

# RE•THINK

**HARNESSING  
DIGITAL  
TRANSFORMATIONS  
TO IGNITE  
BUSINESS GROWTH**



**STRAP  
IN!**

The only consistency in marketing is its unwavering inconsistency. Marketing wins and losses are reflective of the world around us – culturally, economically and technologically. When you're in it long enough, you get a knack for spotting patterns and triggers that inform a shift. Our experience tells us that one of those times is right now.

The last 20 years have seen technological innovation like never before – no big reveal there. But there is a shifting of the tide that is more dramatic than the normal year-on-year trend shifts we're used to. AI and the accompanying far-reaching implications it has brought is the biggest pioneering technological innovation since the smartphone. An exciting time for consumers and a pivotal one for businesses – knowing when to embrace new innovations or continue with your existing frameworks will be the difference in growth or decline.

But AI is not the only growth in digital technologies and marketing your business needs to be attuned to. This edition of **Re.Think** explores topics like the pros and cons of AI-created content, harnessing data effectively, when to buy in on innovation and the digital marketing forecast for the year ahead. We're delighted to share our discoveries, equipping businesses with the strategies necessary to navigate the evolving landscape of marketing innovation.

**ROB HUGHES**

Founder &amp; Managing Director | Reech

AI-WRITTEN CONTENT:

# PROS & CONS OF THE ROBOT RENAISSANCE



Let's address the looming digital elephant in the room; artificial intelligence (AI). We know, change the record – but the fact that your newsfeed has been lit up daily with another AI update or advancement should give some inkling into the trajectory it has taken in recent years. That trajectory is steep and upward, and as tech behemoths around the globe weigh in on the artificial arms race, AI-created content will continue to saturate our feeds, websites and daily digital discourse.

The potential of AI is truly captivating. The ink isn't even dry on your "Future of Marketing" bingo card, and already AI-written content is rewriting the rules. The digital landscape is feeling a seismic shift, and when the term seismic is deployed, it's not all necessarily going to be sunshine and roses. If you're thinking, "Woah, woah, woah - my pal ChatGPT can sling out an article of my choosing in 30 seconds, what could be wrong with that?!" We're merely here to explore the current strengths and weaknesses of the tech; we wouldn't dream of ripping you away from your beloved AR (artificial relationship).

## **LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE PRIMARY PROS AND CONS OF CURRENT AI-CREATED CONTENT...**

# PROS...

## EFFICIENCY ON AUTOPILOT

AI can churn out content at a mind-boggling pace, freeing up your time to do some laundry or go to the shops – things AI can only dream of. It's the drive-thru content factory, dishing out SEO-optimised drafts that can kickstart your creative process or fill those never-ending content gaps.

## DATA-DRIVEN PRECISION

AI can analyse mountains of data, connecting keywords, trending topics, and audience preferences like a search engine conduit in times a human could never match. That means that if you know how to tame the various Large Language Models (LLMs), you can potentially create laser-focused content.

## COST-EFFECTIVENESS (ISH)

Hiring a team of freelance copywriters has the potential to feel like wrangling a herd of caffeinated squirrels. Although some AI tools are free, improved models will cost you. They can be more of a budget-friendly option, especially for those early marketing stages where content volume is a priority.

# CONS...

## SOUL-LESS ROBOT IN THE ROOM

Let's face it, AI-written content can be... well, robotic. It might tick all the SEO boxes and be grammatically sound, but it often lacks the soul, the spark, the *je ne sais quoi* that makes human-crafted content resonate. It can feel formulaic, generic, and frankly, soulless.

## ORIGINALITY? NEVER HEARD OF IT

While AI can mimic existing content and readily retrieve prompts, the very nature of the medium means it can never truly conjure genuine creativity. No matter how good it is at pattern recognition and data analysis, by its nature it is not cognitive (we hope). Cognition is the basis for original creativity where true magic is born.

## THE ESSENTIAL HUMAN HANDLER

Remember when everyone thought self-driving cars were just around the corner? Well, I still can't catch forty winks while driving, so here we are. AI-written content still needs a human editor to fact-check, ensure brand voice consistency, and avoid factual gaffes. Don't release the content robot without the human safety harness.

So, where do we stand? AI content isn't the marketing apocalypse, nor is it the holy grail of content creation. It's a powerful tool, yes, but one that needs to be wielded through a human mind and an inclination for creativity. As an agency that deals with large volumes of work, we see AI as a sidekick, not a threat. We use its data-driven insights and efficiency to streamline our creative firepower, ensuring your content is both strategic and soul-stirring.

Forget the robot vs. human catfight. The future of marketing output is collaboration, about harnessing the power of AI while maximising the magic of human creativity. If you try to run from AI, it will soon grow legs and run right past you. Take the current landscape with a pinch of salt, but enjoy the rising of the robot renaissance. It's certainly not going anywhere, and we may not see another technological advancement like this for quite a while.

PR 2.0

# EVOLVING DIGITAL PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES





Public Relations (PR) isn't just surviving the digital revolution; it's evolving and in turn thriving, maintaining its crucial role in marketing strategies. While the core principles of PR—building relationships and crafting compelling narratives—remain constant, the tools and methodologies we use are undergoing a significant transformation.

As we stare down the barrel of 2025, we can appreciate and build for PR's dynamic practices and wide strategy range, like influencer collaboration, content creation, media outreach, social media management, SEO optimisation, and even data analytics. This evolution is driven by technological advancements, changing societal expectations, the growing influence of digital platforms, and an increased demand for authenticity and transparency.

With major themes like AI integrations, data analytics, the necessity for reliability and real-time crisis management emerging, we explore how and why modern PR tools are pivotal for driving your business forward.

## PR'S COMING OF AGE

We all know what traditional PR looks like, but what about digital PR? Digital PR adapts traditional techniques to the online space, aiming to enhance brand awareness, strengthen credibility, drive website traffic, generate SEO-friendly links, increase social media engagement, and ultimately boost sales – how do you do these many lovely things, digital PR?

It leverages trusted, independent online third parties to positively shape your brand's reputation and enhance Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness (E-EAT) signals – all things Google loves, and it will reward you with higher page rankings and stronger authority across your online offering.

## DATA DICTATED DIRECTION

Gut feelings and assumptions aren't going to cut the mustard anymore. Because it's not just about drafting content and sharing it far and wide, hoping that something, somewhere might stick – then giving yourself a big pat on the back when coverage is secured. If you're not utilising your data banks to inform the finer details of your campaigns, you're not going to stand a chance against the PR professionals doing this day in, day out. From identifying the most relevant journalists for outreach to understanding audience preferences, data has become an essential part of the ideation and execution of PR.

The integration of modern tools like AI and data analytic software has irreversibly transformed PR strategies. These tools enhance various aspects of campaigns by hyper-focusing them, they allow PR specialists to analyse vast amounts of data, identify trends, predict audience behaviour, and tailor outreach efforts with unprecedented precision.

## EMBRACING THE REVOLUTION

AI usage in terms of digital PR is your no-maintenance assistant that can sift through mountains of media coverage, spot patterns that could correlate to trends, and summarise key findings—all while you enjoy your morning coffee. Thank you, kind robot.

These Large Language Models (LLMs) do the type of heavy lifting that has historically taken up huge amounts of time – that’s right, no more complex boolean searches or tedious spreadsheet work. With your AI comrade in the trenches doing the dirty work, it frees you up to harness the data and craft messages that resonate more effectively with specific demographics, naturally increasing engagement and impact. The insights provided by AI can be the crucial component in optimising your strategy, informing your decisions and ultimately demonstrating tangible results.



## CREDIBILITY AS CURRENCY

Audiences are more sceptical and informed than ever before. They expect brands to be transparent about their values, journey, and impact on society as standard. This shift has led to a significant change in PR strategies, with a greater emphasis on authenticity, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Authenticity has become a cornerstone of effective PR. Consumers can easily spot insincerity and are quick to call out brands that don’t walk the talk. Genuine messaging that aligns with a brand’s core values delivered in a human, relatable manner over corporate-speak is always going to resonate. This also includes acknowledging mistakes when they occur and demonstrating how they’re being addressed. PR strategies now often involve proactive disclosure of information, even when it might not be entirely favourable, to further build trust, rapport and connection with audiences.

## GO GET ‘EM

To truly excel, PR pros must not only keep pace with emerging technologies but also anticipate and shape audience expectations. Crafting authentic, engaging messages that resonate deeply and adapting swiftly to the ever-evolving environment will be the foundation of success.

This is an opportunity to drive impactful results for businesses. With the right PR strategy, challenges turn into triumphs, and messaging inspires action in the right audiences. We have the tools, we have the know-how – let’s go tell stories that reverberate success throughout your business.

**“MERGING  
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**ZOE EVANS**

PR Specialist | Reech

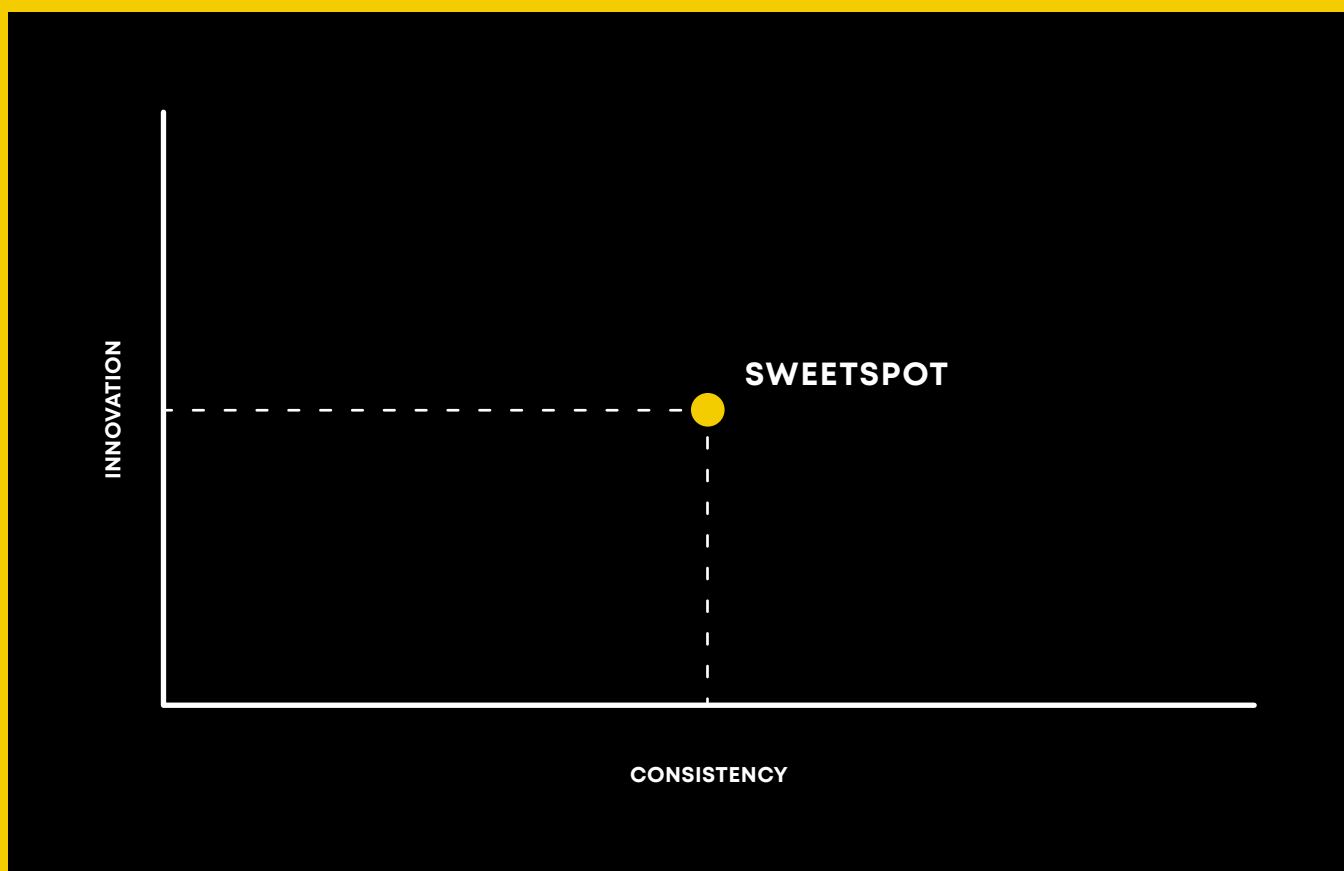
**THE**  
**INNOVATION**  
**EQUILIBRIUM**  
**STRIKING**  
**YOUR**  
**TACTICAL**  
**SWEETSPOT**

If you're still relying solely on the dusty marketing playbook from five years ago, and your current sales pipeline is looking more tepid than hot, it's no massive surprise. On the other hand, if you're so busy flitting to the flashiest piece of tech like a lead-gen hungry magpie that you can't gain any real traction, we wouldn't be shocked either. Companies that find ongoing success in their marketing and sales tactics have found the sweet spot between the consistency and innovation split – innosistency... convation? You get it.

On paper, it's simple. Ditch what isn't working and double down on the strategies that have been keeping the lights on. Job done, cheers.

As we both know, it's not so simple - company structures, rising competition, internal budgets, industry considerations and existing cultures are all governing factors in how your strategies are balanced. We're here to drop some unbiased wisdom bombs when it comes to finding a middle ground for when you should stick or twist on your marketing activities.

## INNOSISTENCY... CONVATION?



# 01

## OLD, MEET NEW

Let's take an old staple as an example: email marketing. Where some companies see an archaic channel that feels outdated, other companies follow the data. The Direct Marketing Association cites the average return on investment for email marketing in the UK to be 42:1. This means that for every £1 spent on email marketing, businesses are seeing an average return of £42 - this represents an exceptionally high ROI compared to many other marketing channels.

Sure, not everyone is seeing these types of returns – but the data dictates that the opportunity is there for companies keen enough to evolve their approach. The robots have infiltrated our organisations and are producing hyper-personalisation, mass volume outreach and fully-fledged workflows quicker than you can say AI. CRM giants Hubspot recently saw their open rates increase by nearly 30% after implementing AI personalisation strategies.

AI is not the scratch-and-win answer to your email conversion woes, but it is an example of how implementing new technological techniques into existing marketing strategies can potentially get those internal figures at the end of the month looking a bit juicier.

# 02

## MEASURE TWICE, SPEND ONCE

How do you know what new initiatives are worth taking the risk on? Pilot programmes and A/B testing are crucial to striking your balance. Before you throw a wad of cash at the engaging rep from this season's hottest tech software, start small. If you find a new initiative or software you like the sound of, begin with a controlled rollout on a basic package to see how it fits. This not only helps identify potential challenges but also provides valuable insights that will inform broader implementation in the future.

An existing bank of data is crucial for this. You need a historical reference to compare your new shiny tactic data against to get a true reading of whether the output, returns or whatever other KPI you're striving for has been improved or not. The first few weeks will take gentle tending through consistent monitoring and regular assessments. The more proactive your approach, the better insight you'll have on the effectiveness of your new initiative. Be bold strategically – measure data relentlessly.

# 03

## ADVANTAGE: AGILITY

The crux of this whole argument is adaptability – it's not a nice buzzword to have floating around the office, it's a crucial pillar that should underpin your culture. Traditional marketing strategies often rely on rigid annual plans, which hinders flexibility and, in turn, removes the option of potentially lucrative reactive marketing.

The agile marketing approach emphasises quarterly sprints and ongoing iteration over pre-determined, long-term roadmaps. A Forbes study shows us that companies that adopt this method are three times more likely to experience significant growth in market share. This shift allows organisations to test new strategies in shorter cycles, gather insights, and refine their approaches based on real-time feedback.

Fresh innovations in your marketing efforts should spark a chain reaction of events throughout the company; the evolution of KPIs being one of these. As an example, instead of solely measuring website traffic, the focus could lay on metrics like engagement time or repeat visits. See what your innovative tactics can potentially bring, zoom out your view and plan for the future you want to see.

The most successful companies aren't those that cling stubbornly to tradition or chase every fleeting trend. They're the ones who master the art of 'strategic evolution' – continuously refining their approach, embracing calculated risks, and adapting swiftly to change.

As you build your modern marketing ecosystem, keep your eyes on the horizon but your feet planted in data-driven decisions. Test, measure, and iterate tirelessly. Become flexible and light-footed. Tread the tightrope and look good doing it.

# HARNESS YOUR DATA MARKET WITH PURPOSE

## **BUSINESSES ARE SITTING ON GOLDMINES.**

Desktops, CRMs and servers have become digital lockboxes for modern businesses most precious commodity – data.

Sweet, sweet data, the window to our audience's likes, dislikes and don't cares. Data is being both purposefully and passively collected from every business in a plethora of different ways, whether they know it or not. Many fail to harness the true potential of their data treasure troves to authentically and strategically connect with their audiences – at their peril.

As consumers grow increasingly sceptical of promotional content and traditional influencer marketing, modern marketing tactics are shifting towards more personalised and targeted approaches. This evolution isn't just a trend; it's becoming a necessity.



**HOW MUCH OF A NECESSITY,  
YOU ASK? WHAT A WONDERFUL  
QUESTION.**

**LET'S FIND OUT...**

# PURPOSEFUL PERSONALISATION

A recent Forbes study on the 'State of Customer Service and CX Study' found that 81% of customers prefer companies that offer a personalised experience, and 70% say a personalised experience in which the employee knows who they are and their history with the company (past purchases, buying patterns, support calls and more) is important to them.

This shift reflects a growing desire for relevance and value in an increasingly noisy digital world. Consumers are no longer satisfied with generic, one-size-fits-all marketing messages. They crave experiences tailored to their unique preferences, behaviours, and needs – all of which are only discoverable through historic and ongoing data collation.

# 81%

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## READY, AIM, MARKET

The move towards contextual and personalised advertising represents a significant departure from traditional mass marketing techniques. By leveraging data intelligently, businesses can create more direct and tailored methods of reaching their audience. As well as resonating stronger with consumers, it offers companies better value for their marketing investments.

Personalised marketing allows businesses to be front-and-centre with the audiences that matter most to them. By analysing customer data, we can craft effective messages that speak directly to individual interests, pain points, and aspirations. This level of targeting ensures that marketing efforts are not wasted on uninterested parties, maximising the impact of every campaign.

# TARGETING IN MOTION

adsmart

from sky

Our recent ad campaign for Shrewsbury Colleges Group, utilising Sky AdSmart technology, is a prime example of this personalised approach in action. This video campaign demonstrates how traditional mediums like television can be transformed into precision marketing tools through the smart use of data.

These ads were shown on both live TV and catch-up services, targeting Shropshire and immediate surrounding areas, ensuring maximum visibility across different viewing habits. As we did with the whole multi-channel campaign, we directly targeted the demographics we wanted it in front of – to great effect.

By harnessing the granular targeting capabilities of Sky AdSmart, we ensured we were targeting exactly the demographics of potential students for Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) we needed to, eliminating the historical challenge of wasted mass exposure in traditional TV advertising.

## THE RESULTS

≈ 2k

direct clicks to the HTQ section of Shrewsbury Colleges Group website through the On Demand viewings, along with immeasurable awareness and in-direct website visits and sign-ups.



# THE FUTURE, PERSONALISED

As we move forward, the ability to effectively collect, analyse, and act on customer data will become increasingly crucial for marketing success. Businesses that can navigate the complexities of data privacy alongside delivering highly personalised experiences will find themselves at a significant advantage.

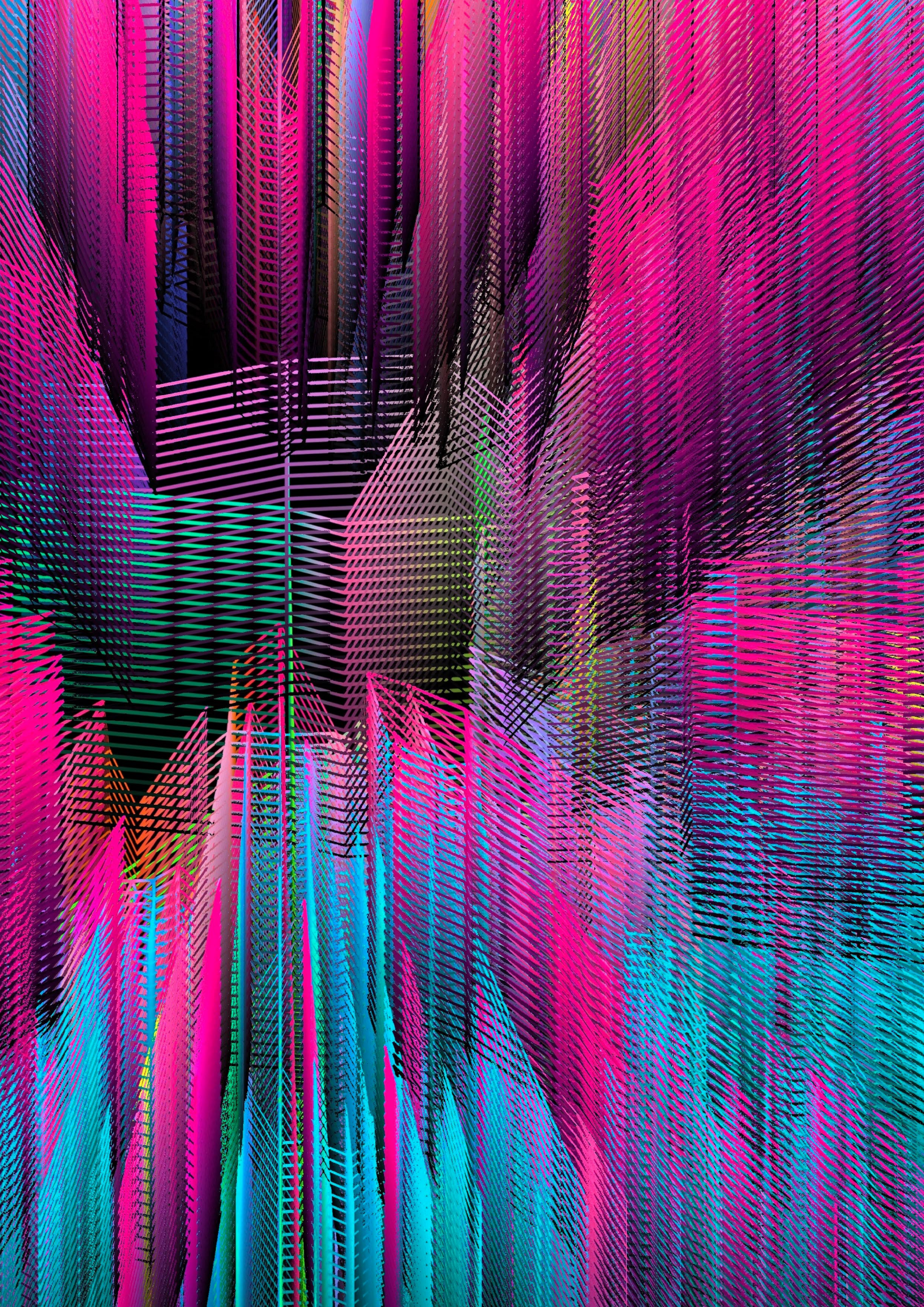
As consumer expectations continue to evolve, the businesses that thrive will be those that embrace personalisation not just as a marketing tactic, but as a core business strategy. By doing so, you can exceed basic expectations, fostering deeper connections and driving meaningful engagement in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

**“EVERY POINT OF DATA IS A PIECE OF THE PUZZLE. REAL INSIGHTS COME FROM FIGURING OUT HOW THOSE PIECES FIT TOGETHER AND WHAT STORY THEY’RE ACTUALLY TELLING YOU.”**



**LEE BISHOP**

Head of Marketing & Performance | Reech



**DIGITAL MARKETING IN 2025:**

# **BEYOND THE OBVIOUS**

**TRENDS AND TECHNOLOGY ARE BARRELLING FORWARD AT A THRILLING/TERRIFYING RATE OF VELOCITY.**

Whatever 'conventional' marketing strategies look like to you, they will have no doubt shifted considerably over the last few years, partly down to cultural shifts, probably due to technological advancements. Of course, you don't need to shift your entire strategy when a new shiny bit of tech emerges – but to truly stay ahead and capitalise on your market when you have the opportunity, you have to keep sharp and stay ready.

Forward-thinking marketers are exploring innovative frontiers to stay ahead, and the most successful ones are fully utilising the arsenal of current technology available to them. We explore some of the most pressing trends surfacing in 2025, and how you can harness them to get and retain the edge in your market.

# GOOD SOCIAL ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH

Marketers are increasingly recognising the importance of engagement quality. According to Kantar's Media Reactions 2024, only 31% of people worldwide say that ads on social media platforms capture their attention, a notable drop from last year's 43%.

When we think about attention deficit, we traditionally think of younger audiences – but this trend is affecting all age groups. Audiences have become accustomed to the fast-paced nature of social media, raising the expectations for what can truly capture their interest. In 2025, brands will need to earn attention consistently and continuously; simply fitting the platform's mould won't suffice. You must find ways to stand out.

Achieving distinctiveness isn't a one-size-fits-all approach. The data tells us that humour is the most effective ad engagement driver for Gen X and Boomers, while Gen Y responds well to both humour and appealing music. For Gen Z, music takes precedence. Creative innovation will be essential for success, ads must be thoughtfully crafted so that viewers can grasp their meaning instantly.

# 31%

of people worldwide say that ads on social media platforms capture their attention.

## ALEXA...

# EXPLAIN VOICE SEARCH OPTIMISATION

With the rise of smart speakers and voice assistants like Amazon's Alexa and Google Assistant, optimising for voice search will become critical in 2025. According to a study by ComScore, 50% of all searches will be voice searches by 2025. This shift requires marketers to adapt their SEO strategies to accommodate natural language queries.

To optimise for voice search, you should focus on long-tail keywords and conversational phrases that reflect how people speak. For example, instead of targeting "best coffee shop," the alternative strategy would be to optimise for "where can I find the best coffee near me?" By aligning content with voice search behaviour, brands can improve their visibility in search results.

# 50%

of all searches will be voice searches by 2025.

# GREEN IS CLEAN IS GOOD

We can't call sustainability a trend anymore because it's here for the long run. Consumers are increasingly prioritising ethical practices and sustainability when making purchasing decisions. According to a Nielsen study, 66% of global consumers are willing to pay more for sustainable brands. Successful brands in 2025 will integrate these values into their core marketing strategies.

Patagonia serves as an ultimate yet exemplary case study; its commitment to environmental sustainability is woven into every aspect of its brand messaging and identity. By promoting their eco-friendly practices and encouraging customers to buy less through campaigns like "Don't Buy This Jacket," Patagonia has cultivated a loyal customer base that naturally aligns with their values. Brands that authentically communicate their commitment to social responsibility will not only attract conscious consumers, but also foster long-term loyalty and trust.

# 66%

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# MARKETING'S OFFICIAL CURRENCY

Yes, more data chatter, but the stock price of data is only rising – for good reason. Advanced predictive analytics will allow marketers to anticipate customer needs before they arise and beat the competition to the turn. By analysing historical data and identifying patterns, brands can proactively offer solutions at the perfect moment and appear as thought leaders.

For instance, Amazon uses predictive analytics to recommend products based on past purchases and browsing behaviour. This proactive approach enhances customer satisfaction and drives sales by presenting relevant options when consumers are most likely to buy. A lot of groundwork is required to get your systems in place for something like this, but the rewards outweigh the grind. As the digital commerce landscape continues to saturate, leveraging predictive analytics could be essential for brands seeking to stay ahead of the competition and deliver exceptional customer experiences.





# LET'S AV' IT 2025.

As we move forward, the most successful marketers will be those who can seamlessly blend creativity with data-driven insights and authenticity with cutting-edge technology. The future of digital marketing is not just about reaching customers; it's about creating experiences that captivate, engage, and inspire. The key will be remaining agile, continuously experimenting with new technologies and approaches while always keeping the customer experience at the heart of every strategy.

**LET'S GET AFTER IT, SHALL WE?**

# HOLD

# TIGHT!

Well, look at us. Just a couple of well-informed marketers ready to hit 2025 with a hoard of winning digital technological innovations – how exciting. Hopefully, at a minimum, these findings have unlocked some new potential pathways for growth for your upcoming marketing activities.

The next edition of **Re.Think** is cooking as we speak, where we'll be delving into modern business evolution across a multitude of sectors and some of the key ingredients to staying relevant and profitable in a turbulent landscape.

**STAY TUNED AND KEEP AGILE.**

# THANKS FOR READING