

Here's what your marketing leadership should be focused on

 By [Neil Pursey](#)

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You've invested in your marketing, but your CFO is putting pressure on you to show a return on investment (ROI). If you're second-guessing yourself and your team, it's most likely because your team is spread across paid, owned and earned media, each doing their best to get through the workload and meet their KPIs.



Neil Pursey, CEO of Measurebyte

Getting these disciplines working together can be a complex process. You probably realise that you're wasting budget and missing opportunities for growth, but you don't know where to start fixing the problem. You're frustrated, and it's because you're not focused on the metrics that matter.

A common challenge for companies is the complexity of marketing data - it's unstructured and intimidating to even the most seasoned data engineer. We can't expect our marketing team or agency to effectively report and provide meaningful insights when internal marketing teams don't have aligned KPIs and traditional agency models don't allow for objective reporting.

The reporting and ROI challenge only gets worse the higher up in leadership you go. Most C-Suites have access to too much marketing data, and meaningful discussions quickly get derailed because they are not looking at the metrics that matter to them.

I've worked with some of the biggest FMCG, insurance, and financial companies in the country, as well as large multi-

national corporations, and each project has boiled down to three major challenges businesses face in using their marketing data to its full potential.

Challenge 1: You're meeting a personal KPI, not a business objective

Here's the reality: We all have KPIs, and we all want to meet them to get our bonus or that promotion. But the challenge with personal KPIs is that they don't align teams to a common business objective, which creates a lack of motivation to collaborate. And not only are they rigid, but they use time as a measurement.

This is problematic because no two months are the same. Customer buying behaviour could look vastly different between February and March, and, as we've seen with the pandemic, the economy can change drastically year on year.



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Added to this, different metrics are important for different leadership levels – the data your marketing manager needs to report on a digital campaign is not likely to be the same as the brand manager. In a marketing world, aligning brand growth metrics that matter to KPIs at leadership levels gives your decision-makers clarity, confidence, transparency and increases their strategic ability.

This is the catalyst for digital transformation.

To get the best from your marketing data, you need to focus on objectives and key results. Once you're working towards clear goals with measurable milestones, you can harness your team and the data they have access to, ensuring the business achieves its growth objectives.

Very often, reporting doesn't speak to proactive monthly target setting. This creates a lack of accountability among staff. People are motivated by purpose and profit, and if these can't be measured and benchmarked, then your ambitious, star players will leave because they are not growing.

Teams that collectively set targets will immediately have direction and purpose driving their work, and you'll see employee motivation will skyrocket, which leads me to my second point.

Challenge 2: You have data silos

We see that silos can exist across paid, owned and earned media. Depending on the size of your team, data can be locked up inside these categories and not shared among the broader teams. With so many sources of data, it can be impossible to create a complete, integrated picture. And that doesn't even include the data from your product, finance and sales teams.

Breaking down these data silos based on the metrics that matter and centralising your data allows you to view important counter metrics across teams, channels and campaigns. Finding the data story by putting counter metrics together is the foundation for collaboration and removing these data silos across a company or department.

At an executive level, you're most likely looking at a dashboard that includes a large data dump, and none of the information is the data you need for high-level decision making.

Building an integrated DecisionBoard allows you to use data based on your metrics that matter and objectives and key results (OKRs) for better, strategic decision making. You can see how your campaigns support sales and the financial

implications. This means you can spend your budget in the areas where it will have the biggest impact.

Challenge 3: You're putting tech ahead of people

Companies are heavily investing in tech to digitally transform. But they take it for granted that marketing includes digital transformation because of their access to data and marketing technology. Practically though, this is not the case.

Ironically, marketing data across your internal teams and agency partners are the very reason for silos being created, and these silos are a massive stumbling block for true digital transformation across the whole business. We need to remember that people are the gatekeepers to this data. Creating an environment of aligned KPIs and OKRs and breaking down silos is all linked to people.



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Without the right foundation, marketing technology can confuse the metrics that matter. Without the necessary people and process foundation and a measurement framework to guide you on your journey of marketing ROI, technology will never be used to its full potential.

Unfortunately, no amount of marketing technology can solve the bad habits of people. If you build those good habits in your staff and agency partners, you will have good data: Data from which you can find and actionable insights. Once you have reached this level of maturity, embed the necessary tech to automate and scale your excellent efforts to make you and your brand world-class.

It's more important than ever that marketers and business leaders understand and can wield the business value of marketing. But there's currently too little focus on what marketing metrics matter for business growth and too many data dumps in marketing reporting.

What you need to transform your business goes beyond just digital. You need reports that cut across silos and can inform decision making, insights that can be actioned, and technology and people working together.

ABOUT NEIL PURSEY

I founded Measurebyte in 2020 with a mission to improve centralised marketing reporting to eliminate inherent biases. The result of this is improved marketing operations, which is helping our clients save on media wastage and improve their ability to measure their impact on sales.

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