Welcome Insights

The State of Marketing in 2020

The Impact of COVID-19 & the Top Trends
for Marketing Teams Navigating 2021

Welcome
a NewsCred Brand

Sirkin RESEARCH

In early 2020, *Welcome* commissioned Sirkin Research to conduct market research to identify marketing trends transforming enterprise marketing teams.

The research focused on survey insights from 250+ marketing leaders in the world's leading organizations, in an effort to understand precisely what gets in the way of enabling them and their colleagues to do their best work.

Shortly after that research was completed, COVID-19 began sweeping the globe. Once again, Welcome commissioned Sirkin Research, to understand the impact of coronavirus on marketing teams around the world — specifically as it related to managing shifting priorities, adjusting channel investments, and navigating new ways of working. Overall, statistics represent those who indicated a "moderate" to "high" challenge or priority, and other statistics are based on marketers providing where their time is spent.

The findings within this report are designed to help marketing leaders pioneer a path towards overcoming common challenges that hinder their teams' ability to work better, together, while empowering them to deliver exceptional marketing results.

For more information, visit welcomesoftware.com or contact sales@newscred.com.

Contents

The Impact of COVID-19 on Marketing

In March of 2020, the world changed dramatically.

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic heightened around the globe, marketers were forced to pivot quickly, act faster, and begin acclimating to a "new normal."

Targeting marketing leaders and practitioners across leading enterprise organizations, this survey looked at the pandemic's effect on content strategies and marketing budgets, as well as the dynamics of remote collaboration. Here were the top four takeaways.

IMPACT #1

As expected, marketers are playing catchup to shifting priorities, plans, and resources.

The pandemic crisis created a host of new challenges for marketing teams as plans quickly change and evolve.

+ **56%** of survey participants indicated that managing shifting priorities or strategies is their top challenge

+ **48%** noted getting visibility into fluid plans is also a challenge

+ **40%+** indicated that managing realignment of budget and people resources is difficult

56%

56% of survey participants indicated that managing shifting priorities or strategies is their top challenge.

IMPACT #2

Changing priorities are leading to increased investment in new channels.

As priorities and plans shift, marketing teams are also expecting shifts in the budget.

+   **78%** of marketing leaders indicated an increase in the creation of virtual events

+   **67%** of marketers expect an increase or significant increase in webinars

+   **66%** expect an increase in social media followed by blog content at **57%** and video production at **50%**

TABLE 1 Channels Marketers Are Expecting to See Increased Investment

Anticipated Increase in Marketing Investments	% Expecting Increase or Significant Increase in Budget
Events (Virtual)	78%
Web Content	72%
Webinars	67%
Social Media	66%
Content (Blog)	57%
Video Production	50%

IMPACT #3

Remote work conditions are creating a surge in "work about work."

The biggest challenges marketing teams are facing during the pandemic, beyond shifting priorities, largely stem from the fact that the move to remote working was unexpected.

+ **49%** noted shifting team priorities and objectives as a challenge

+ **33%** noted an uptick in required meetings

+ **28%** indicated an increase in mundane tasks and status updates

TABLE 2 Challenges Encountered Related to Marketing Teams Working Remotely

Difficulty with Remote Work Execution	% Indicating as Challenge or Significant Challenge
Shifting (& communicating) team priorities & objectives	49%
Uptick in required meetings (i.e. planning or team checkpoints)	33%
Increase of mundane tasks & status updates (e.g. emails, reporting)	28%
Difficulty maximizing distributed teams/resources	27%
Additional burden to report on team efforts, production, or results	27%
Inability to effectively collaborate in real-time	22%

IMPACT #4

Companies using planning and project management tools face fewer challenges as the result of the coronavirus vs. those that don't use these tools.

The respondents (32%) that appeared to leverage enterprise-level collaboration and planning tools, such as Marketing Resource Management (MRM) and Content Marketing Platforms (CMP):

+ Were **29%** less likely to cite realigning people resources to new initiatives as a challenge or significant challenge

+ Were **28%** less likely to cite providing visibility into a fluid plan as a challenge or significant challenge

+ Were **23%** less likely to cite managing vendors and other non-employees as a notable issue

TABLE 3

Companies Using Planning and Project Management Tools vs. Those that Don't: % Decrease in Noting as Challenge or Significant Challenge during Pandemic

Realigning people resources to new initiatives	**-29%**
Providing visibility / managing fluid plans	**-28%**
Managing vendors & other non-employees remotely	**-23%**
Discovering & repurposing marketing assets	**-16%**
Managing shifting priorities / strategies	**-8%**
Managing a remote / distributed marketing team	**-8%**
Realigning budget to new initiatives	**-2%**

In summary...

Overall, the insights from the "Impact of COVID-19 on Marketing" survey tell a compelling story. As coronavirus has introduced new priorities and shifted strategic focus, marketers have been scrambling to modify plans, reinvest budget, and find the bandwidth necessary to execute new campaigns and build new content. Compounded with working remotely, marketing teams' productivity is likely on the decline as there appears to be an increase in "work about work," such as an increase in meetings and status updates.

Even prior to COVID-19, marketers were operating in a rapidly evolving and difficult landscape. And while this latest circumstance only further exacerbates that, teams already appear to be adapting — with more forward-thinking organizations leveraging tools to realign plans, improve collaboration, and reallocate resources.

The Top 6 Trends
in Marketing, 2020

Visibility challenges strain management's ability
to lead, and a marketer's ability to execute.

+ **79%** lack a single, unified calendar to visualize all campaigns

+ **70%** have poor visibility into what campaigns are being created,
already exist, or how to find them

+ **74%** have poor visibility into resource bandwidth & competing priorities

Welcome's 2020 Perspective

In many cases, a well-thought-out marketing campaign is like a work of art. It's complex, intricate, and every component was likely carefully considered with specific intent. But, using spreadsheets, presentations, or other generic tools to communicate and manage these plans becomes an immediate disservice.

These static, decentralized solutions quickly leave individual contributors asking questions such as: What's my role? What do I owe, to whom, and when? Project Managers are likely asking: Where does this project stand? Are we on track, and if so, what are our next steps? And perhaps most unfortunately, Executive Management may ask: What is the objective of this work? How does this align with our other initiatives, and what is the value to the business?

Frankly, there's no way for any side to get clear, concise answers to their questions. This blurry line of sight creates misalignment at the team level and an inability to ladder activity up to the bigger picture at the leadership level. Ultimately, this all potentially leads to non-strategic marketing, wasted effort, and missed opportunities.

2020 TREND #2

Consistent administrative bottlenecks delay launches and slow speed-to-market.

+ **77%** of marketers say it takes on average 8 weeks or more to launch a single campaign

+ **13%** of a marketer's week is spent getting approval on budgets, monitoring the budget, and tracking invoices

+ **7%** of a marketer's week is aligning on responsibilities/ownership

Welcome's 2020 Perspective

Not only is a spreadsheet unconducive to planning, but it also requires constant upkeep to accurately reflect current status and ownership as work exchanges hands. Did we email the brief out to the agency? Have we submitted our booth designs? Does Legal have the latest version of our press release? And who was tracking down approval from Finance anyway?

The more time employees spend managing these types of handoffs and doing manual maintenance, the less time they have to produce constructive, value-adding work. Of course, the more integrated and complex a campaign, the more deliverables there are to be produced, and the more maintenance that is required. It becomes a vicious cycle that can lead to missed timelines — not to mention disgruntled marketers doing tedious (and seemingly never-ending) administrative upkeep.

In reality, teams need tools that make marketing easier, not harder. This means real-time, centralized, and collaborative.

2020 TREND #3

MarTech stacks and marketing waste are growing (in parallel).

+ **78%** of marketers must use 5 or more tools to plan, manage, and execute their campaigns

+ **69%** don't have a single place for managing, discovering, and quickly repurposing content

+ **79%** don't have the ability to centrally manage and prioritize ad hoc requests from cross-functional stakeholders

78%
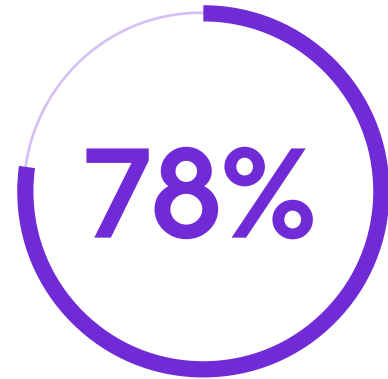
78% of marketers must use **5 or more tools** to plan, manage, and execute their campaigns

NewsCred's 2020 Perspective

Recent years have seen big investments in marketing technology. But as MarTech stacks have grown, so have the number of tools marketers need to navigate daily — and that's added new layers of complexity. For example, perhaps your team maintains a shared calendar in one tool, but you create and collaborate on actual deliverables in another. Meanwhile, progress is tracked using a separate project management tool. And within each of these systems, every contributor is linking back and forth to various plans, documents, and spreadsheets that live… elsewhere.

Unfortunately, this reality forces marketers to navigate a cluttered and disparate tech stack — a myriad of one-off investments and single-purpose tools — which complicate the transfer of content (and data), while creating inherent silos between teams and functions.

2020 TREND #4

Team silos are reinforced by separate "collaboration" tools.

+ **78%** say they typically use 5+ tools or more to launch a single campaign

+ **69%** have difficulty collaborating on new, innovative content ideas

+ **17%** of a marketer's week is spent brainstorming campaign strategy & objectives

+ **70%** noted slowed content creation as it goes through brand compliance, translation, and legal/compliance teams

+ **10%** of a marketer's week is spent just distributing assets

Welcome's 2020 Perspective

Doing work in disparate tools often equates to doing work without necessary context and collaboration. When everything happens independently, there's an inherent lack of connectivity across teams and process, which introduces the risk of marketing messaging inconsistencies, effort duplication, and content waste. Ultimately, this just diminishes the customer experience and results in lower-than-expected performance.

In order for campaigns to achieve their desired business outcomes, every team and campaign contributor must operate in alignment and coordinate around the creation of the various assets that campaigns depend on. Yet, many organizations simply "make do" using manual, inefficient, decentralized tools, or workarounds with software not purpose-built for marketing.

2020 TREND #5

Data reporting is manual and efficiency metrics are non-existent.

+ **97%** desire to demonstrate the business impact of marketing

+ **82%** struggle to attribute campaigns to revenue

NewsCred's 2020 Perspective

Many marketers recognize that data-driven learnings are key to getting an edge on the competition. But as budgets shrink and expectations grow, accurate and meaningful reporting also becomes essential to winning over internal stakeholders. If your organization is like the majority, you don't have a streamlined way of pulling your data into a detailed retrospective that offers a full, unbiased, and complete picture for executive review.

Without the ability to measure operational efficiency and production, for example, managers have no way of knowing how the team is executing or how much was accomplished. And without the ability to report on campaign performance, leadership lacks the necessary insights to measure ROI, determine what's working (and what's not), and maximize future investments.

Ultimately, this inability to demonstrate marketing impact puts marketing leaders behind the 8-ball in just about every financial and strategic business conversation.

2020 TREND #6

The biggest problem? Marketers don't have time to be creative and do their job.

+ **Less than 40% of a marketer's time is spent on campaign development... the rest is work about work**

   + **12%** of marketers' weeks are spent monitoring the status of deliverables

   + **55%** of marketers say that wasteful meetings and excessive emails get in the way of execution

   + **9%** of a marketer's week is spent on approvals

Welcome's 2020 Perspective

Unfortunately, having the right plans in place (along with the proper controls for visibility and governance) can only go so far. Many marketers are hindered by the all of the "work about work" that takes them away from doing what they love most: being creative, and developing exceptional marketing assets. The culprit? Decentralized plans, generic tools, and an ever-growing list of status updates, meetings, and other extraneous activity that become necessary to execute — all of which exacerbate existing problems in today's fast-moving, ever-changing, and high-expectation landscape.

The good news is that the data suggests that companies who are early to adopt planning and project management tools, often characterized as Marketing Work Management (MWM), Marketing Resource Management (MRM), and Content Marketing Platforms (CMP), are less likely to experience these pain points.

The Reality of Modern Marketing

Today's marketers are, more than ever, hamstrung by an increasingly complex landscape.

Expectations have never been higher, and in some cases, budgets are shrinking — facing continuous scrutiny in a "what have you done for me lately" environment. This combination places unprecedented pressure on today's marketing leaders to drive real results and continuously prove business impact. Forget "doing more with less"; the real question becomes, "How do we maximize what we have?"

At the same time, marketing has never been more difficult to execute.

There are more channels, more content, more touchpoints, and more tools than ever before. Campaigns are complex, requiring a delicate balance between "careful, attention-to-detail" and "scrappy, agile launch." One weak link or disconnect within any part of the marketing process can result in subpar outcomes.

Such is the reality of modern marketing. But it doesn't have to be.

The essential questions are: how do we break through these challenges? How do we change the way we work? And how do we execute better — as a team — in order to deliver on our shared purpose to deliver higher quality, more meaningful marketing?

Transform Teams.
Transform Work.
Transform Marketing.

The truth is, no marketer (or team) is an island — no matter how challenged our teams can feel (or be) at times.

Even in this time of complexity, the recipe for exceptional marketing remains constant: effective project management, shared visibility, creative collaboration, and holistic control across plans and teams.

Transforming your marketing foundations from "conventional, old-school organization" to "modern, agile marketing team" starts with reevaluating how your team works.

Consider the following questions:

?   Does every person in my organization understand our marketing strategy?

?   Do they have the ability to see when, how, and why plans may have changed?

?   Are we giving our teams the ability to align their work in support of more strategic initiatives?

?   Are my tools & processes fully integrated, and working together?

?   Is my tech stack acting as a strategic enabler, or a prohibitor towards our execution?

?   Have we centralized our work enough so that teams can quickly, easily, and seamlessly collaborate?

?   Does every level of marketing have the necessary visibility (and autonomy) to make strategic decisions?

?   Are we empowering teams to deliver high-impact campaigns and measure strategic outcomes?

Meet Welcome, the Marketing Orchestration Software Designed for Flawless Execution

Marketing Orchestration is a transformative shift in the way today's teams need to approach how they plan, execute, and measure their marketing efforts.

It requires strategic coordination across Teams/Functions (i.e. people), Strategies (i.e. resources and budget), Channels (i.e. campaigns and content), Integrations (i.e. tools), and Data (i.e. process and results).

The reality is that all of these need to work in harmony in order to transcend today's challenges, delight customers and create amazing things that matter.

At its core, Welcome's software is purpose-built for the complexities of marketing, transforming conventional organizations into modern, agile teams.

By providing a suite of integrated tools, Welcome gives teams the complete visibility, end-to-end control, and holistic insights needed to orchestrate marketing.

Visit **welcomesoftware.com** to request a demo, and learn why the world's most modern marketing organizations run on Welcome.

- + Align resources for strategic execution
- + Accelerate campaigns & content creation
- + Maintain control across teams, content & resources
- + Demonstrate meaningful results
- + Integrate tools to better coordinate teams, campaigns and data

About the Author

Anthony Aiosa

Director of Product Marketing, Welcome

Anthony Aiosa has 10 years of concentrated marketing experience across brand, content, and product, spanning both global enterprise and scaling SaaS organizations. In his current role as Director of Content & Product Marketing, Anthony helps drive Welcome's own marketing efforts to evangelize and champion marketing work management software.

Welcome
a NewsCred Brand

Welcome unleashes the potential of marketing teams by transforming how they work. Purpose-built for marketers, Welcome's software empowers teams to flawlessly orchestrate marketing at enterprise scale — across teams, content, channels, technology and data — enabling them to execute faster, achieve more, and demonstrate results.

Founded in 2008, NewsCred has partnered with hundreds of the world's best marketing organizations to provide unprecedented control and visibility, improve operational efficiency, and elevate the impact of marketing.

Sirkin
RESEARCH

Sirkin Research is focused on conducting primary research and delivering rich data insights to guide better decision-making for businesses. Located in Philadelphia, PA, USA, Sirkin research has over 15 years of experience working for some of the largest global technology and financial brands in the world. The firm's work spans the globe from Paris to London to New York. Sirkin Research has recently re-branded as Arras Consulting, www.arrasconsulting.com.

Welcome

a NewsCred Brand

welcomesoftware.com | sales@newscred.com | (212) 989 4100