

The Cost Of Losing Creativity

The ROI Model For Agency Creativity

by Jay Pattisall

June 17, 2019

Why Read This Report

The CMO's go-to playbook for growth has run its course. Customer experiences are stagnant; digital sameness has taken hold; tech spend is skyrocketing; and cost reductions have cut to the quick. Where should CMOs turn to grow their brands? Our research shows that investing in creativity will help firms achieve higher returns over a six-year period. It's time to differentiate and move on from faltering brand experiences with agency creativity.

Key Takeaways

The CMO Approach To CX Risks Growth

Homogenized experiences and table-stakes technology have created a sea of digital sameness that threatens CMO's go-to strategy for growth — improving the customer experience.

Ignite Differentiated Growth With Agency Creativity

CMOs who look for creative problem solving from their agencies will find a new force multiplier that differentiates and grows their brands.

Shift \$19 Billion From Technology To Creativity

Move portions of your marketing budget out of commoditized areas of technology and into creative resources to produce powerful, differentiated, branded experiences and communication powered by the right technology.

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[Desperate For Differentiation: Creativity Galvanizes The Total Brand Experience](#)

[The US Customer Experience Index, 2019](#)



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The CMO Approach To Customer Experience Risks Growth

Customer experience (CX) has become homogenized, and technology is now table stakes as customers can no longer distinguish one experience from another. Similar CX solutions and heavy investments in common technology platforms create a sea of digital sameness.¹ Forrester's barometer of CX, the Customer Experience Index (CX Index™), shows few signs of brand progress. Every CMO at every company feels mounting pressure to differentiate their brand now that their go-to playbook for performance has run its course. It's time for CMOs to revisit their approach to experience development because:

- › **Customer experience is stagnating.** CMOs relying on improving customer experiences to drive lifetime customer value need to think again. Forrester's US CX Index, our annual survey of over 100,000 customers to measure how well a brand's experience strengthens loyalty, has trended flat for the fourth consecutive year (see Figure 1). All 300 US brands that the CX Index tracks are languishing, lapsing, lockstepping, or lagging.² Many of the world's most valuable brands are in a CX rut, and CMOs can no longer rely on improving customer experiences as key drivers of the growth and revenue that their firms have come to expect.
- › **Digital sameness is pervasive.** CMOs leveraging the convenience and simplicity of connected digital experiences now need to design for differentiated benefits. Every brand offers the same digital experience because they all address the same customer needs, use the same technology platforms, and design for the same mobile use case. QSR experiences allow diners to pay in advance and skip the line; hotel apps allow travelers to open their room door; fashion and beauty experiences look eerily similar (see Figure 2).³ What makes any brand different from another? CMOs need to look beyond functional experiences in order to break out of their CX rut.
- › **Adtech/martech spend is disproportionately high.** CMOs doubling down on technology to improve customer experiences and marketing ROI must rethink that approach.⁴ The cost of technology continues to increase, while the outcomes stagnate. The CMO now has the fastest-growing tech spend in the C-suite, and it's projected to grow by between 9% and 11% from 2017 to 2022, compared with only 2.4% for agency services (see Figure 3).⁵ The cost of non-working technology dollars reaching the same levels of working media budgets is unsustainable. Disproportionate spending leaves CMOs little room to expand creatively and build upon their technology investments.
- › **Agency cost-cutting is hitting rock bottom.** CMOs seeking to continue reinvesting agency fees in technology or working media dollars must consider the adverse effects. Analysis of the US agency sector shows that the year-to-year percent change in agency revenue growth in 2017 barely kept up with the pace of inflation (see Figure 4). This hurts firms' business results and shareholder value. Kraft Heinz has cut its advertising budget by 39% since 2014 as part of its parent 3G Capital's extreme cost-cutting strategy.⁶ As a result of failing to properly invest in its brands, Kraft Heinz has lost half its share value, has written down \$15 billion on Kraft and Oscar Meyer, and has reduced its dividend by 36%.⁷

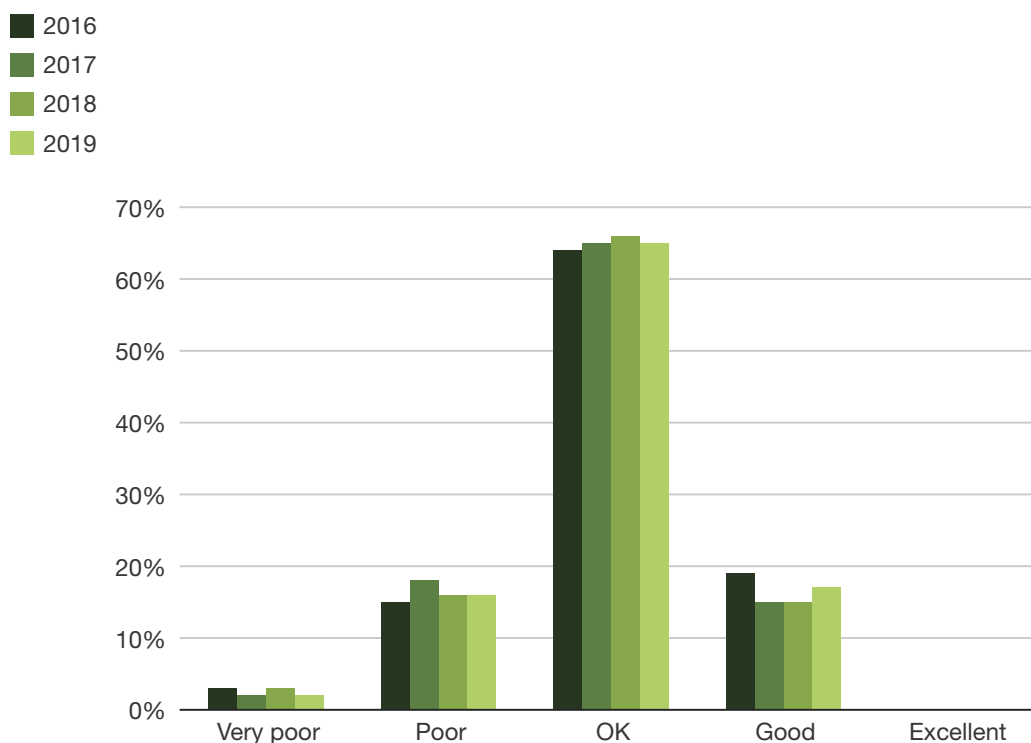
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- › **Insourcing is no longer cost-efficient.** CMOs looking for cost efficiencies by expanding in-house operations must look elsewhere. The capabilities driving in-house efficiencies have reached a ceiling: 97% of in-house agencies offer creative service, and 70% offer digital and video capabilities, according to joint research from Forrester/In House Agency Forum. Less prevalent capabilities, such as data sciences, eCommerce, media, and programmatic, are more costly and time-consuming operations to stand up: Bayer Consumer Health began the process of insourcing its digital media operation in October 2018, with the goal of bringing digital planning, buying, optimization, and analytics in-house by 2020.⁸

FIGURE 1 Brands Are Stuck In A CX Rut, Characterized By Four Years Of Flat Growth In The Forrester CX Index™

The distribution of US CX Index scores, 2016 to 2019



Base: 122,500 (2016), 118,992 (2017), 110,828 (2018), and 101,341 (2019) US online consumers (18+) who interacted with a specific brand within the past 12 months

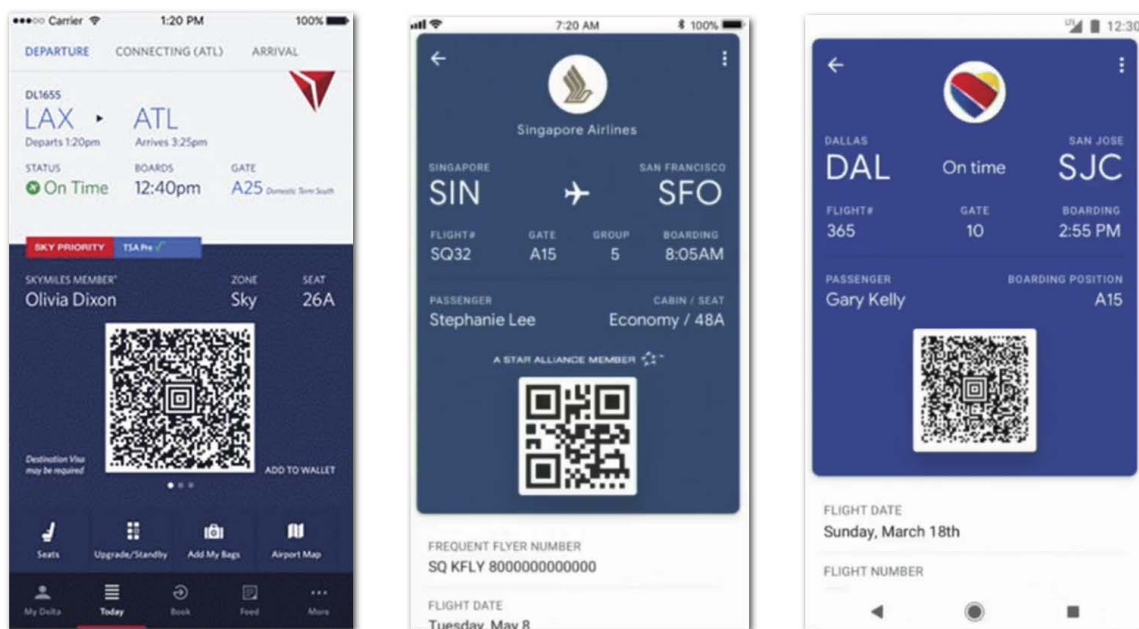
Source: Forrester Analytics Customer Experience Index Online Surveys, US Consumers 2016 to 2019

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FIGURE 2 Digital Sameness Prevents Consumers From Distinguishing One Experience From Another

2-1 Digital sameness in travel



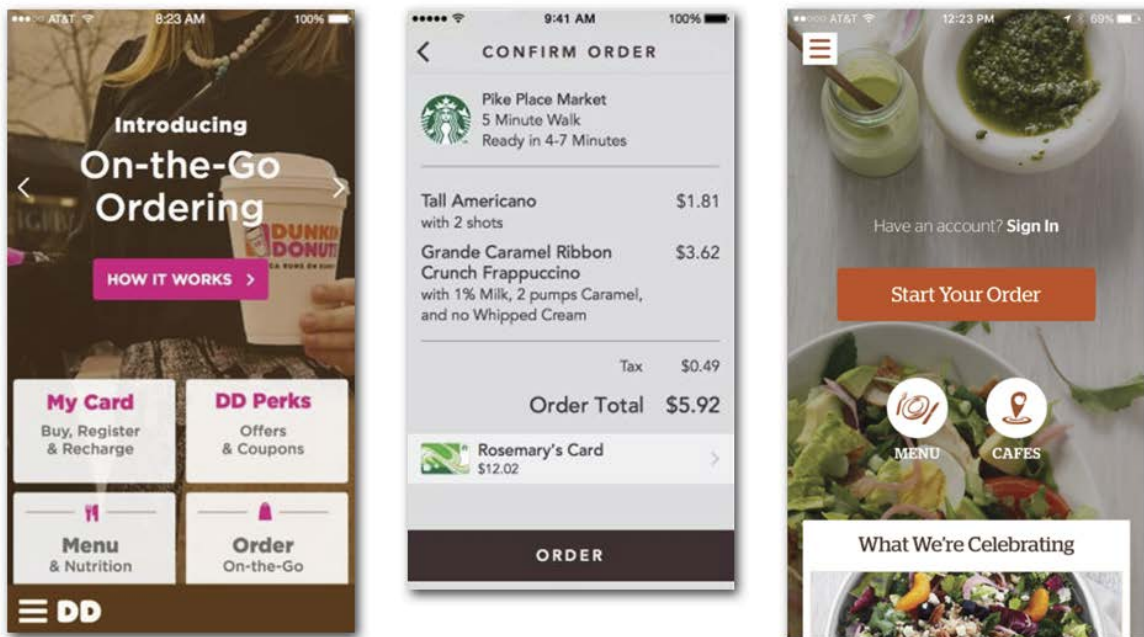
Source: Delta Airlines, Singapore Airlines, and Southwest Airlines mobile apps

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FIGURE 2 Digital Sameness Prevents Consumers From Distinguishing One Experience From Another (Cont.)

2-2 Digital sameness in quick-service restaurants



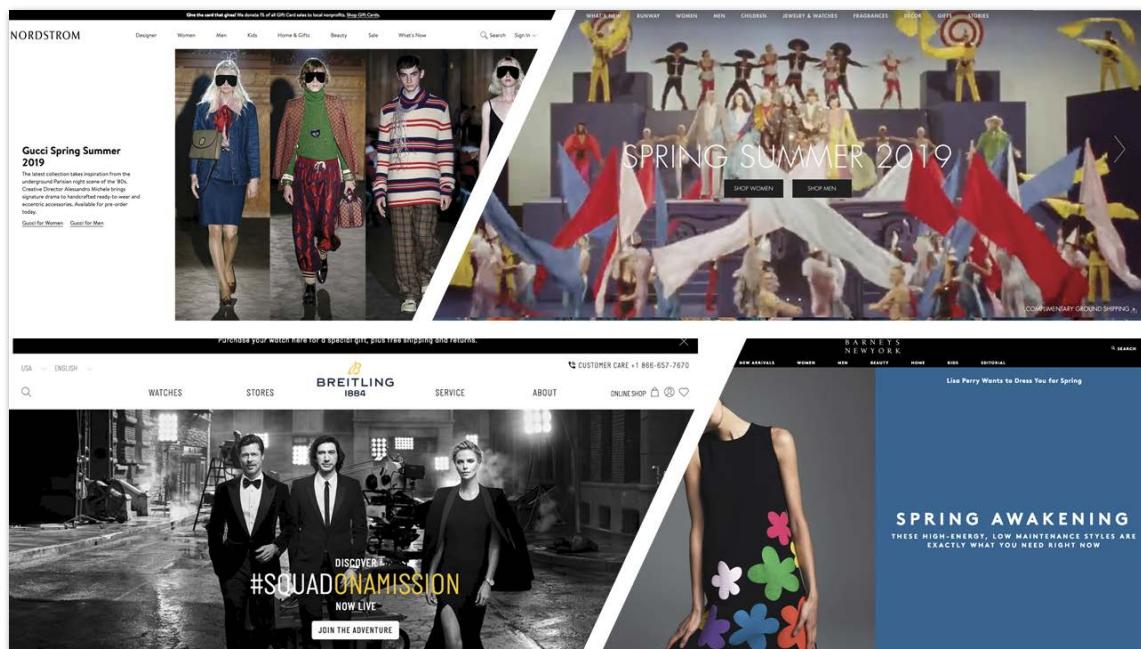
Source: Dunkin', Starbucks, and Panera Bread mobile apps

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FIGURE 2 Digital Sameness Prevents Consumers From Distinguishing One Experience From Another (Cont.)

2-3 Digital sameness in fashion



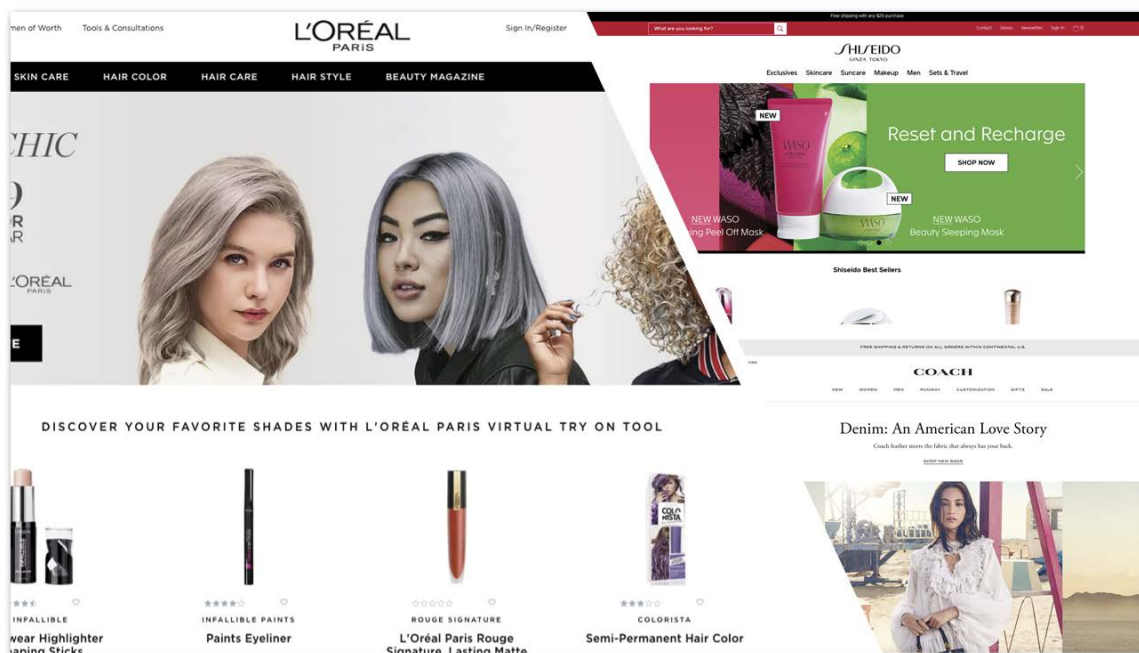
Source: Nordstrom, Gucci, Breitling, and Barney's websites

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FIGURE 2 Digital Sameness Prevents Consumers From Distinguishing One Experience From Another (Cont.)

2-4 Digital sameness in beauty

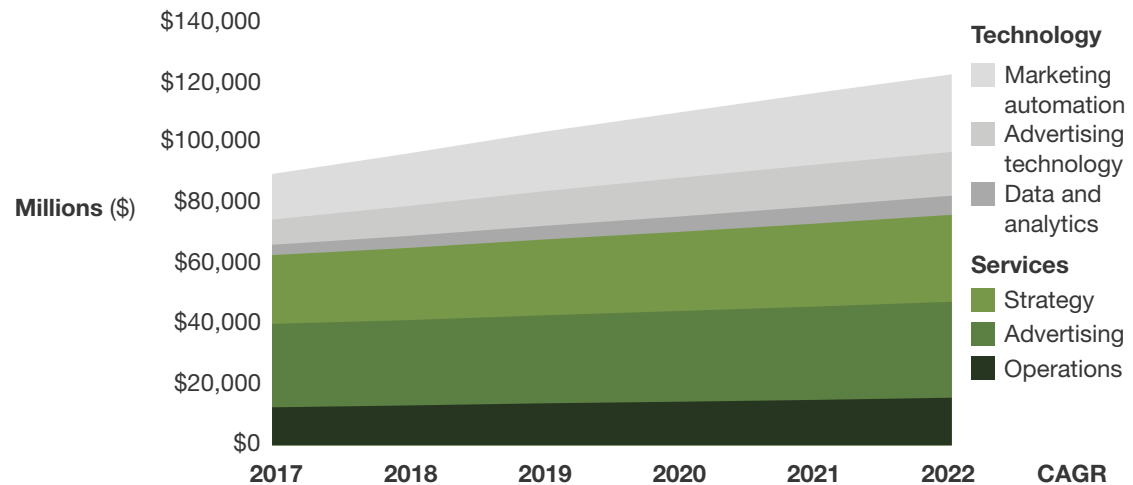


Source: L'Oréal, Shiseido, and Coach websites

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FIGURE 3 Spending On US Marketing Technology Is Forecast To Grow At 5x The Rate Of Spending On Creativity

Forecast: US marketing technology and services, 2017 to 2022



Technology

Data and analytics	\$3,404	\$3,967	\$4,498	\$5,077	\$5,684	\$6,324	10.9%
Advertising technology	\$8,317	\$9,870	\$11,432	\$12,771	\$13,770	\$14,429	9.6%
Marketing automation	\$15,046	\$17,348	\$19,638	\$21,602	\$23,654	\$25,617	9.3%

Services

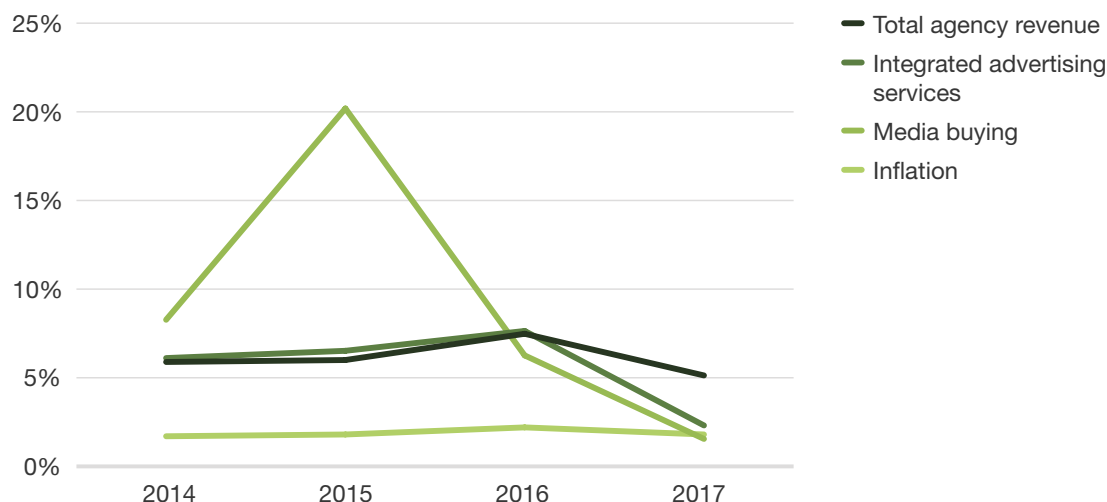
Operations	\$12,517	\$13,130	\$13,839	\$14,365	\$14,969	\$15,687	3.8%
Strategy	\$22,699	\$23,811	\$25,025	\$26,126	\$27,381	\$28,695	4.0%
Agency	\$27,527	\$28,160	\$29,033	\$29,933	\$30,802	\$31,664	2.4%

Total	\$89,510	\$96,287	\$103,467	\$109,874	\$116,258	\$122,416	5.4%
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Percentage of all marketing spend	30%	30%	31%	31%	31%	32%	
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FIGURE 4 US Agency Revenues Now Barely Grow At The Rate Of Inflation

Year-over-year growth of US agency services



Source: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Internal Revenue Service

Ignite Differentiated Growth With Agency Creativity

CMOs flocked to improving CX because of the exponential growth that convenient, customer-centric digital products and apps provided. Consumers' high expectations and the presence of disruptive digital technology made the emphasis on experience a force multiplier for revenue growth. But now that CX is mired in sameness, CMOs need to find a new growth elixir — a new way to uniquely attract and retain customers. "Technology has become a commodity, while culture, creativity, and strategy make all the difference," says Vittorio Bonori, CEO of Publicis Groupe Italy. CMOs must turn to creativity to differentiate their experience and spark growth. Those who invest in creativity can expect their brand experiences to:

- › **Create an indelible brand impression with consumers.** Great creative experiences cut through the clutter of sameness, create emotional attachment, and drive higher returns. "The work needs to connect with you on an emotional level — happiness, sadness, jealousy — to make a powerful connection for the brand," says Debbi Vandeven, chief creative officer for VMLY&R. Oreo and Wiz Khalifa created original music and video for Oreo's Playful 4 Life concept, celebrating the bonding moments that parents and children have with Oreos.⁹ Mondelez, Oreo's parent company, attributed its strong Q1 2019 performance in part to brand support for Oreos.¹⁰ Mondelez's and Oreo's approach shows how investments in creatively fostering brand promise generate company and shareholder value.

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- › **Infuse the brand promise with digital execution.** Creative experiences that embed the brand's purpose and values within a tech-fueled solution connect the uniqueness of the brand, the emotional needs of its customers, and the convenience of technology. MDC Partner's digital agency Instrument created Nike Audio Guided Runs for smartphones and smartwatches; they provide runners with contextually relevant feedback and inspiration that underscore Nike's "Just Do It" brand ethos.¹¹
- › **Attract more brand-interested prospects.** Great creative experiences generate more interest from prospective customers, growing the overall customer base. A steady stream of new customers entering your brand franchise helps scale growth and removes dependence on your organization's best customers. T-Mobile grew its subscriber base from 50 million in 2014 to 72.6 million in 2017: Key to that growth was the brand's adoption of its "un-carrier" mission to rid the industry of hidden fees and contracts, which it communicated through its marketing campaigns and experiences.¹² Consequently, T-Mobile has delivered higher shareholder returns than AT&T, Sprint, and Verizon.¹³
- › **Retain more brand-loyal customers.** Great creative experiences show customers the benefits of their affiliation and patronage, preserving the overall customer base. And the purpose of the brand, infused with technology and communication, enhances this customer lifetime value strategy. Digitas completely redesigned healthcare provider Teladoc's mobile experience with custom technology to connect users to physicians via video, resulting in a 95% customer satisfaction rating.¹⁴

The Image That Marketing Creates Promotes Growth Across The Entire Organization

The image and positive company reputation that marketers and their partners produce impact customers, prospects, and especially the employees who bring the total brand experience to life. Organizations that use agency creativity to enhance their company's reputation can expect to:

- › **Recruit top talent.** Creativity helps organizations build a culture that attracts talent. Inspiration is inextricably tied to the brand's ability to impart a belief in the core mission and vision and show that the company is forward-looking and innovative.¹⁵ Adobe gives its employees and managers a high degree of autonomy in order to encourage creativity and avoid micromanagement.¹⁶ Adobe's commitment to a culture of creativity helps it attract and hire a highly talented workforce.
- › **Retain valuable workers.** Creativity helps organizations establish an inspiring purpose that retains talent. Showing clearly how their work contributes to the company's mission and values is key to empowering and retaining employees.¹⁷ Patagonia hires employees with environmental activist tendencies to live their brand in their daily work, a strategy that results in a 4% employee turnover rate — compared with a category average of 13%.¹⁸
- › **Increase productivity.** Creativity helps organizations develop more diverse and productive workplaces. Empowering employees with a good environment in which they can be productive leads to profitability. McKinsey & Company has demonstrated that companies in the top quartile for ethnic/cultural diversity on executive teams were 33% more likely to have industry-leading profitability and 27% more likely to have superior value creation.¹⁹

Calibrate Your Technology And Creative Budgets With Our ROI Model

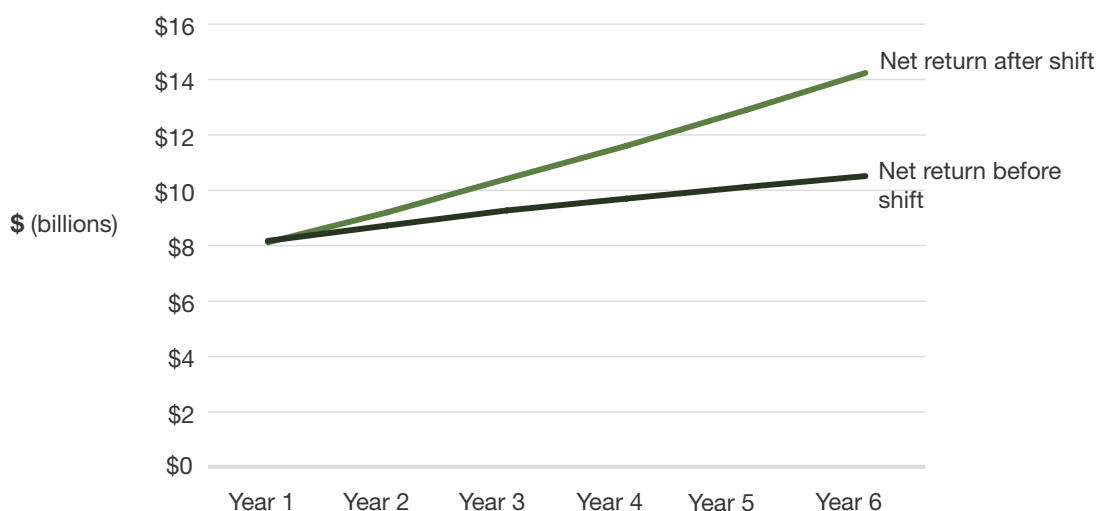
We modeled the return on investment (ROI) for agency creativity using Forrester's marketing technology and services spending projection for 2017 to 2022 and calculated returns based upon improving CX performance in the Forrester CX Index. Forrester's spending projection shows the disproportionate amount of technology dollars dedicated to technology, with compound annual growth rates of 9.3% for martech, 9.6% for adtech, and only 2.4% for agencies.²⁰ Analysis of CX Index performance shows that improving your CX Index score by one point produces revenue growth.²¹ Our ROI model demonstrates that shifting some tech investment to agency creativity will:

- › **Produce higher returns compared with current tech spending levels.** Recalibrating creative budgets results in higher returns. ROI will accumulate over time as CMOs ramp up creative differentiation and draw down baseline technology. Forrester's model shows incremental growth beginning in year two and ultimately bringing 18% higher total ROI for the same budget, resulting in a total US market return of \$66 billion by year six (see Figure 5).
- › **Adjust spending in declining tech categories.** As adtech matures, investing in creativity allows CMOs to more effectively repurpose portions of their budgets. GroupM recently produced analysis showing a 5% decline in adtech during Q1 2019 and an overall 19% delta between adtech and martech growth.²² An example of this decline is adtech firm Sizmek recently filing for bankruptcy protection and portions of Sizmek's offering being sold off to Zeta Global Holdings and Amazon.²³
- › **Provide firms with a multiyear growth plan.** Forrester's model gives firms and CMOs a six-year plan to differentiate, grow, and replace their baseline CX strategy (see Figure 6). Investments in year one and two are moderate — 10% and 12%, respectively — to enable a transition period. Subsequent years appropriately ramp up creative investments to provide increased growth annually. This gives CMOs targets for reallocating dollars and the expected annual returns for doing so.

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FIGURE 5 Investing In Agency Creativity Will Produce Higher ROI Over A Six-Year Period

The expected six-year US net return before/after shifting marketing budget from technology to creativity



Source: Forrester's Q2 2019 US Agency ROI Model

FIGURE 6 Shifting Dollars Into Creativity Provides CMOs With A Six-Year Growth Plan

From:	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Advertising technology	4%	7%	10%	13%	15%	17%
Marketing technology	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	3%
To:						
Agency	5%	8%	11%	15%	17%	20%
Return:						
% growth from shift	-0.7%	5.4%	12.3%	19.7%	27.4%	35.4%

Source: Forrester's Q2 2019 US Agency ROI Model

Recommendations

Shift \$18 Billion From Technology To Creativity

Your next wave of growth hinges on your willingness to rethink investments and shift resources out of baseline technology and into creative customized engagements. This will yield a more proportionate approach to technology and creative service providers as well as the right balance between differentiation and digital. While you will need to keep investing in foundational technology like data, analytics, and marketing automation to service the overall organization, this isn't true for all technologies. Immediately calibrate technology and creativity spend by:

- › **Auditing third-party adtech investments for redundancies.** Look to more mature, established categories of technology to identify what services to right-size. Forrester's assessment of the adtech market recommends divesting from maturing areas like mobile and social advertising platforms.²⁴ GroupM's Brian Wieser, who recently completed analysis showing that adtech players contracted by 5% during Q1 2019, suggests adtech is more standardized and thus more susceptible to cuts: "Once you get to a place of standardization, it becomes easier to drive out inefficiencies," he says.²⁵
- › **Hiring tech-savvy agencies capable of applying creativity to all touchpoints.** Your goal should be to work with agencies that excel in both customer obsession and creative differentiation. This is easier said than done, given the uniqueness of those skill sets. Start by vetting agencies to determine that they incorporate CX and brand strategy capabilities into their process. Barkley, a full-service creative agency, designs in-store and online experiences to delight customers of its client Dairy Queen as part of its "Fan Food" brand campaign.²⁶
- › **Leveraging agencies' growing technology stack.** Select the services providers that can best integrate and implement creativity, data, and media using their technology — or demand your agency does so. Although agencies have spent well over \$12 billion on technology and data company acquisitions since 2014, not all of them use that technology to support better creativity.²⁷ One agency's chief strategy officer told us they would be hard pressed to convince creative teams to use the insights and information coming out of the holding company's data platform.²⁸
- › **Putting creativity at the heart of the experience.** Rather than bolting creative on at the end of the process as an established look or defined list of deliverables, initiate the project with creative problem solving to help define the problem and craft a solution at the start.²⁹ Doing so engages your agencies and your marketing department throughout. This speeds up execution and helps create more brand- and business-knowledgeable employees and agencies. "When looking at a digital transformation, it's about injecting the experience with creativity and providing the experience in the right context that ties back to the goals of the customer," explains Ricardo Salema, chief creative officer for Isobar in the US.

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- › **Scaling the creative mindset across marketing, CX, and operations.** Cross-pollinate CX, marketing, and creative skills in the marketing department, operations, and IT. This requires careful collaboration with your COO and CIO counterparts. Start by identifying opportunities to impact products and content that lack branded elements. “Just because so much focus is on digital doesn’t mean we should ignore brand within this relentless creation and distribution of content,” says Wesley ter Haar, founder and chief operating officer of MediaMonks.

What It Means

Creative Differentiation Becomes The Organizing Principle For Growth

When brands pivot to deliver creative differentiation in all their digital, physical, and communication experiences, marketing will fundamentally realign around creative problem solving as its core offering. This realignment will not be limited to Madison Avenue. Silicon Valley and corporate America will embrace creative differentiation as an organization principle for their structure, process, and offerings — or pay the price. When technology and creativity spend are balanced:

1. **CMOs take over customer experience by relabeling it creative experience.** Marketers wanting to signal their understanding of differentiation as a strategy for growth will do so by incorporating the new CX — creative experience — into their lexicon. A key characteristic of this new moniker is the broadening of the channels and executions associated with it. Where customer experience is predominantly associated with owned digital channels, creative experience includes all conceivable brand touchpoints: advertising, content, experiential, digital products, customer service, and more.
2. **CMOs become fully accountable for the ethics of their marketing budgets.** CMOs will select services providers and budgeting models that fully comply with their firm’s values. CVS Health CMO Norman de Greve’s move to make CVS the first brand to pledge not to hire agencies that also have tobacco clients is only the tip of this iceberg.³⁰ Firms will dislodge creative services providers and their own budgeting practices that take advantage of freelance or gig economy workers earning unlivable wages. Low-cost production providers/platforms that rely on networks of contract workers who don’t receive the compensation or benefits of permanent employees will fall to the wayside. Just as we have seen in platform businesses like Uber and Lyft, the demand for ethical employment will necessitate investments in agency creativity.
3. **Agency holding companies wake up and reinvest in their own creativity.** After spending upward of \$12 billion on data technology and acquisitions, agency holding companies will focus on creative investments. The most progressive holding companies will strengthen their creative offerings (as they already have with media and digital) by embedding data technology into the creative agencies. Omnicom Media Group’s recent move to relocate programmatic into US media agencies is emblematic of what is to come on the creative side. Holding companies unwilling to integrate their high-ticket purchases will be at a disadvantage in new business. Agencies unwilling to embrace data-driven creativity will fall victim to consolidation or merciless M&A.

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4. **Agency creative departments fire and hire to embrace a data-driven creative process.**

Agencies will clean house to get rid of both the perception that agency creative departments view data and research as an inhibitor of creative output and the practices that reinforce this perception. Creative departments that ignore insights and activation strategies are a liability that agencies can no longer afford, given marketers' need for differentiation, performance-driven marketing, and a return on the billions of dollars they've invested in their technology. "A brand story really works if the analytics illustrate what we're doing with the brand story in the first place," says Scott Morgan, president of creative agency Brunner.

5. **Tech giants scramble to bolster their creative capabilities.** Technology companies like Adobe, Amazon Web Services, Google, Oracle, and Salesforce will shift away from their partner strategies to purchase creative service providers to better position themselves in the customer engagement market. This disruption in their go-to-market strategies will result in new tiers of services to substantiate the departure from their traditional partner approach.

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Supplemental Material

Survey Methodology

For the Forrester Analytics Customer Experience Index Online Survey, US Consumers 2019, Forrester conducted an online survey fielded in February through May 2019 of 101,341 US individuals ages 18 to 88. For results based on a randomly chosen sample of this size ($n = 101,341$), there is 95% confidence that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 0.22% of what they would be if the entire population of US adults who are online weekly or more often had been surveyed. The final data set was stacked by brand (260 US brands) and weighted by age, gender, region, income, and broadband adoption to represent 195,194 weighted respondents answering for all brands.

Bases: For each industry in 2019, the number of US online adults (18+) who interacted with a specific brand within the past 12 months is as follows: airlines: 8,376; auto/home insurers: 14,060; auto manufacturers (luxury): 6,525; auto manufacturers (mass market): 10,915; banks (direct): 7,420; banks (multichannel): 13,334; credit card issuers: 10,391; direct brokerages: 8,771; federal government agencies: 11,912; health insurers: 12,745; hotels: 25,871; investment firms: 7,969; rental cars: 7,448; retailers (digital): 8,352; retailers (multichannel): 32,290; wireless service providers: 8,804.

Companies Interviewed For This Report

We would like to thank the individuals from the following companies who generously gave their time during the research for this report.

Accenture Interactive	Hearts & Sciences
Barkley	Instrument
BBDO	mcgarybowen
Blue Shield of California	MediaMonks
Brunner	Mitsubishi Motors
BSSP	Nike
DDB	Omnicom
Dentsu Aegis Network	Omnicom Group
Digitas	Publicis
Energy BBDO	RB Health
GroupM	The Richards Group
GSD&M	VMLY&R

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Endnotes

- ¹ See the Forrester report "[Desperate For Differentiation: Creativity Galvanizes The Total Brand Experience.](#)"
- ² See the Forrester report "[The US Customer Experience Index, 2019.](#)"
- ³ QSR: quick-service restaurants.
- ⁴ See the Forrester report "[Pick The Omnichannel Media Management Model That Enables Your Customer Obsession Efforts.](#)"
- ⁵ See the Forrester report "[The US Marketing Technology And Services Outlook, 2017 To 2022.](#)"
- ⁶ Kraft Heinz spent 39% less in ad budget in 2017 than they spent in 2014, the year before they merged. Source: Avi Dan, "The Kraft Heinz Mess Is A Warning To Advertisers: You Can't Cost-Cut Your Way To Growth," Forbes, March 6, 2019 (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/avidan/2019/03/06/the-kraft-heinz-mess-is-a-warning-to-advertisers-you-cant-cost-cut-your-way-to-growth/#60074748f337>).
- ⁷ Source: Lauren Hirsch, "Kraft Heinz's new CEO inherits challenges left behind by cost-cutting," CNBC, April 23, 2019 (<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/04/23/kraft-heinzs-new-ceo-inherits-challenges-left-behind-by-cost-cutting.html>).
- ⁸ Source: Josh Palau, "What People Get Wrong About In-Housing," AdExchanger, March 11, 2019. (<https://adexchanger.com/brand-aware/what-people-get-wrong-about-in-housing/>).
- ⁹ Source: Oreo (<https://www.oreo.com/>).
- ¹⁰ Source: "Mondelez International Reports Q1 Results," Nasdaq, April 30, 2019 (<https://www.nasdaq.com/press-release/mondelez-international-reports-q1-results-20190430-01379>).
- ¹¹ Source: Forrester briefing with Instrument and "Nike Audio Guided Runs," Instrument (<https://www.instrument.com/work/nike-audio-guided-runs>).
- ¹² Source: Aaron Pressman, "Inside T-Mobile's Big, Brash Comeback," Fortune, February 15, 2018 (<http://fortune.com/2018/02/15/best-companies-t-mobile/>).
- ¹³ Source: Aaron Pressman, "Inside T-Mobile's Big, Brash Comeback," Fortune, February 15, 2018 (<http://fortune.com/2018/02/15/best-companies-t-mobile/>) and S&P.com.
- ¹⁴ Source: Forrester briefing with Digitas, May 2019.
- ¹⁵ See the Forrester report "[Introducing Forrester's Employee Experience Index.](#)"
- ¹⁶ Source: Sujan Patel, "10 Examples of Companies With Fantastic Cultures," Entrepreneur, August 6, 2015 (<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/249174>).
- ¹⁷ See the Forrester report "[Introducing Forrester's Employee Experience Index.](#)"
- ¹⁸ Source: Scott Mautz, "Patagonia Has Only 4 Percent Employee Turnover Because They Value This 1 Thing So Much," Inc., March 30, 2019 (<https://www.inc.com/scott-mautz/how-can-patagonia-have-only-4-percent-worker-turnover-hint-they-pay-activist-employees-bail.html>).
- ¹⁹ Source: Vivian Hunt, Lareina Yee, Sara Prince, and Sundiatu Dixon-Fyle, "Delivering through diversity," McKinsey & Company, January 2018 (<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/delivering-through-diversity>).
- ²⁰ See the Forrester report "[The US Marketing Technology And Services Outlook, 2017 To 2022.](#)"
- ²¹ See the Forrester report "[How Customer Experience Drives Business Growth, 2018.](#)"

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²² Source: Forrester briefing with GroupM, May 2019 and Brian Wieser, “A 19% Growth Gap Reflects AdTech Maturity, Increasing Importance of MarTech,” GroupM blog, April 29, 2019 (<https://www.groupm.com/news/19-growth-gap-reflects-adtech-maturity-increasing-importance-martech>).

²³ Source: Gerrit De Vynck and Lizette Chapman, “Amazon Is Close to Buying Sizmek’s Ad-Serving Technology,” Bloomberg, May 17, 2019 (<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-05-16/amazon-said-to-be-close-to-buying-sizmek-s-ad-serving-technology>).

²⁴ See the Forrester report “[The Forrester Tech Tide™: Adtech For B2C Marketers, Q2 2018.](#)”

²⁵ Source: Forrester briefing with GroupM, May 2019.

²⁶ Source: Forrester briefing with Barkley, April 2019.

²⁷ Forrester is referring to the 2014 purchase of Sapient for \$2.2 billion; the 2016 purchase of Merkle for \$1.5 billion; the 2018 purchase of Acxiom for \$2.3 billion; the 2019 purchase of Epsilon for \$4.4 billion; and the \$2 billion that agencies have spent developing technology over the past decade. Many agencies have told us in confidence that they have yet to integrate this technology.

²⁸ Forrester briefing with a creative agency, April 2019.

²⁹ See the Forrester report “[The Forrester Wave™: Creative Advertising Technologies, Q4 2018.](#)”

³⁰ Source: Lindsay Rittenhouse, “CVS Health becomes first brand to take the ‘Quit Big Tobacco’ pledge,” AdAge, April 30, 2019 (<https://adage.com/article/agency-news/cvs-health-becomes-first-brand-take-quit-big-tobacco-pledge/2167906>).

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