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Confidence in Digital Grows, but Budget Constraints Remain a Major Challenge for Hong Kong Marketers

New Adobe research recommends marketers optimize strategies and improve digital proficiency

Hong Kong — May 11, 2015 — New research released by Adobe with CMO Council, shows that Hong Kong marketers' confidence in the value of digital marketing continues to grow but budget limitations remain a major concern.

Adobe announced key findings from the APAC Digital Directions report, a deep-dive into strategies, mandates and challenges and a companion piece to the CMO Council and Adobe's ongoing Digital Marketing Performance Dashboard. The report reveals findings based on data collected from 648 respondents in Hong Kong, China, South Korea, Australia, Singapore and India. More than half of the companies surveyed were head-quartered in Asia Pacific (56%), and 57% of respondents worked in organisations with turnover of US\$1.1 billion or greater. Respondents came from industry sectors including IT, retail, banking and travel and hospitality sectors among others.

Hong Kong marketers rate themselves as doing an average job

According to the report, Hong Kong marketers rate their own digital proficiency as average (39%), citing constrained budgets being the biggest obstacle to their ability to implement meaningful digital strategies to improve business performance. This was slightly higher than the regional average (36%), where 22% and nearly 5% of APAC marketers rated their proficiency levels as good or very good respectively.

Optimize strategy for business performance

Enabling continuous touch points and engagement opportunities with customers (66%); acquiring, converting and retaining customers more cost-effectively (49%); as well as providing knowledge and insight for better targeting and response (41%), are the top three most important ways that digital marketing programs have helped business according to respondents. Hong Kong marketers believe that additional digital marketing improvements and maturity could impact their business by creating a more customer-centric and responsive organization (58%) and making them a more agile, opportunistic and innovative company (41%).

In terms of making a business case for digital marketing expenditures, Hong Kong marketers are more focused on reporting on previous campaign results and measuring the KPIs of key digital campaigns (76%, the highest result in APAC).

2015 Top Challenges

When it comes to constraints, budget limitations (60%), limited digital agency capability, knowledge or experience (51%), and the inability to find staff with the right skills and experience to execute the strategy (40%) are the three greatest challenges facing Hong Kong organizations in executing digital campaigns in APAC.

Working with marketing teams to determine mix and budgets (72%) is the main factor that decides budgets for digital marketing investments. 33% of Hong Kong marketers expect to spend less than 10% of their total marketing budget on digital marketing.

"The group that is most dramatically under-investing in digital by allocating less than 10% of its budgets, is a relatively small one. In fact, compared to the same time last year, 74% of respondents have increased their digital marketing budget allocation. This suggests Hong Kong marketers generally have confidence in digital marketing," said Yew Hwee Ng, General Manager of Adobe Greater China.

2015 Top Digital Priorities

Strengthening digital marketing content strategy (70%), social media optimization, including boosting community growth, engagement and content (51%) and richer, deeper customer profiling and insights are top priorities specific to digital marketing in the next 12 months.

Recommendations

"Leading a digital transformation for your business is a complex and challenging task, but the rewards are great. Early adopters have now consolidated their position as leaders and are able to prove value to their organisations and industries, creating a virtuous cycle of funding and resources. Those companies use customer intelligence in an insightful way, are leading with data; measuring, predicting and using insights across multiple channels to raise the bar by creating new experiences to satisfy customers," said Paul Robson, President, Adobe Asia Pacific.

Liz Miller, Senior Vice President of Marketing at CMO Council, agrees. "Digital has truly come of age. Respondents are confirming that digital enables additional touchpoints with customers (66%), delivers more cost-effective customer acquisition (47%), improves customer loyalty (41%) and improves the overall customer experience and responsiveness (33%). The challenge now is to turn our attention to extracting greater value and insights from data to provide ideas and knowledge that improve product, services and customer engagement and provide the foundations for a stronger internal pitch to boost investment and resourcing."

Helpful Links and References

- [APAC Digital Directions Report](#)
- [APAC Digital Directions Infographic](#)
- [Digital Dialogue Blog](#)
- Join the [live webinar](#) for an in-depth review of the research results.
- Read about [Adobe Marketing Cloud](#)

About the CMO Council

The CMO Council is dedicated to high-level knowledge exchange, thought leadership and personal relationship building among senior corporate marketing leaders and brand decision-makers across a wide-range of global industries. The CMO Council's 8,500 members control more than \$450 billion in aggregated annual marketing expenditures and run complex, distributed marketing and sales operations worldwide. In total, the CMO Council and its strategic interest communities include more than 20,000 global executives in more than 110 countries covering multiple industries, segments and markets. Regional chapters and advisory boards are active in the Americas, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Middle East, India and Africa. The Council's strategic interest groups include the Coalition to Leverage and Optimize Sales Effectiveness (CLOSE), LoyaltyLeaders.org, Marketing Supply Chain Institute, Customer Experience Board, Market Sense-Ability Center, Digital Marketing Performance Institute, GeoBranding Center, and the Forum to Advance the Mobile Experience (FAME). More information on the CMO Council is available at www.cmocouncil.org.

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