

2021

Demand
Spring
2021-22
Marketing
Predictions

-2022



At Demand Spring, we pride ourselves on helping marketers stand taller. With that rise should ideally come the ability to peek over the treetops and see the road ahead. But the reality is that little in life, or business, or marketing for that matter, is predictable.

Even if predictions feel like risky business in these ever-unpredictable times, it doesn't mean we can't ride the tailwinds toward impacting **change, evolution, transformation and growth**. We've taken those tailwinds to heart to help us shape and share some predictions for the remainder of 2021 and through to 2022. We hope our reflections and predictions for marketers over the coming months provide you with insight to carry you through...



The Fall of the Chief Revenue Officer by 2022

PREDICTION –
01

WHY NOW:

Today's CMO needs to be a revenue driver, a customer champion, an alignment conductor, a brand builder, a digital savant, and a primary face of the organization. They have one of the most strategic roles in an organization. So, why would they not report directly into the CEO?

While we are huge advocates of marketing and sales alignment, we do not believe the CMO should report into a sales leader wearing a CRO hat. We believe that as we move through 2021, CEOs will recognize that having direct access to their CMO as one of their most strategic leaders is an imperative for short- and long-term growth. Those who proceed with a CRO structure risk turning marketing into a support function.



Roadmap for 2021 -2022

AN ACTIONABLE PLAN FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2021 AND INTO 2022 TO PREPARE FOR THIS REALITY.

01.

CEOs who have implemented a CRO role should reassess the focus and growth they are seeing in their short- and long-term go-to-market strategy and their brand building efforts.

02.

The CRO should be held accountable for KPIs that focus on a blend of traditional short-term sales goals and long-term brand, customer experience and growth objectives.

03.

CEOs who have not yet implemented a CRO structure should resist the urge to put this role in place as a seemingly simple solution for what is likely a bigger picture business problem.

04.

CEO's should prioritize continuing to have CMOs report directly to them. They need to hold the CMO accountable for the revenue driving outcomes CMO's can and should be leading in 2021 and beyond.

What this looks like in 2022

CEOs will begin decoupling the sales and marketing leadership roles, with each reporting into them. They will recognize the unique expertise and counsel the CMO brings to the C-Suite table and the impact that their direct autonomy has on building the brand, the customer experience, and the long-term growth strategy.



The Rise of the Employer Brand will Drive Business Growth

PREDICTION -
02

WHY NOW:

In our 2020 Predictions Report we talked about the rise of the “Glassdoor Effect” on the company brand, and the direct correlation between the reputation of a company and the experience employees have working for that

company. In 2021, the employee experience will rise as a key indicator of top talent retention or flight, and this trend shows no signs of slowing in our digital first, work (primarily) from home world.



Roadmap for 2021 -2022

AN ACTIONABLE PLAN FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2021 AND INTO 2022 TO PREPARE FOR THIS REALITY.

01.

CMO's will falter in their 2021 goals to drive authentic brand engagement or build any kind of purpose-driven brand culture if the employee experience is a largely negative one.

02.

Employees are looking for a sense of meaning in their roles, and real autonomy in deciding how and where their work gets done. They want to take pride in their work and in their employer.

03.

CMO's need to actively drive an authentic sense of belonging in their digital first business culture and with their remotely located teams.

04.

Top marketing talent is hard to find and even harder to retain if the company culture is toxic, exploitative, or exclusionary. CMO's cannot succeed without the right people in place to turn the 2021 brand vision into reality. CMO's can do two things here: conduct a SWOT analysis of your senior team's communication and collaboration style to weed out any interpersonal challenges that are slowing the team down, and consider a full marketing organizational alignment audit to ensure you've got the right people on the right seats on the bus, heading in the right direction.

What this looks like in 2022

By 2022, the best CMO's will know how to successfully build a company of brand champions to connect, engage and inspire customers to come on board and stay for a while— a long while.

They will be leveraging data from both NPS scores as well as employee sentiment surveys to identify brand growth obstacles and clearly articulate the employee voice. They will ensure there's a healthy dose of humanity infused into how the brand comes to life, both inside the building and out in the marketplace.

If CMO's are on a path to own the customer experience, driving a more authentic and effective employer brand is key in 2022 to achieve that longer range goal.



Live Customer Events Return but Event ROI is Forever Changed

PREDICTION -
03

WHY NOW:

Here we are almost half-way through 2021, and two things remain true in the B2B events space:

- 1. Planning for a live customer event still feels fraught with risk.**
- 2. Despite the risk many are still yearning for the return of the live customer event.**

It's easy to understand why: practically speaking, most B2B marketers will admit that, as an industry, we've long since over-invested time, money and resources into our live events. So many marketing leaders are anxious to bring back the "all hands on deck" galvanizing rally cry that their annual live customer event represents for their entire organization. Everyone from marketing to sales to customer success to the finance team seemed to understand that there had to be an investment in live events to guarantee that elusive goal: customer experience.

Beyond the "but we've always done it this way" live event tradition that too few marketing leaders have been willing to challenge, there's also the issue of raw humanity at work, and how much we **ALL** want to get some of that back to normal. Our past live events and gatherings hold many of our most cherished memories of having fun at work: the flight to a great hotel, the expense account, the splashy celebrity keynote speaker, the customer dinner, late night closing out the hotel bar... remember those days?

We do, too.



Roadmap for 2021 -2022

AN ACTIONABLE PLAN FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2021 AND INTO 2022 TO PREPARE FOR THIS REALITY.

01.

The roadmap here might feel like a boring journey along a two dimensional digital highway, but 2021 is clearly shaping up to be another year of doing the best we can with what we've got. And you know what? What we've got is actually and quite possibly much better than we realize.

02.

Many marketing leaders have embraced the great unknown of the "live virtual" customer conference, and when conceived and executed with thoughtful planning and aligned goals and objectives across marketing and sales organizations, these new digital events can actually raise the bar on what it means to connect with customers in a digital first world.

03.

Use your live virtual event plan to create a new rally cry inside your organization—one where marketing, sales and customer success all understand how live yet virtual events can create new connective tissue throughout the organization to drive customer centricity.

What this looks like in 2022

By 2022, customers will likely be able to travel again from a logistical perspective, but that doesn't mean that they will budget for it, prioritize for it, or feel comfortable with it as they have in the past.

For marketing teams that found success leveraging digital event engagement platforms, don't be too quick to abandon the medium in 2022. Consider keeping your live customer event as a digital experience in 2022. To reconnect with live events, instead think about restructuring your 2022 field marketing goals to create mini regional experiences that allow three-dimensional customer connection in a more intimate and conversational way: a series of regional dinners, for example, to serve as a pre event "micro-lead-up" to your live digital annual event. We predict this blended strategy will yield the highest overall ROI from a hybrid approach to events in 2022 and beyond.



Google Eliminates Third-Party Cookie Support and Marketing Survives the Impact

PREDICTION -
04

WHY NOW:

Cookie-based behavioral web profiling has been the target of privacy concern for some time now. Browsers like Safari and Firefox have already blocked third-party cookies by default, but this spring represents the moment that Google gets on board and officially begins phasing out third-party cookies on its browser.

This is a big moment for digital marketers to note. Third-party cookies have driven a huge percentage of the web ads we see and we place (not to mention martech capabilities), and no one can entirely predict what the cookie crumbled future will look like for marketers trying to master personalization in a post third-party cookie world.



Roadmap for 2021 -2022

AN ACTIONABLE PLAN FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2021 AND INTO 2022 TO PREPARE FOR THIS REALITY.

01.

For 2021, digital marketing leaders need to conceptualize engagement differently to be ready for the changes on the horizon. The death of the third-party cookie does not mean that marketers cannot find personalized ways to engage online.

02.

Plan for web engagement strategies that will be more focused on content and context than on demonstrated behavior online.

03.

Future online customer engagement needs to be more about conversation and less about investigation to understand digital buyer intent.

04.

If behavioral targeting is going to lose the battle to the future of web privacy, it's time to pivot to contextual web based advertising now so we are ready for the brave new cookie-free-world later.

What this looks like in 2022

CMO's will rebalance their digital marketing spend and reallocate funds from the martech budget to areas that focus on creating and delivering engaging content. This will mean taking a hard look at how well your content marketing tools are working for you, and refreshing your content marketing stack to stand up to customers' augmented content marketing needs.

From a technology standpoint, marketers will reach a level of maturity with the martech they've been using in 2020 and 2021 due to the digital surge brought on by the pandemic. With better analytics, marketers will be able to see what is producing higher ROI and what they can afford to let go of; enabling them to spend on other areas of marketing, such as content.

ABM strategies will shift with the removal of the third-party cookie, specifically when it comes to digital ads. Cookie based behavioral targeting will be replaced with keyword or keyword contextual-based advertising. And with this move back to contextual advertising means marketers will be doubling-down on creating and distributing relevant content.



As the wise saying goes, “The only constant in life is change.” And it goes without saying that change is nothing new to marketers. We hope these predictions and roadmap recommendations help guide you and your team on your continuous journey of marketing transformation. Model these predictions into your own marketing vision, mission and map for Revenue Marketing growth. Challenge your organization to discuss and debate these predictions and build plans to harness the power and opportunities inherent in these changes. And if you need help mastering the pace of change in the ever-unpredictable world of marketing today, reach out to us at info@demandspring.com.

ABOUT DEMAND SPRING

Demand Spring is an integrated Revenue Marketing consultancy that helps marketing organizations stand taller by enabling them to scale their ability to contribute to pipeline and revenue.

Our team of Revenue Marketing Strategists, Content Marketers, and Marketing Technologists help our clients transform their marketing practices, deliver exceptional customer experiences, and drive revenue.