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FUTURE OF DIGITAL FOR AGENCIES

Objectives to Implementation

Tiffany St James

I'm the Chief AI Officer of Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and a Leadership Psychologist.

A digital strategist working with large national businesses, global organisations and governments to augment digital capability. I've been recognised as one of the Top 25 women to have changed British Digital Industry over the last 25 years.

I've run my own Management Consultancies for 18 years and am the Former Head of Social Media for the UK Government across 22 Government Departments, running Digital Transformation programmes for a decade within the UK Government from no email to open data.

I'm the digital training business partner to the Alliance of Independnt Agencies , undertaking digital and AI training.

Cabinet Office

City of Westminster

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

Google

MTV

PRUDENTIAL

National Trust

BIG LOTTERY FUND

TalkTalk

4

telegraphmediagroup

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Agenda

09:30 ARRIVAL Tea and Coffee

- Global Mega Trends and Global Challenges
- Agency Trends

11:00 to 11:15 BREAK

- How Agencies need to evolve

12:45 to 13:45 LUNCH

- Digital Services
- Future Digital Services

15:00 – 15:15 BREAK

- AI Roadmap
- People Skills

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Global Mega Trends

What do we mean by a Global Mega Trend?

What are the Key Characteristics of Global Megatrends?

1. Long-term Impact: They span decades and are not limited to short-term disruptions.

2. Global Influence: They affect multiple countries and regions, transcending borders.

3. Multi-dimensional: They cut across industries, disciplines, and societal dimensions.

4. Transformative: They have the potential to reshape norms, systems, and ways of living.

5. Complex Interactions: They often interconnect, amplifying or influencing one another.

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What are the Global Megatrends?

- Consider individually, write down your top 1, 2 or 3

- Share with your table

- Pick your top 3 as a table

- There are no wrong answers.

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Four Global Megatrends

- Ageing

- Digitisation

- Decarbonisation

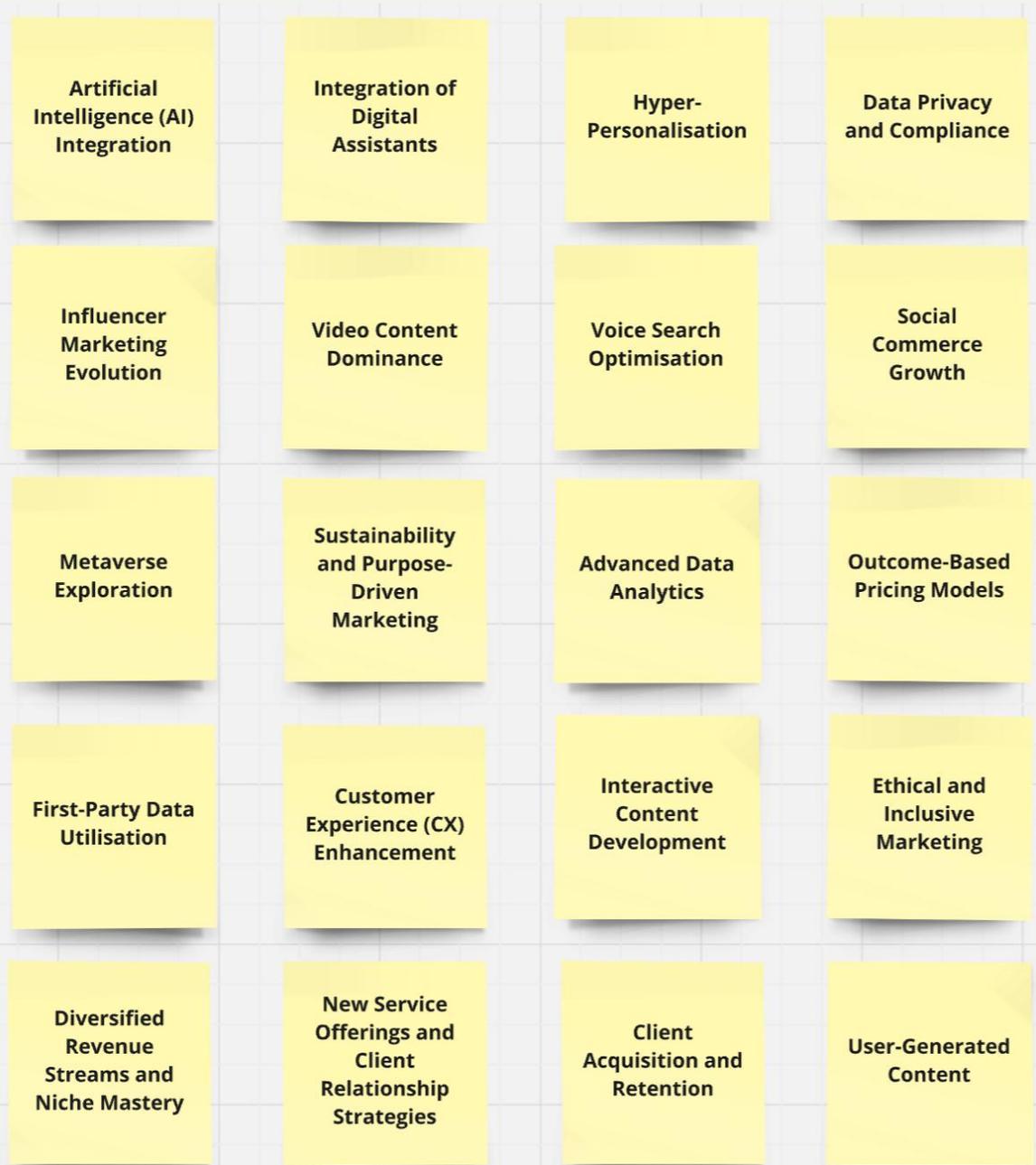- Social Transformation
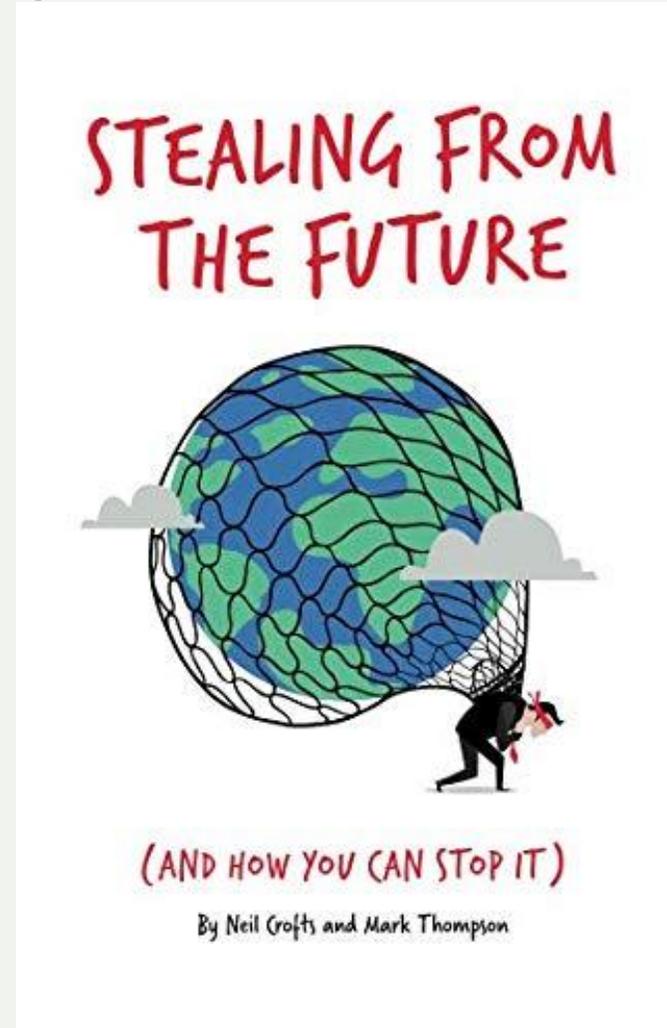
Buy on Amazon here

Examples of mega trends

1. **Climate Change and Sustainability**: The growing impact of environmental changes, resource scarcity, and the transition to sustainable practices.

2. **Technological Innovation**: Rapid advancements in AI, robotics, and digital transformation are reshaping economies and industries.

3. **Cultural and Social Changes**: Evolving societal values, diversity, and the rise of individual empowerment.

4. **Demographic Shifts**: Changes in population dynamics, such as aging populations, urbanisation, and migration.

5. **Economic Power Shifts**: The rise of emerging markets and the redistribution of economic influence globally.

6. **Geopolitical Dynamics**: Shifts in global power structures and the impact of international relations.

7. **Health and Well-being**: The increasing focus on mental health, longevity, and global health challenges like pandemics.

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Global Challenges

Agency Trends

Agency Trends

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Integration	Integration of Digital Assistants	Hyper-Personalisation	Data Privacy and Compliance
Influencer Marketing Evolution	Video Content Dominance	Voice Search Optimisation	Social Commerce Growth
Metaverse Exploration	Sustainability and Purpose-Driven Marketing	Advanced Data Analytics	Outcome-Based Pricing Models
First-Party Data Utilisation	Customer Experience (CX) Enhancement	Interactive Content Development	Ethical and Inclusive Marketing
Diversified Revenue Streams and Niche Mastery	New Service Offerings and Client Relationship Strategies	Client Acquisition and Retention	User-Generated Content

1) Artificial Intelligence (AI) Integration

Agencies are increasingly adopting AI to enhance efficiency and creativity.

AI is being utilised to streamline creative workflows, from content generation to design, improving efficiency and innovation.

The Times

The Wall Street Journal
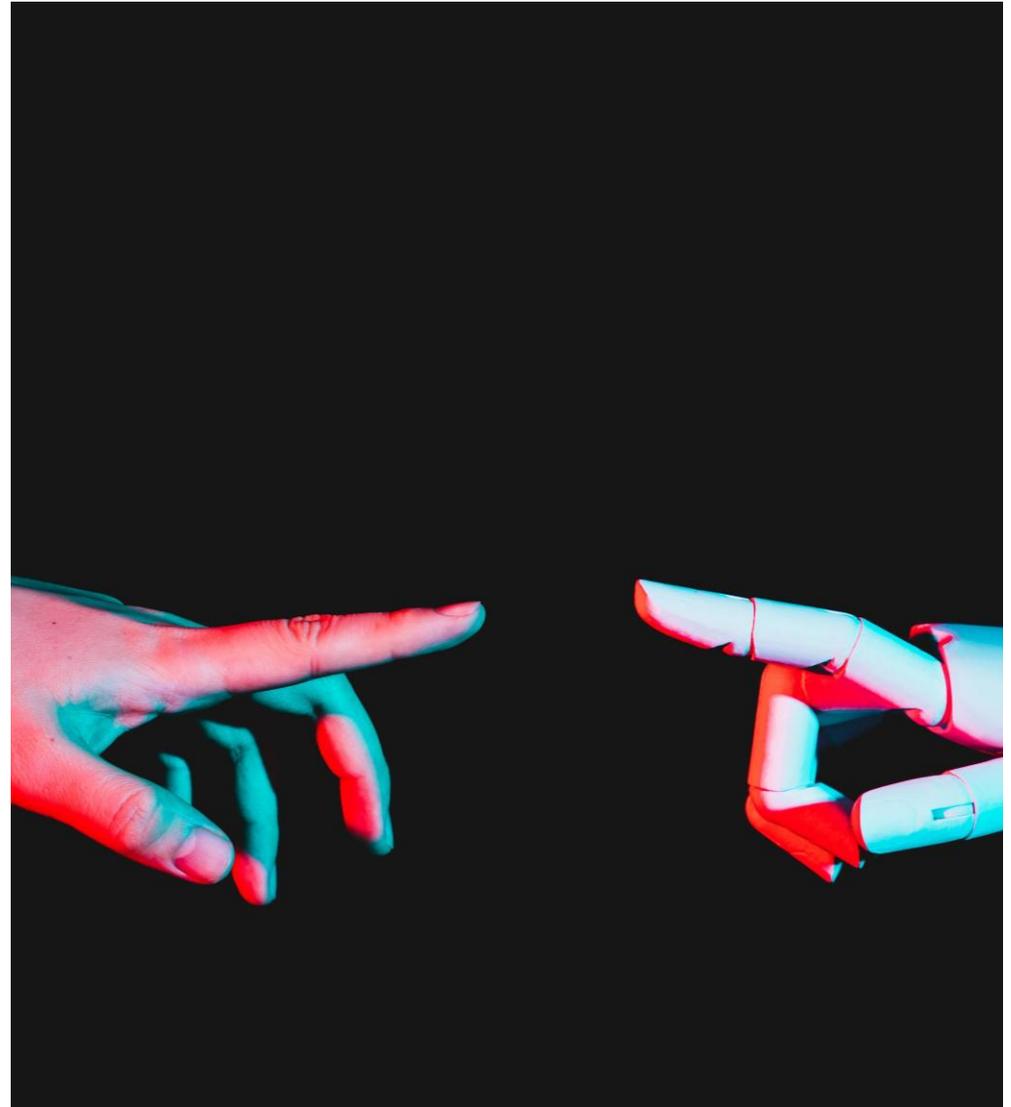
2) Integration of Digital Assistants

Utilising AI-driven digital assistants and chatbots enhances customer service and engagement through personalised interactions.
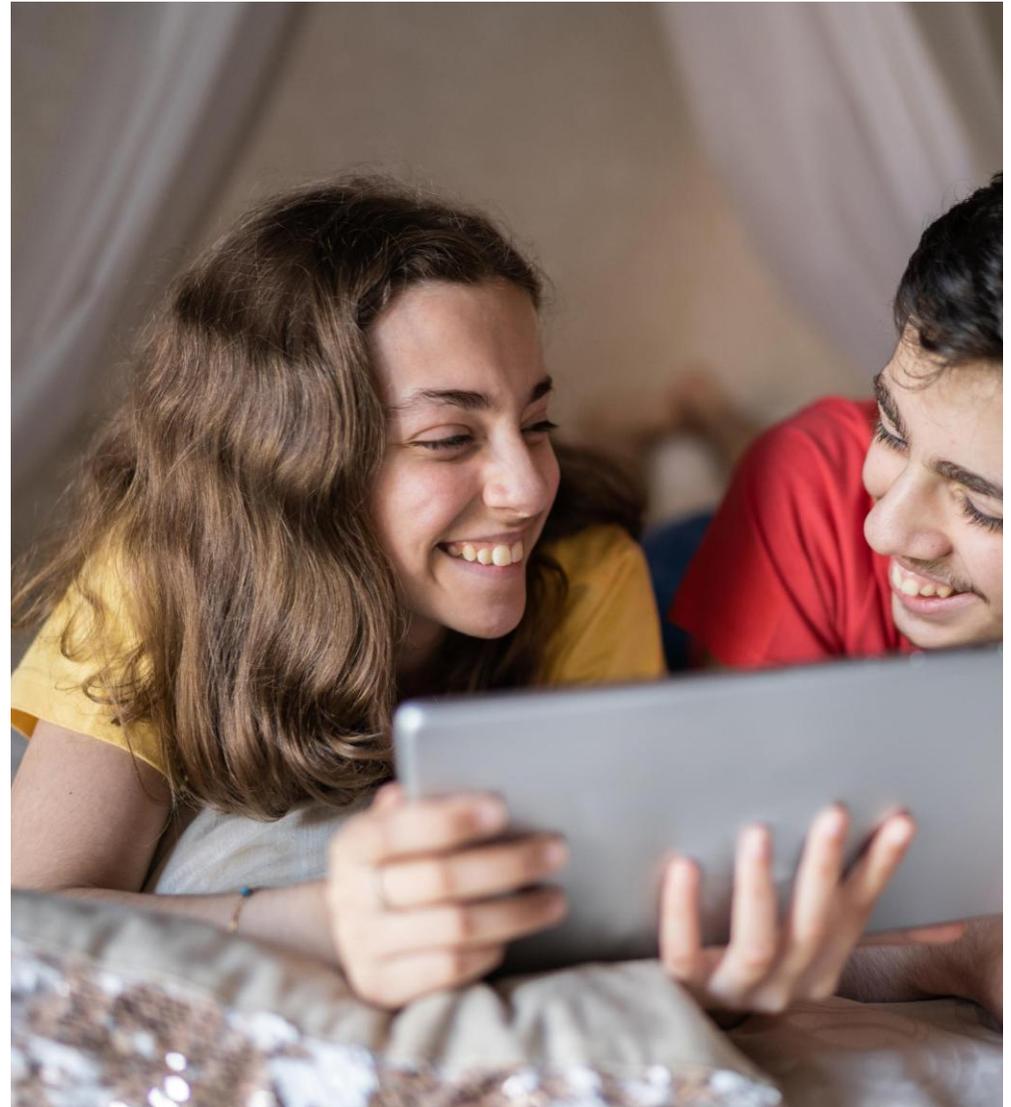
Wikipedia

3) Hyper-Personalisation

Leveraging AI and data analytics, agencies are delivering highly personalised content to engage audiences more effectively.

SimilarWeb

4) Data Privacy and Compliance

With evolving regulations like GDPR, agencies must prioritise data privacy and ensure compliance to maintain trust and avoid penalties.

Customers.ai

5) Influencer Marketing Evolution

The rise of social media influencers offers new avenues for brand promotion, requiring agencies to adapt strategies to leverage these partnerships effectively.
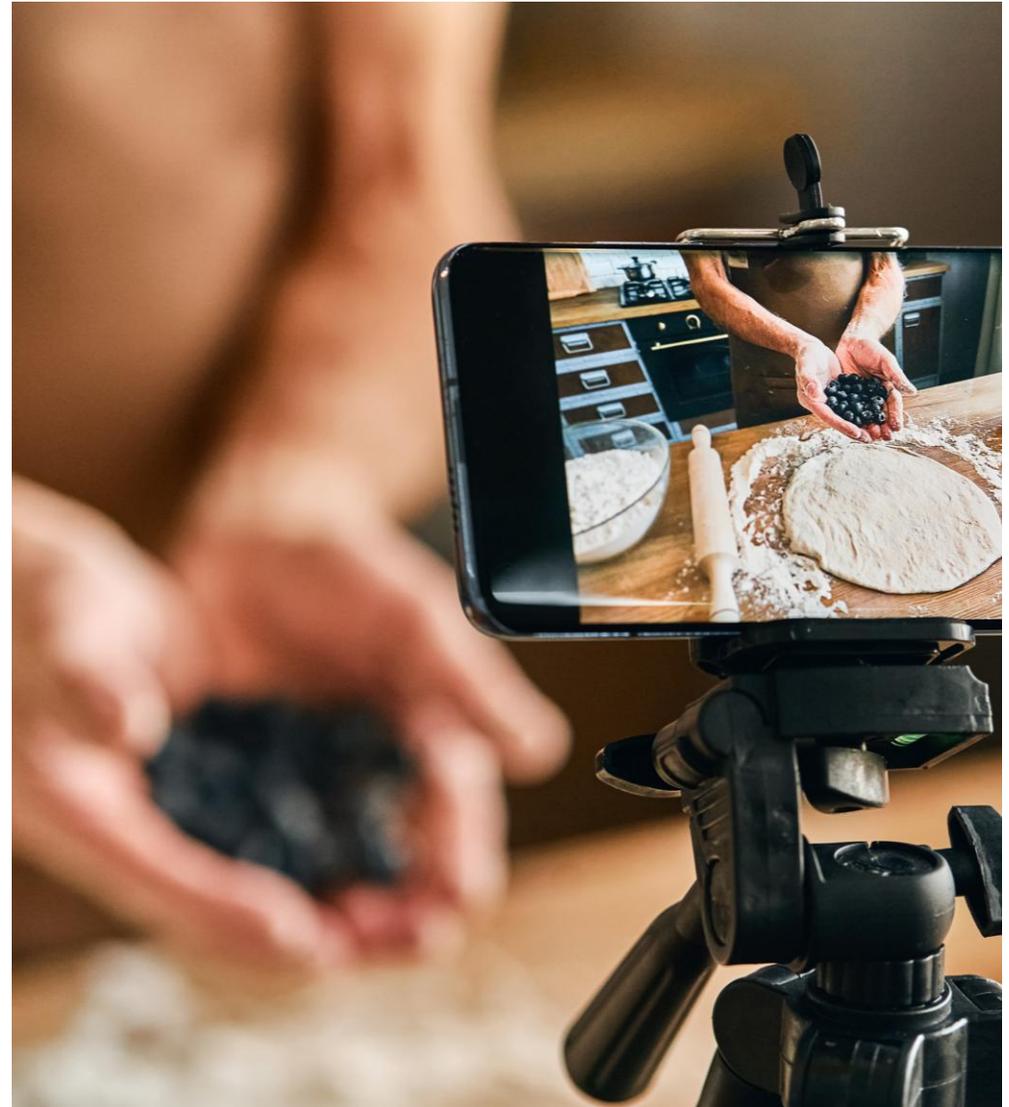
Financial Times

6) Video Content Dominance

Video continues to be a powerful medium, with live streaming and short-form videos gaining traction across platforms.

Thee Digital

7) Voice Search Optimisation

The increasing use of voice-activated devices necessitates optimising content for voice search to enhance discoverability.

Thee Digital

8) Social Commerce Growth

The integration of e-commerce features within social media platforms is creating new opportunities for direct sales and customer engagement.

Thee Digital

9) Metaverse Exploration

Agencies are beginning to explore marketing opportunities within virtual and augmented reality spaces, anticipating future consumer engagement in the metaverse.

Thee Digital

10) Sustainability and Purpose-Driven Marketing:

Consumers are increasingly valuing brands that demonstrate social responsibility, prompting agencies to craft campaigns that reflect these values.

Customers.ai

11) Advanced Data Analytics

The use of sophisticated analytics tools enables agencies to gain deeper insights into consumer behaviour, informing more effective strategies.

Customers.ai

12) Outcome-Based Pricing Models

The efficiency gains from AI are leading agencies to shift from hourly billing to pricing models based on deliverables and outcomes.

The Wall Street Journal

13) First-Party Data Utilisation

With third-party cookies diminishing, agencies are focusing on collecting and leveraging first-party data to inform personalised marketing efforts.

Customers.ai

14) Customer Experience (CX) Enhancement

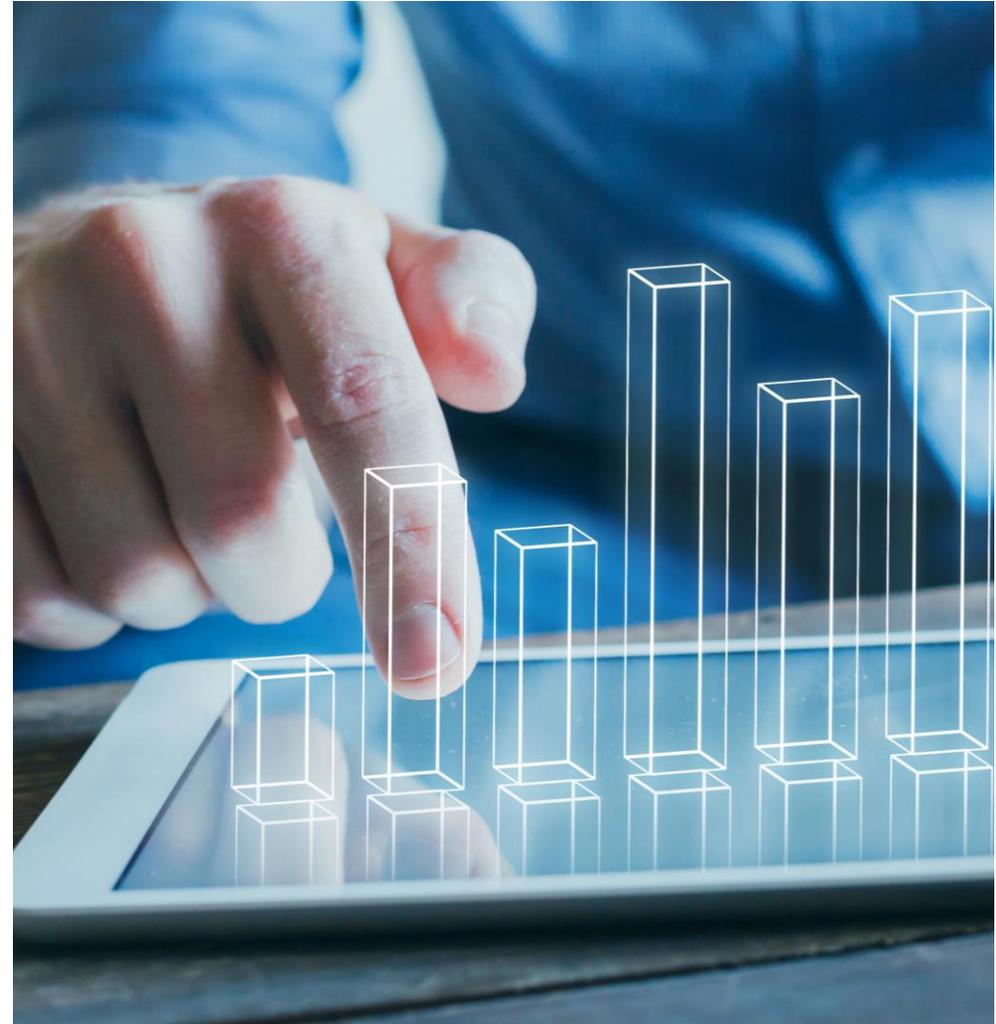Agencies prioritise creating seamless and engaging customer experiences to foster loyalty and satisfaction.

[Econsultancy](#)

15) Interactive Content Development

The creation of interactive content, such as quizzes and polls, is being used to boost engagement and gather valuable consumer insights.

Thee Digital

16) Ethical and Inclusive Marketing

There's a growing emphasis on ensuring marketing practices are ethical and inclusive, reflecting diverse audiences and promoting equity.

Thee Digital

17) Diversified Revenue Streams and Niche Mastery

Agencies are focusing on diversifying revenue streams, improving operational efficiency, and specialising in specific niches. This approach includes tapping into new sectors and leveraging emerging technologies.

https://agencyanalytics.com/blog/marketing-agency-benchmarks-growth-predictions

18) New Service Offerings and Client Relationship Strategies

Agencies are expanding their services, with a focus on digital offerings, and are employing various methods to retain clients, including increased communication, transparency, and flexible payment options.

Search Engine Journal: Digital Marketing in 2023: 600 Marketing Agencies Share Expert Insights

19) Client Acquisition and Retention

Client acquisition and retention are becoming more challenging, with agencies relying on social media, tech partnerships, and referrals as top sources for finding new clients.

Search Engine Journal: Digital Marketing in 2023: 600 Marketing Agencies Share Expert Insights

20) User-Generated Content

Leveraging user-generated content is becoming a key strategy for enhancing brand authenticity and trust.

https://asana.com/resources/marketing-trends

Reactions

- What was expected?

- What surprised you?

- What's missing?

What is important for your agency?

Pick 3 that most resonate with you

They can be the same as others

Share why you consider this the top 3.

How Agencies Need to Evolve

How do you think agencies need to change?

Name 3 ways

Embrace Data-Driven Decision-Making

Data as a Core Competency

- A data-first approach, leveraging data analytics, customer insights, and performance metrics to inform your strategies.

- Invest in tools and expertise to analyse large datasets from multiple sources (social media, web analytics, CRM, etc.).

Personalisation at Scale

- Digital platforms enable hyper-targeting and personalisation.

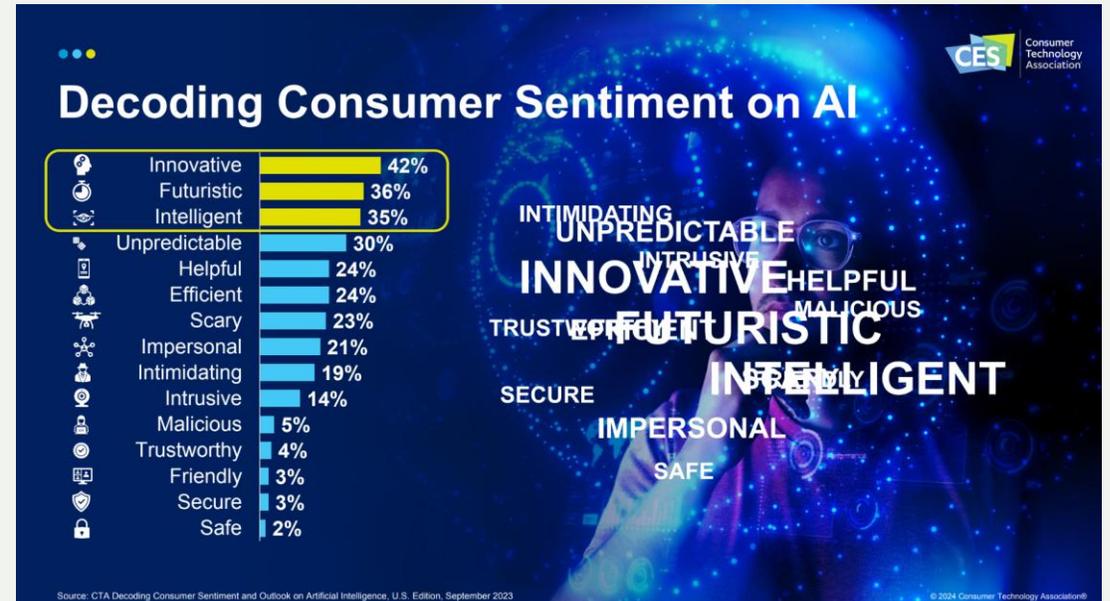- Harness customer data, behaviour insights, and predictive analytics.

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Source: Deloitte's 2023 Global Marketing Trends report

Embracing AI and Generative AI

Automation for Efficiency

- Campaign optimisation
- Social media management
- Customer segmentation
- Agentic intelligence

AI for Content Creation

- AI-driven tools produce content faster while maintaining quality.
- This will be essential as the demand for real-time, scalable digital content grows.

Decoding Consumer Sentiment on AI

Innovative	42%
Futuristic	36%
Intelligent	35%
Unpredictable	30%
Helpful	24%
Efficient	24%
Scary	23%
Impersonal	21%
Intimidating	19%
Intrusive	14%
Malicious	5%
Trustworthy	4%
Friendly	3%
Secure	3%
Safe	2%

Source: CTA Decoding Consumer Sentiment and Outlook on Artificial Intelligence, U.S. Edition, September 2023

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Content Marketing Evolution

Storytelling

- Agencies need to create compelling stories that stand out.

- Move from generic content to high-value, engaging narratives that resonate with specific audiences.

Short-Form and Visual Content

- As attention spans shrink, agencies should prioritise short-form, visual content for platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube.

- Video, infographics, and interactive media are becoming essential tools for digital campaigns.

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Adapting to Privacy and Data Regulations

Privacy-First Strategies:

- Agencies must develop marketing strategies that are less reliant on third-party cookies and personal data, focusing on:

  - **first-party data**
  - website behaviour, purchase data: surveys and customer feedback

  - **contextual targeting**
  - places ads based on the content of a webpage, rather than on user data or behaviour

  - **and value-based marketing**
  - communicating the value a product or service provides to customers

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Agility and Flexibility in Campaigns

Agile Marketing

- Real-time adjustments to campaigns based on performance data and emerging trends.

- More short-term planning and faster execution cycles.

Responsive Creative

- Produce real-time or reactive content, particularly in response to trends, news, or social movements.

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Talent and Skill Transformation

Upskilling Teams

- Agencies must invest in training employees on new platforms, tools, and digital techniques.

- Skillsets in SEO, digital media buying, UX/UI design, and analytics are becoming increasingly important.

Recruiting New Talent

- Diversify teams to include specialists in emerging fields such as AI, machine learning.

- Build teams with interdisciplinary expertise to offer innovative solutions to clients.

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Sustainability and Social Responsibility

Eco-Conscious Campaigns

- Agencies should integrate sustainability into their digital campaigns.

- Promote eco-friendly practices and align with brands that focus on sustainability.

Purpose-Driven Marketing

- Shift towards purpose-driven campaigns that resonate with social movements and cultural shifts.

- Ensure campaigns are ethical, inclusive, and reflect societal values, diversity and climate change.

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Performance-Driven Models

Outcome-Based Pricing

- Agencies must adapt to performance-driven pricing models.

- Align compensation with campaign results, such as pay-per-click (PPC) or revenue-sharing models.

Real-Time Performance Tracking

- Offer clients real-time visibility into campaign performance.

- Dashboards and live reporting will help agencies build trust and long-term partnerships.

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Reactions

- What was expected?
- What surprised you?
- What's missing?

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So what?

- Which global challenge resonated?

- Which Digital Agency Trend might you want to respond to?

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AI AGENCY MATURITY MAP

Maturity model – Agency Dimensions

Dimensions	Exploration	Experimentation	Incorporation	Optimisation	Continuous Business Agility
AI for Creative & Experiential Production	No use of AI in creative or experiential work. Reliant on manual brainstorming and production processes.	Using AI tools experimentally for concepting (e.g. image generation, copy variants). No consistent workflow.	Some AI tools integrated into ideation or prototyping. Creative teams gaining confidence in using AI.	AI is routinely used for experiential design, rapid prototyping, and generative content. Formalised workflows exist.	AI is embedded end-to-end across experiential production, with reusable assets and real-time personalisation at events.
AI Led Personalisation & Behavioural Targeting	No AI use in targeting or segmentation. Behavioural data not integrated or underused.	Manual personalisation using basic demographic or campaign data. Some awareness of behavioural models.	Behavioural and psychographic data used in segmenting audiences. AI tools piloted for targeting.	AI models actively used to personalise campaigns at scale based on behavioural signals.	Behavioural personalisation is automated and adaptive. AI insights guide all touchpoints and optimise in real time.
AI Driven Measurement & Media Optimisation	Media planning and performance evaluation done manually. Limited insight into ROI.	Use of basic analytics tools. Media metrics tracked, but AI not yet used for prediction or optimisation.	AI tools used to forecast performance and inform optimisation decisions. Attribution models explored.	Predictive AI informs channel mix, budget allocation, and real-time optimisation. Clear measurement framework.	Full AI integration in media planning, dynamic optimisation, and attribution. Proven uplift in effectiveness.
AI Powered Activation & Promotion	No AI elements in live campaigns or brand activations. Reliant on traditional tactics.	Occasional use of AI-led tools (e.g. chatbots or content generation). Pilots for AR/VR interactions.	AI embedded in certain activations (e.g. gamified experiences, personalised content). Used by selected teams.	Multi-format AI activations in experiential and digital campaigns. Teams co-design with AI tools.	AI is core to brand activations. Experiences are adaptive, data-driven and continuously evolving through AI feedback loops.
AI for Insight & Data Storytelling	Insights are generated manually. Data visualisation is basic or underutilised.	Using dashboards or BI tools to present performance data. Starting to explore AI for trends or summaries.	AI supports insight extraction and data storytelling. Use of NLP and automated reporting growing.	AI tools automate insight generation and translate behavioural data into decision-ready narratives.	Insight generation is predictive, real time and personalised. Stakeholders receive auto-generated, contextualised stories.
Proprietary IP & Competitive Advantage	No AI-related IP. All tools and models are off-the-shelf.	Experimentation with prompt libraries, templates or process frameworks. No formal IP.	Some unique workflows or reusable models that offer competitive edge.	Agency has proprietary AI-enabled IP (e.g. frameworks, datasets, tools) that differentiates their offer.	Proprietary AI assets are core to agency value proposition and revenue streams. Reused, scaled and evolved constantly.

Plot where you are / your agency is

- Plot on the maturity map where your agency is striving to be.

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Digital services that agencies offer

Discuss in your groups

- What digital services are you currently offering?
  - Review the list of services
  - Add on post-its what is missing

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What Human Skills will we need?

There is early evidence of cognitive offloading.

Practice memory retrieval.

Draft first. Use tools intentionally, not reflexively.

Four key conditions to high-performing, human-centred teams

Psychological Safety

Growth Mindset

Emotional Agility

Cognitive Flexibility

The two pillars of creative intelligence.

Divergent thinking and Critical thinking.
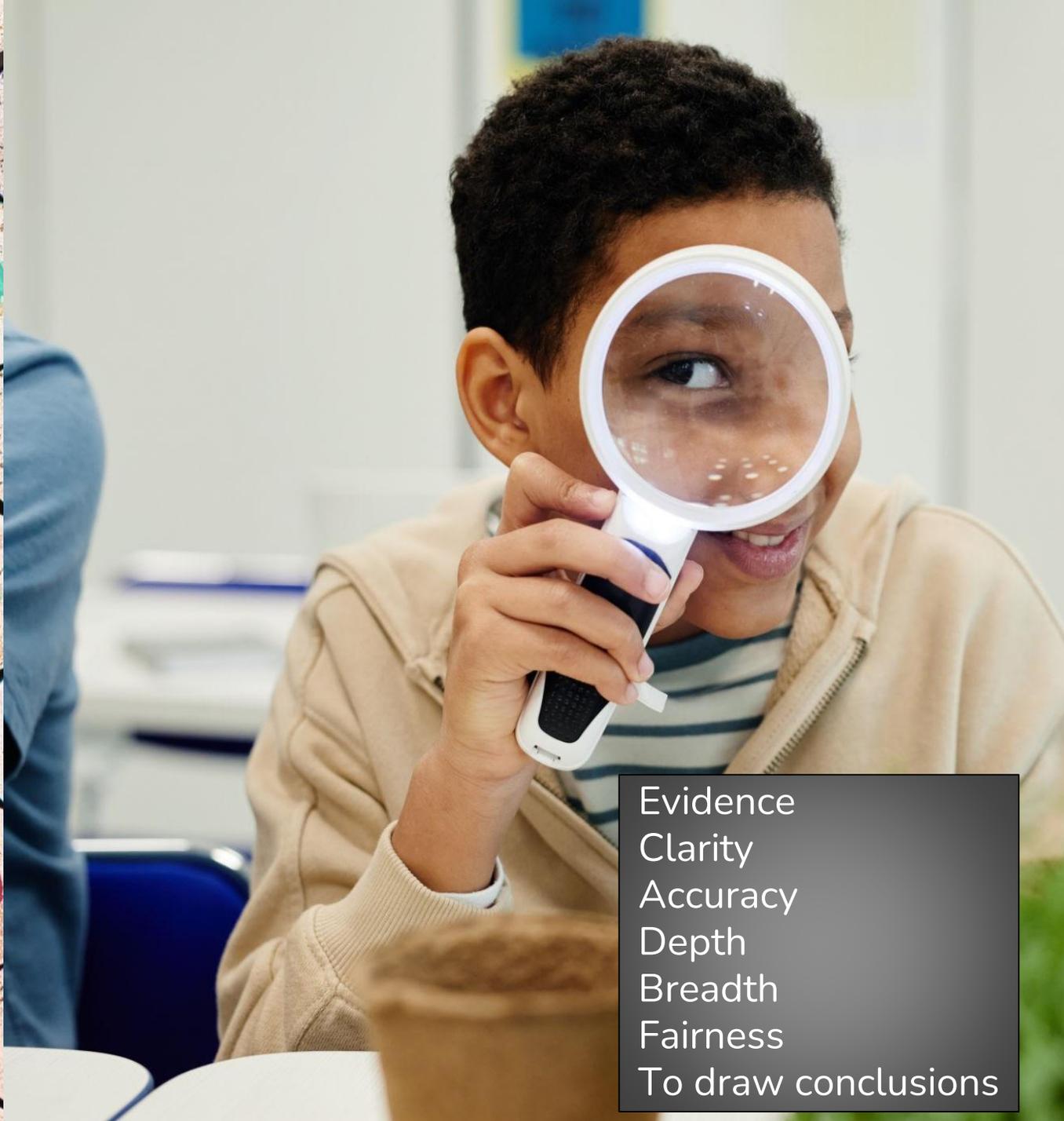
Evidence
Clarity
Accuracy
Depth
Breadth
Fairness
To draw conclusions

How will your agency of the future operate

Team task

- Pick an agency trend you as a team want to respond to
- What is your new agency service/s?

Consider what resources you may need?
- What people will you need
- What processes might you need
- What technology might you need

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For training and digital consultancy please ask for me through AIA:

For independent consultants:

Consultancy CLUB

For Public Speaking:

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Twitter: Join in the banter @tiffanystjames
LinkedIn: For how to evolve as a leader follow me here:
https://www.linkedin.com/in/tiffanystjames/

Facebook Page: Helping businesses with digital skills @theTiffanyStJames

Feedback for Tiffany: https://bit.ly/TSJfeedback

ADDITIONAL LUNCHTIME CONTENT

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How it started

How it's going

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CREATE IMAGES AND MOODBOARD

Make images

- Adobe Firefly

- Midjourney

- Stable diffusion

- DALL.E 3
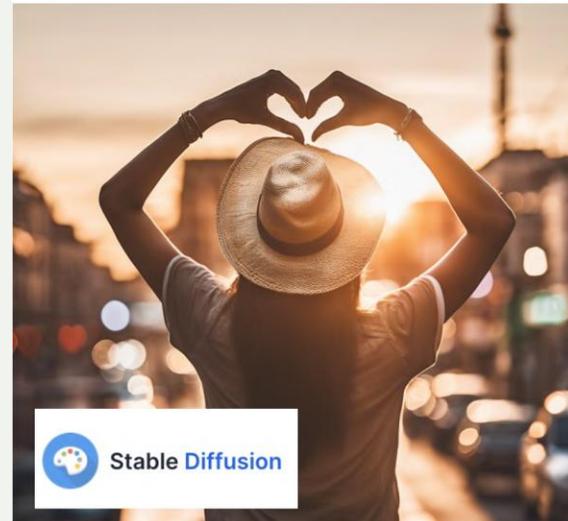
CREATE MOVEMENT IN STILL IMAGES

GOOGLE MEET: NEAR REAL-TIME TRANSLATION

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SYNTHESIA.IO - AI AVATARS IN 100+ LANGUAGES

SORA DEMO: ChatGPTs text to video service

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HK6y8DAPN_0