

DENTSU CREATIVE

2024 CMO REPORT



WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL CMO REPORT

"At a time when growth is harder to come by, CMOs are turning to Innovation as never before to unlock new sources of sustainable growth. As the founder of Dentsu Lab Tokyo, Innovation is close to my heart. So I'm excited to see that CMOs are planning significant investment in innovation, particularly as we expand our Dentsu Lab offering around the world to help our clients solve their most urgent problems. I'm also inspired by how clients are embracing the coming together of humanity and AI. Despite exponential leaps forward in artificial intelligence, we see real power in experiences that connect technology and humanity through touch, haptics, voice, gesture and beyond."

Yasu Sasaki, Global Chief Creative Officer
dentsu



"What we're hearing from clients, and our survey confirms, is that they need and value creativity more than ever. But it's a new kind of creativity; creativity that is business-driven, making an impact across every aspect of their organization from comms to commerce to sustainability. In parallel, we see new attitudes to AI emerging, where it's not a threat to human creativity but a way of giving human creativity superpowers -- exponentially increasing the pace and possibilities of personalization, real time responsiveness, and relevance."

Abbey Klaassen, Global Brand President
Dentsu Creative



"Brands and businesses are now in the era of sudden change. Changes we've anticipated for years are now accelerating dramatically and reaching critical tipping points accelerated by new behaviors, new technologies and new possibilities. We can't reach new customers in old ways, or make new work with old tools. Brands today will be built at the intersection of culture, commerce and community; in a world where stories are shoppable and stores are stories. The challenge for brands will be to engage communities in thoughtful and collaborative ways enabling scale, relevance and authenticity."

Pats McDonald, Global Chief Strategy Officer
Dentsu Creative



THE ERA OF SUDDEN CHANGE

INTRODUCTION

Change happens both faster, and slower, than we realize. As Bill Gates once said, "We overestimate the change that will occur in the next two years and underestimate the change that will occur in the next ten".

As an industry we are instinctively drawn to the new, the novel, the next. Sometimes we do overestimate the pace of change. The death of broadcast has been announced more times than most of us can remember, while most consumers continued happily to tune in.

Some truths endure: the organizing power of the idea, the transformational power of emotion. **83% of CMOs believe powerful creative ideas can transform businesses. 61% believe that we underestimate the power of emotion to drive these transformations. 81% agree creativity is more important to their business than ever.**

But some things change, and suddenly. Suddenly it feels we are at a very real tipping point; living through a series of profound shifts in how our work is created, consumed and distributed that call for urgent and fundamental changes in how we engage:

- A worldwide redistribution of attention means we can't reach new customers in old ways. Finally, broadcast media is facing a generational tipping point.
- An exponential rise in the number of creators with a platform and the means to publish is upending old and exclusive content models.
- A dizzying acceleration in the ability of AI to automate the creative process will challenge old ideas of where our limitations lie-enabling exponential leaps forward in our ability to personalize at pace and scale.
- An urgent need to reinvent the global economy for sustainable growth will force us all to collaborate in new ways with old competitors.

So perhaps it's not surprising to see that while CMOs around the world are more committed to creativity than ever, it's a new kind of creativity. Creativity that doesn't stay in its box, but adds transformational value across every aspect of the business. Because suddenly, it is impossible to over-estimate the pace and power of change.

What we see in our annual survey is a cohort of CMOs under more pressure than ever to provide foresight for their organizations; to anticipate fast changing consumer demands and rapidly evolving technologies. We see a new understanding that marketing today is a collaboration; that brands are built not through rigid control but through culture, communities and creators.

Versus just 12 months ago, we see a new coming to terms with the role of AI as co-pilot; CMOs no longer see craft and AI as diametrically opposed and are much less likely than a year ago to believe that AI cannot create content that represents their brand or moves their audiences.

Perhaps most importantly, in a world where many agree growth is harder to come by, and product advantages easier to replicate we see a hunger for creativity applied more widely across our clients' business; across every aspect of their organization and every complex challenge from CX to Sustainability to Innovation.

8 KEY IMPERATIVES FOR MARKETERS IN 2024

1 FROM OMNICHANNEL CREATIVITY TO OMNIPRESENT CREATIVITY

In a fast-changing world, where growth is harder to come by, CMOs need creativity in every aspect of their business not just communications. 82% believe Creativity has more potential than ever to unlock growth.

2 FROM SHARE OF VOICE TO SHARE OF CULTURE

In a world where attention has shifted, brands will scale in new ways; through culture, content and entertainment. 88% of CMOs agree it is more important than ever for brands to be part of culture.

3 FROM CONDUCTING TO CONTROLLING

CMOs recognize that brands today are built through ecosystems of connected talent, partners and creators: 77% acknowledge that in the future marketing will be a partnership between brands, creators and platforms.

4 FROM SEAMLESS EXPERIENCES TO DISTINCTIVE EXPERIENCES

As product advantages are swiftly copied, brands will build differentiation through connected and distinctive brand experiences. 75% of marketers agree that every touchpoint can and must tell the brand story – from comms to commerce.

5 FROM INSIGHT TO FORESIGHT

CMOs are facing pressure to act not only as the voice of the customer, but the voice of the future, anticipating trends and desires before they arise. 79% of CMOs are challenged to use data and insight to predict future products and propositions.

6 FROM AI AS COMPETITOR TO AI AS CO-PILOT

As AI matures, CMOs are reappraising its potential as a collaborator and co-creator rather than a threat to human creativity. The percentage of CMOs agreeing that Gen-AI will never make content that moves us declined 18 points year on year.

7 FROM INNOVATION AT THE EDGES TO INNOVATION AT THE CORE

As the pace of change accelerates, clients are investing significant proportions of their budget in Innovation, no longer a niche or a nice-to-have. 79% of marketers are planning to invest more than 10% of their budget in innovation, 56% more than 20%.

8 FROM TAKING BRIEFS TO TRANSFORMING BUSINESS

With uncertainty on the horizon, the role of marketing as a driver of growth becomes ever more important. CMOs want agencies not just to answer briefs, but to help them transform their businesses through the power of creativity: 70% agree they want their agency to bring them what they need, not always what they want.

FROM OMNICHANNEL CREATIVITY TO OMNIPRESENT CREATIVITY

The relationship between creativity and effectiveness is often hotly debated. Studies from some of the most reputable sources in the industry have at times highlighted a widening delta between creatively awarded work and commercially effective work.

There's much debate as to why that might be, and how the pattern is evolving, but one answer perhaps is how we define effectiveness. The world has changed, while the ways we measure impact have largely stayed the same. With relatively few exceptions, the industry is set up to measure the familiar dopamine hit of a paid (often TV-led) campaign.

Which doesn't entirely reflect the way creativity grows businesses today. CMOs are crying out for creativity across every aspect of their business. Creativity in CX, creativity in tackling Sustainability, Creativity applied across their most urgent business problems.

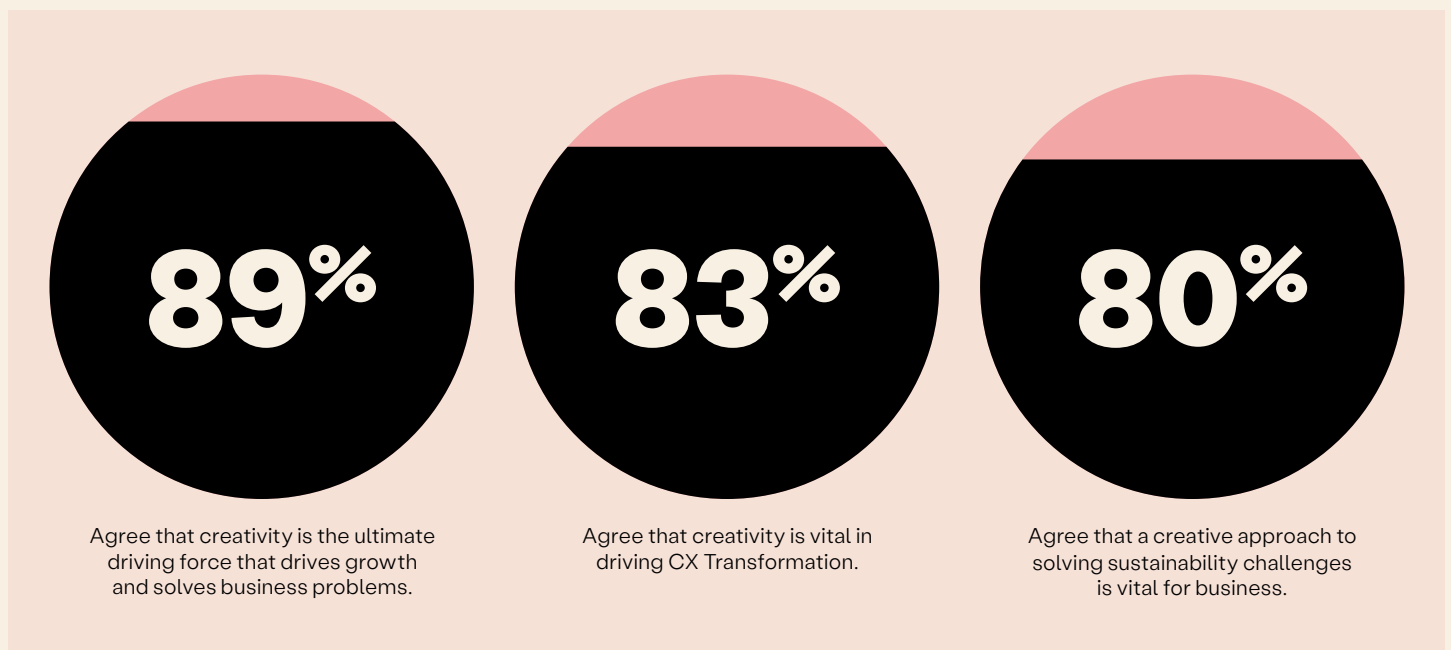
81% of CMOs feel creativity is more important to marketing than ever. Creativity is regarded as the ultimate force that drives business growth and solves business problems – **89%** agree, **57%** agreeing strongly.

What's more, CMOs are crying out for creativity in surprising places, as commercial and societal problems become more complex and more interconnected, breakthrough thinking is needed more than ever. **83%** of CMOs agree that Creativity is vital in driving CX transformation, while **80%** believe that a creative approach to solving sustainability challenges is vital for business.

83% of CMOs believe that creativity has more potential than ever to unlock business growth. This is resonating particularly highly with Food & Beverage (**88%**); Personal and Household Care (**97%**) and Pharmaceuticals (**85%**) marketers.

With this in mind, perhaps it's time we redefined creative effectiveness and look not only at how we can drive growth within existing business and communications models, but at how we can transform the model entirely.

HOW STRONGLY DO YOU AGREE WITH THESE STATEMENTS?



FROM SHARE OF VOICE TO SHARE OF CULTURE

Marketers are more committed than ever to building brands through culture. Brands are still built through the tried and tested principles of mental and physical availability, but today mental availability is built through culture and community. Physical availability will be built online as much as offline, through social commerce, D2C platforms and retail media.

As an industry, we are living through a global redistribution of attention. As Dr Grace Kite, Economist and Founder, Magic Numbers, puts it: "There's increasingly little supply of the thing that we advertisers most want to buy – 30 fame driving seconds of a punter watching audio-visual ads on their living room TV screen".¹

In a world where broadcast media is reaching a long-anticipated tipping point, we need new ways to scale, new ways to tell our brand stories, new ways to build an outsized cultural footprint.

88% of CMOs agree it is more important than ever for brands to be a part of culture, while **78%** agree creating Entertainment properties is important to their marketing strategy. As a result, brands are investing in new forms of entertainment and cultural impact.

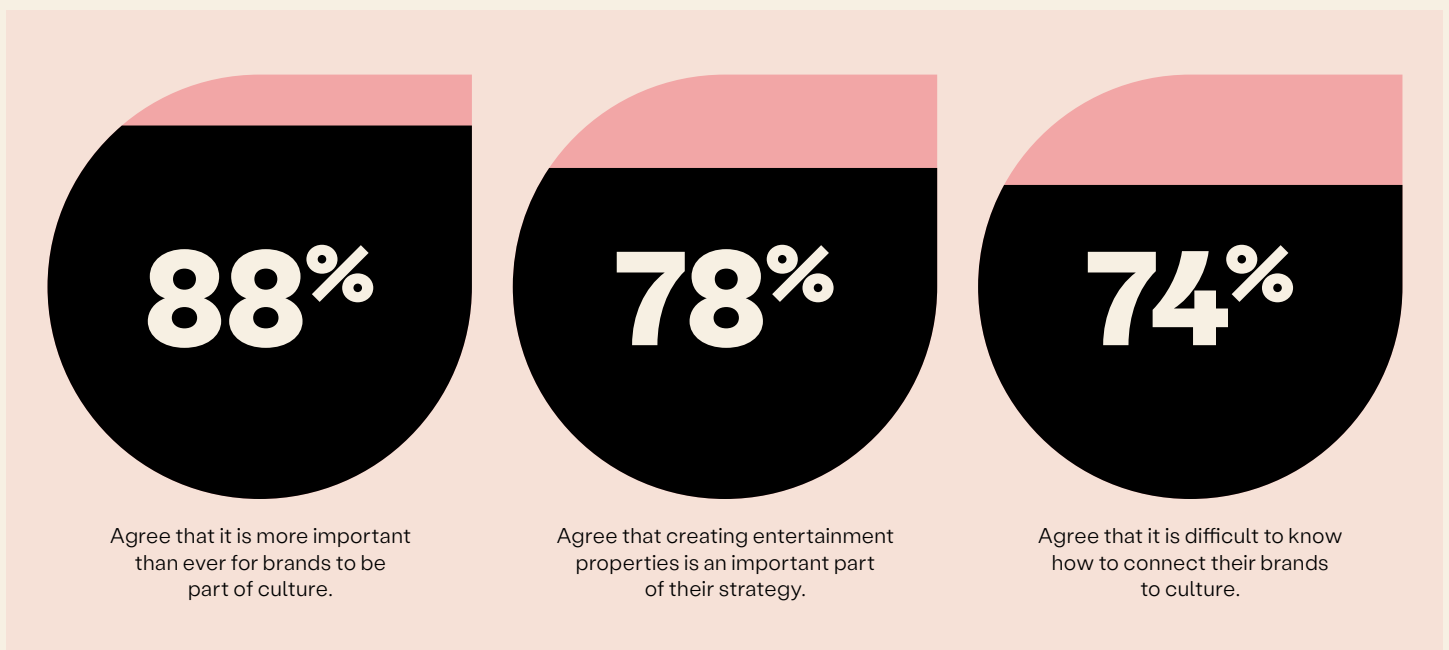
31% have invested in Entertainment platforms and IP, **29%** in TV programming, and **18%** in music production. Marketers in the US are particularly invested in content and entertainment; over indexing on music and character IP, while Brazil and Italy lead the way on user generated content and the UK favors publishing and podcasting.

Yet **74%** say it is challenging to know how to connect their brand to culture. **73%** find it a challenge to tell their brand stories in new ways such as entertainment, experience or action, while **77%** agree that building brand in a world where broadcast media is less relevant will be a challenge.

Helping brands build reach and impact in a new world demands new tools and insights; not all reach is created equal. Dentsu's pioneering research into [The Attention Economy](#)² provides unique insight into Attentive Reach; channels and touchpoints that deliver active attention.

Married with cultural insight, and the ability to create culture, not simply campaigns these techniques are vital in helping brands win the outsized share of culture they need to thrive.

HOW STRONGLY DO YOU AGREE WITH THESE STATEMENTS?

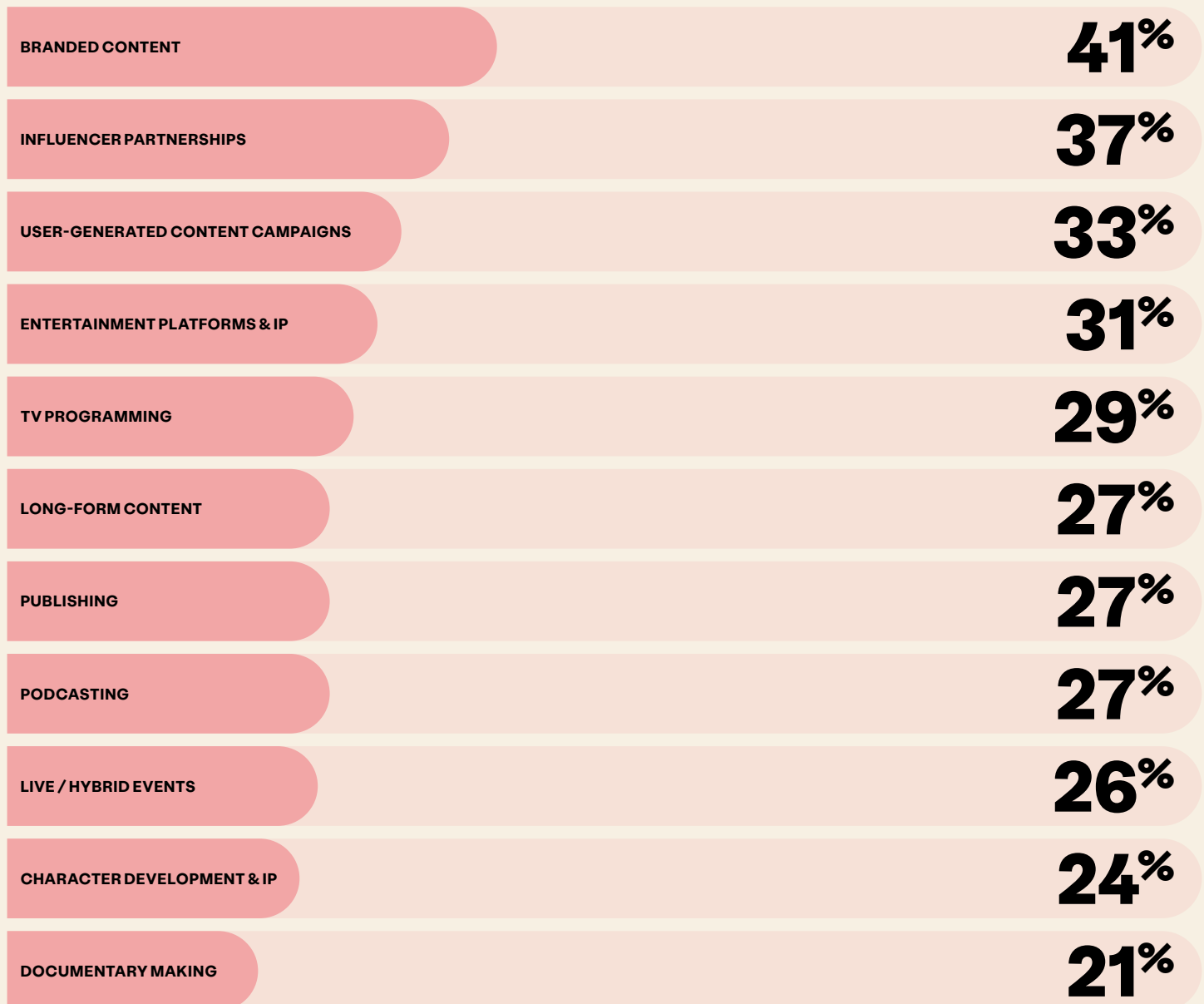


FROM SHARE OF VOICE TO SHARE OF CULTURE

Influencer partnerships and user generated content are already widely adopted when it comes to creating cultural impact. But TV programming and entertainment platforms are also emerging as areas of interest and investment, perhaps prompted by the open-ness of streaming platforms to brand partnerships and monetizing their IP in new ways.

Likewise, podcasting has become a popular way of building brand engagement, trust and authenticity. Data from Spotify shows that **54%** of podcast listeners believe podcast ads are more effective than ads they see elsewhere, and **52%** trust what is being promoted.³

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING HAVE YOU ALREADY INVESTED IN?



FROM CONTROLLING TO CONDUCTING

Perhaps one reason brand owners struggle to understand how best to connect their brand to culture is that we have moved far beyond a world of monoculture. Of course, a few events and properties can still dominate the global cultural agenda – Barbie, the Olympics, the billion-dollar phenomenon that is Taylor Swift. But increasingly we see that culture is powered by communities of shared passion and interest, interacting with entertainment, brands and businesses on their terms.

In a world where every piece of content we consume is increasingly mediated through the algorithm, engaging with these communities is vital. Not only will it be an increasingly important way to drive reach-community is the new scale-it is a critical driver of authenticity: **82%** of CMOs agree that Gen Z/C expect brands to be authentic.

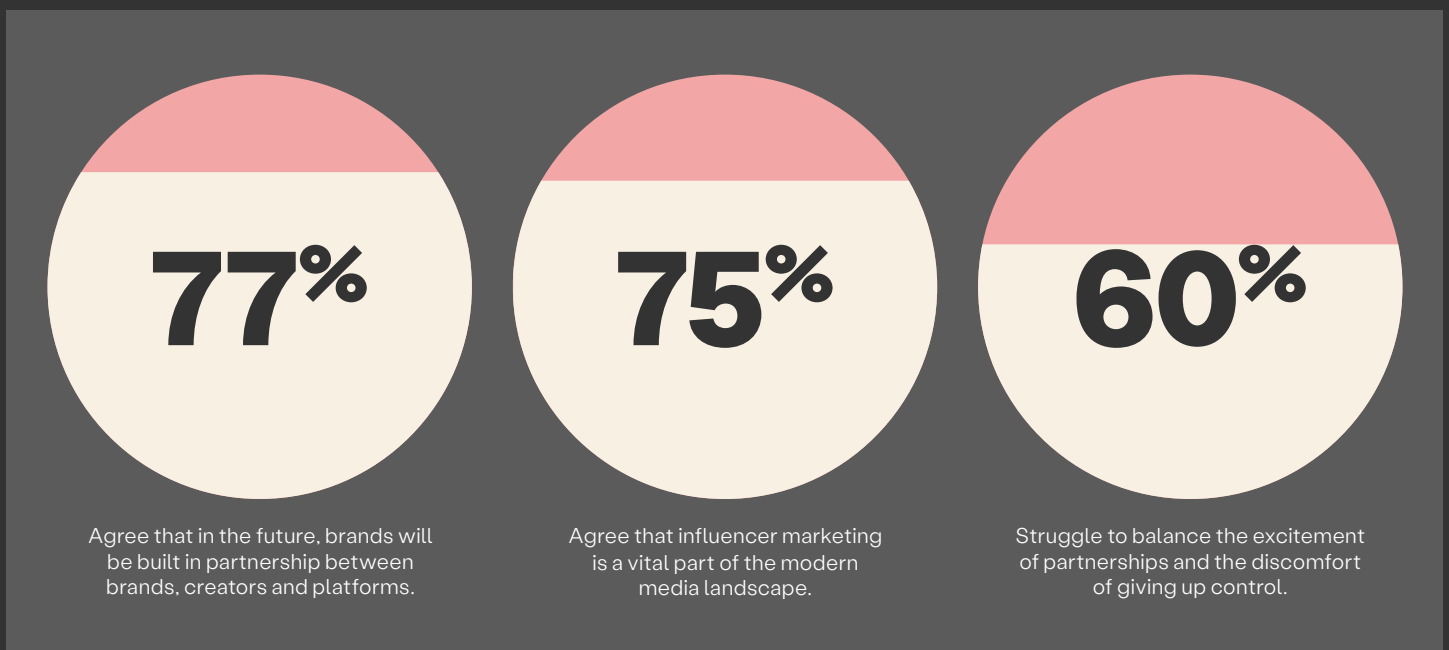
Yet engaging with communities, talent and creators means relinquishing a degree of control in ways that not every brand is comfortable with today. **77%** of CMOs agree that in the future, brand marketing will be much more of a partnership between brands, creators, and platforms while **71%** agree that working with celebrities is a powerful way for brands to be relevant to culture.

75% agree that Influencer marketing is a vital part of the modern media landscape, while **80%** agree that Earned attention is an increasingly important part of the marketing mix. Likewise, our [Consumer Vision 2035 report](#) shows that 7 in 10 global consumers say that in the future they expect to spend more time engaging with user-generated content than mainstream Hollywood entertainment.⁴

There is however a tension between the excitement of partnerships and the discomfort of giving up control – which **60%** cite as a challenge and concern. Perhaps in response to this, **75%** of businesses agree that brands should aspire to create culture and build their own audiences.

To help our clients navigate a world where brands will be built through connected ecosystems of content, culture and community, agencies must evolve and embrace a new role: becoming not only creators but masterful conductors helping marketers navigate these forces and harness them to drive further growth. A new generation of teaming, talent and collaboration platforms will evolve, with the most successful agencies being the best connected agencies.

HOW STRONGLY DO YOU AGREE WITH THESE STATEMENTS?



FROM SEAMLESS EXPERIENCES TO DISTINCTIVE EXPERIENCES

The power of culture and community is also impacting the worlds of commerce and customer experience. The boundaries between content and commerce have never been more blurred as commerce platforms, social giants and entertainment platforms alike pursue the Holy Grail of shoppable, culturally resonant, and creator-led content.

Netflix Shop is committed to bringing the streamer's most beloved platforms to fans through retail. Amazon Live is embracing a creator-led approach to commerce, while TikTok Shop aims to make its infectious video content shoppable. China has long led the way in this space with platforms such as Taobao and Ten Cent live contributing to a live streaming industry generating \$562.62 billion in revenue in 2023.⁵

Stories are shoppable, and stores can tell stories.

As a result, and in response to the rapid commoditization of products and experiences, today's CMOs need every customer experience to be a brand experience. As product advantage is easily replicated, and competitors only ever a click away, brands will seek to add value and differentiation through an ecosystem of digital services and experiences.

79% of CMOs agree that brands today are built through experience, while **75%** agree that every touchpoint can and must tell the brand story—from comms to commerce. **63%** agree that technologies such as Live Streaming have blurred the boundaries between content and commerce, while **80%** agree that digital experiences will become increasingly important in physical stores.

The key characteristics of a creative brand experience CMOs identify are Technology that enhances the creative idea (**66%**), Intelligent personalization to surprise and delight (**56%**), Useful Customer Experience Support (**55%**), Innovative new interfaces (**51%**) and a Powerful Organizing Idea (**51%**). We have been tracking these metrics for a number of years in our study; while growth has been steady over time this year we see a leap forward in the importance of personalization (**+13%**), and technology that enhances the brand idea (**+16%**).

Yet despite the importance they place on creativity and innovation, CMOs feel that many experiences remain purely functional. **62%** agree that brands have improved the functional convenience of their customer experience, but not the creative expression.

Among the barriers that stand in their way are lack of data and technical infrastructure, and an inability to find partners with the craft skills to finesse every touchpoint. To overcome these obstacles, brands will need not only a powerful and distinctive experience vision, but the ability to implement the data, technology and content stack that makes the vision a reality.

CMOS AGREE MORE THAN EVER ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVE AND DISTINCTIVE EXPERIENCES

	2022	2023	2024
INTELLIGENT PERSONALIZATION TO SURPRISE AND DELIGHT	38%	43%	56%
A POWERFUL ORGANIZING IDEA	37%	43%	51%
INNOVATIVE NEW INTERFACES	43%	48%	51%
TECHNOLOGY THAT ENHANCES THE BRAND IDEA	34%	48%	66%

FROM SEAMLESS EXPERIENCES TO DISTINCTIVE EXPERIENCES

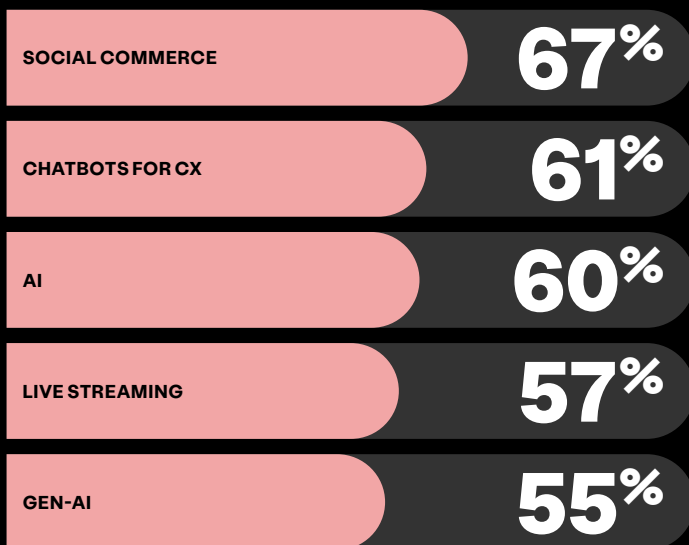
Despite the challenges, CMOs are investing in a host of new technologies aimed at delivering immersive, distinctive and delightful experiences. In the converging worlds of content and commerce, it's unsurprising to see that social commerce has the highest levels of adoption among CMOs worldwide, followed by Chatbots for customer service, AI and Live Streaming.

The technologies CMOs are most likely to adopt in the future include Metaverse/Web 3.0 technologies, Mixed Reality and Gaming; all technologies where the right craft partner will be an imperative.

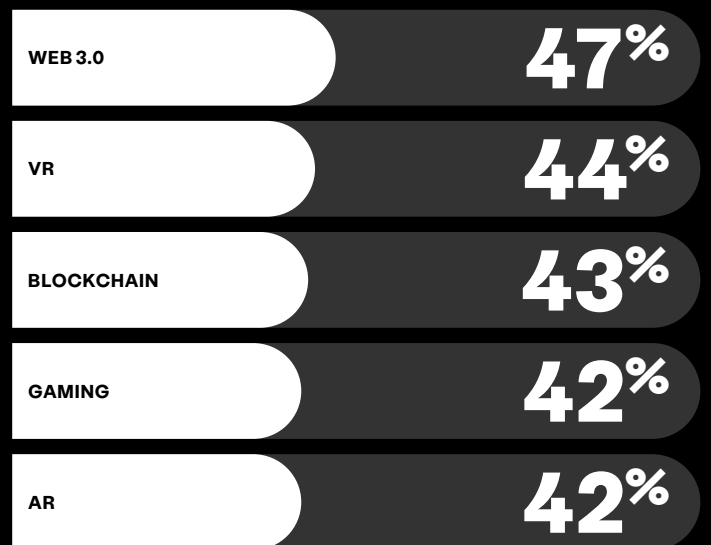
It will be intriguing to see how these technologies converge, bringing AI and metaverse technologies to bear in the world of social commerce and streaming. Our [Dentsu VI platform](#) is an example of where brands may choose to innovate in this space, combining influencer marketing with AI to create a suite of virtual influencers and ambassadors.

SOCIAL COMMERCE TECHNOLOGIES ARE WIDELY ADOPTED, WITH MIXED REALITIES AND GAMING TECHNOLOGIES ON THE RISE.

CURRENTLY USING (TOP 5)



CONSIDERING USING (TOP 5)



FROM INSIGHT TO FORESIGHT

In a volatile world, marketers are facing increasing pressure to anticipate changing trends and behaviors. Many are turning to AI and Machine Learning to anticipate trends before they are visible to the mainstream, and a key responsibility facing marketing departments is the ability to bring new trends and foresight to the business.

When asked to consider the biggest challenges facing them and their teams, understanding and responding to changing consumer behavior is a challenge for **82%** of marketers, with **40%** describing it as a significant challenge. **80%** describe staying ahead of changing technologies as a challenge, **38%** of whom find it a significant challenge. **79%** agree with the statement *"I am increasingly expected to use data to provide insight on consumers today but also predict future products and propositions."*

Our Dentsu [Consumer Vision 2035 report](#) reveals that customers have similar expectations: "77% of global consumers "would welcome brands being able to anticipate or predict what they want and proactively offer relevant and helpful products and services".⁶

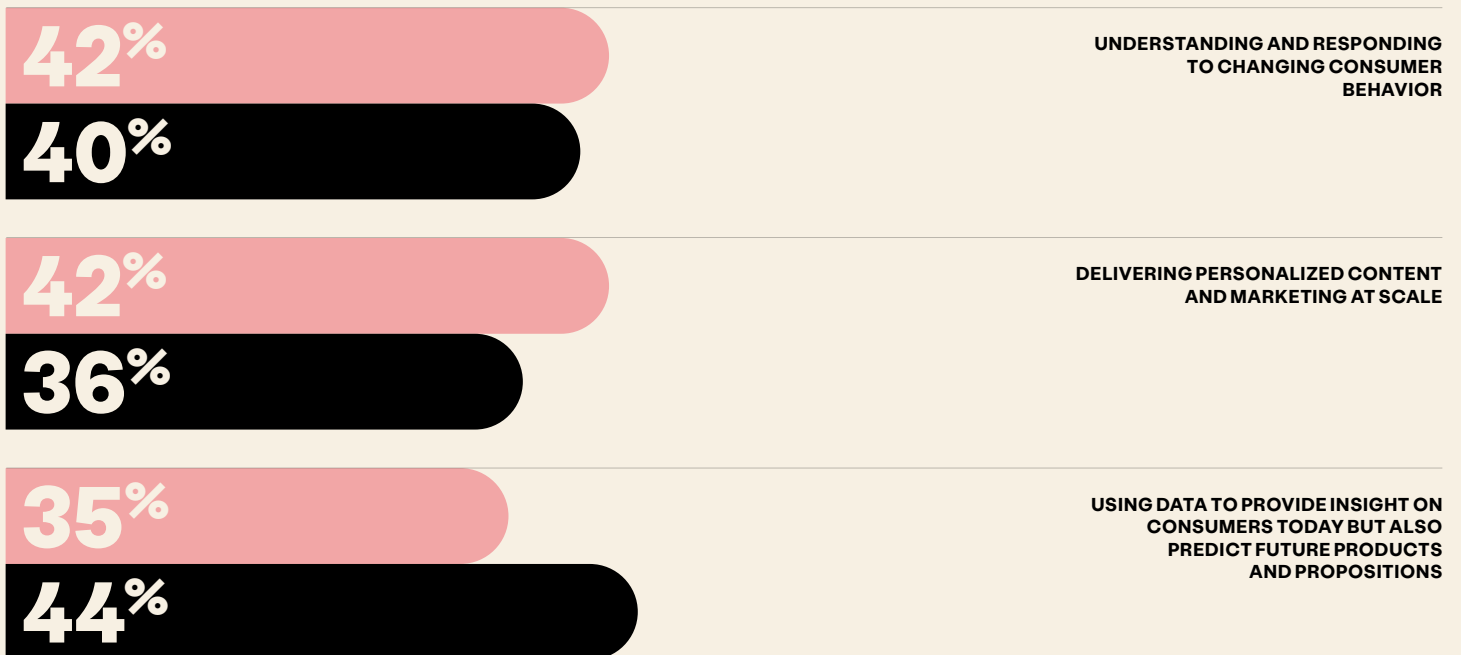
More broadly, data and insight challenges are hampering clients' ability to embrace the full potential of personalization and contextual relevance. **78%** of CMOs find it a challenge to deliver personalized marketing at scale, with **77%** struggling to own the customer relationship in a world where third parties from retailers to technology platforms often seem to hold more power.

These challenges are especially troubling in light of CMO's key strategic priorities: personalized and data-driven marketing is their number one strategic priority, followed by the ability to build 1:1 relationships and to leverage AI for insight and targeting.

"Understand the consumer/market trends" is identified as the primary role of marketing by **42%** of respondents, ahead even of driving business growth at **41%**. Japan, the UK and Mexico are most likely to define understanding the future as their primary role, while Canada, Australia, Brazil, Italy and Spain prioritize growth.

HOW MUCH OF A CHALLENGE ARE THESE ISSUES?

● MINOR ● SIGNIFICANT



FROM INSIGHT TO FORESIGHT

In response, marketers are investing in data and insight, with **59%** of CMOS claiming to use AI and Machine Learning to predict change in consumer behaviors, **59%** investing in social listening to anticipate changes in sentiment and others engaging communities in a process of insight gathering and co-creation.

Predicting the future is an intriguing – and often highly flawed – blend of sophisticated data analytics and human insight. Large language models are transforming the ways we interact with unstructured data, with potential to identify not only current trends but the emergent and high velocity trends at a scale and speed beyond what is currently possible.

Yet understanding what drives a niche trend or community with potential to scale remains a very human and manual endeavor. Cultural curiosity and connection remains a vital asset agencies can bring marketers.

CMOS ARE TURNING TO AI, SOCIAL LISTENING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO GIVE THEM THE BENEFIT OF FORESIGHT



FROM AI AS COMPETITOR TO AI AS CO-PILOT

Under pressure to anticipate the future, we see CMO's attitudes towards AI as a creative partner changing rapidly. While last year's survey showed a strong conviction that AI will never make work that touches the heart, CMOs in 2024 are less certain. From believing that human craft and AI are staunchly separate, many are now interested to explore the intersection of humanity and technology.

79% of marketers still agree that human craft is critically important in the creation of distinctive brand ideas. However, we saw a marked decline in those convinced that AI can never truly compete with the human imagination. In last year's survey, **75%** of respondents agreed that Generative AI will never truly replace the human imagination. This year, that number fell to **65%**.

In 2023, **67%** of marketers agreed that AI would never be able to create content that truly move people versus just **49%** in this year's survey. **81%** of last year's respondents agreed that their customers would pay a premium for human-created content and experiences, versus **65%** of this year's CMO cohort. An extraordinary shift in attitudes in just 12 months.

This transformation also opens CMO's eyes to the potential of Generative AI as a collaborator and partner.

77% agreed that they would be interested in an AI trained on their brand's tone and style, although **47%** remained concerned that AI-assisted creativity could not truly capture their brand voice.

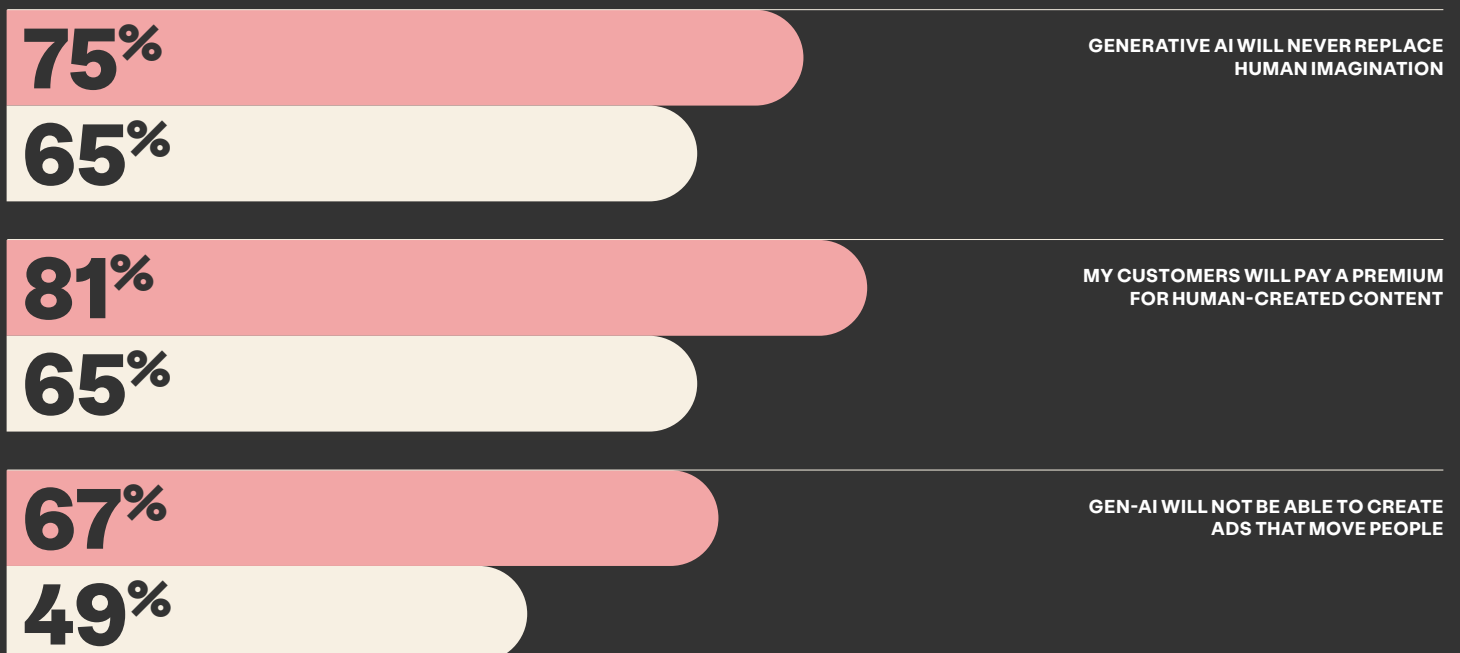
On a positive note, CMOs in 2024 feel more confident in their roles: **46%** of respondents in 2024 felt that AI might take their jobs, down over 10 percentage points from **57%** in 2023, perhaps a response to deeper understanding of the power of collaboration and co-creation with AI.

Despite the significant shifts in opinion, we believe the findings signal a more nuanced understanding of the power of AI and how it complements the human imagination.

The positive outlook is that AI will not compete with human imagination, but grant it superpowers; the ability to deliver big, bold and emotional ideas at an unforeseen level of scale, personalization and responsiveness. Progressive writers and art directors will work hand in hand with AI, scaling their talents far beyond what is humanly possible. Increasingly important in a world where **78%** of marketers agree "It is important for my content to be produced at scale, seamlessly, across multiple channels and territories."

HOW STRONGLY DO YOU AGREE WITH THESE STATEMENTS?

● 2023 ● 2024



FROM INNOVATION AT THE EDGES TO INNOVATION AT THE CORE

As growth becomes challenging, and markets stagnate, innovation is a greater imperative than ever.

The CMOs in our survey are inevitably experiencing different economic headwinds across markets, and as a result attitudes to growth vary significantly. In mature economies such as the UK, Germany and Japan between **28-30%** of CMOs reported flat or declining revenues while markets such as India, the UAE, Mexico and Brazil were significantly more likely to report positive momentum.

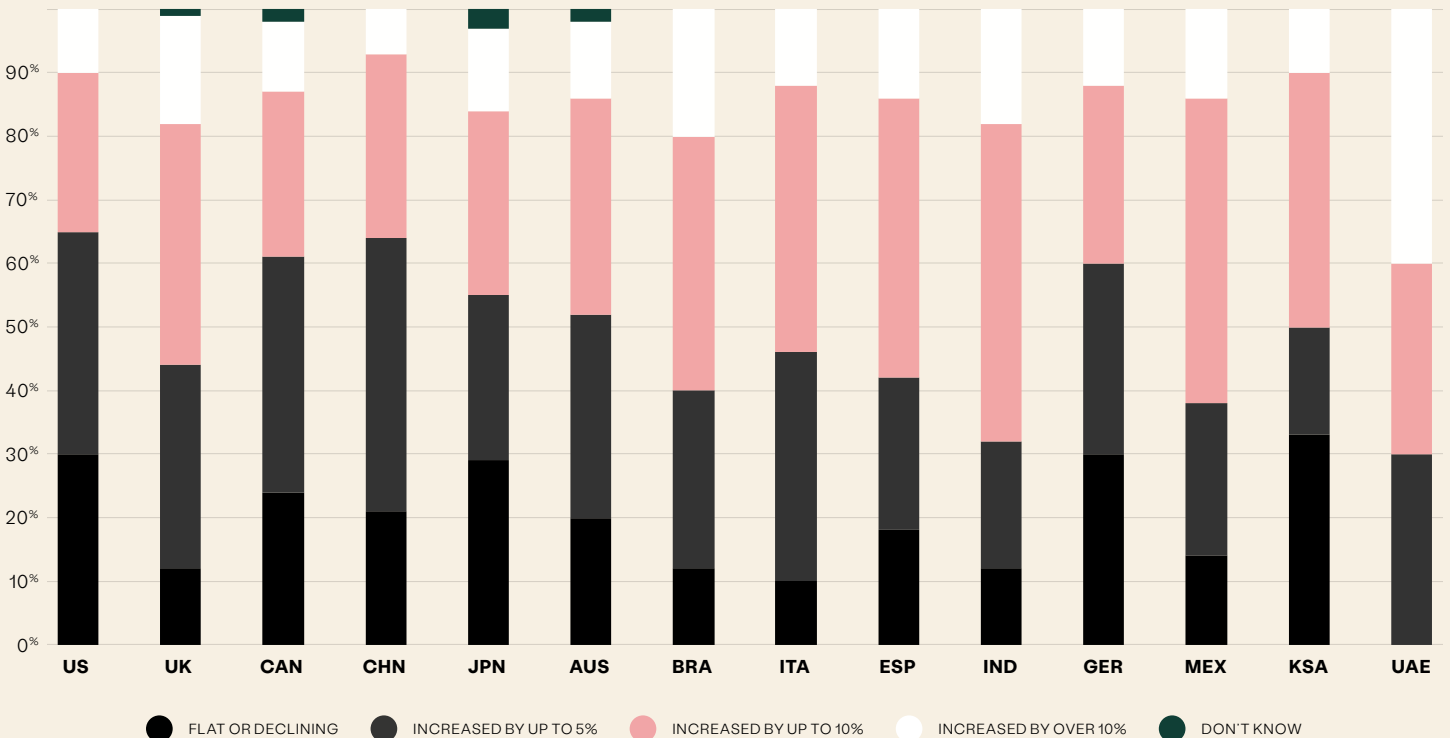
Overall, however, **85%** of CMOs agreed that increasing competition and market saturation is a challenge for their business, while **83%** cite growth in an economic slowdown as a significant challenge.

Perhaps as a result, investment in innovation is a significant priority for the CMOs in our survey. **79%** of those surveyed will invest over **10%** of their budget in innovation, with the highest percentage (**28%**) claiming they will invest **21-30%** in innovation; a long way from the 70:30:10 model often referenced in the past.

When it comes to the technologies that they believe will help them innovate, **41%** of CMOs are planning to adopt AI/Machine Learning to help personalize experiences and tailor content, **49%** are planning to explore immersive experience such as virtual try-on, **46%** are planning to introduce gamification techniques and **40%** are planning to implement Blockchain technologies to ensure transparency and traceability.

One stumbling block may be the struggle to find an innovation partner: **60%** of CMOs don't feel they have the agency partner they need to help them innovate. In response to client demand, [Dentsu Lab](#) will expand around the world in 2024, collaborating with marketers to solve their more urgent business and societal challenges through the power of creative innovation.

BY WHAT PERCENTAGE DID YOUR TOTAL GLOBAL REVENUE CHANGE LAST YEAR?



FROM TAKING BRIEFS TO TRANSFORMING BUSINESS

Perhaps the most significant finding of our survey is the changing role of the marketing department, and by extension the agency in a world where growth is harder to come by and change is a constant. **79%** of CMOs agree that "Marketing in my organization is seen as a driver of business transformation" versus **67%** who believe that "Marketing in my business is seen primarily as communications".

The role of the CMO has evolved to encompass foresight, growth, end-to-end customer experience and innovation as much as comms, and they need an agency partner who can support them with flexible teaming solutions, and creativity at the core.

79% agree that "I want an agency that can solve my biggest problems through the power of creativity" while **70%** are prepared to be challenged in that pursuit, agreeing "I want an agency that can bring me what I need, not what I want."

Moreover, CMOs increasingly want their marketing activities to impact not just business, but to have wider societal impact; **78%** agree "I want my marketing activity to impact people, impact business and impact society." **77%** agree brands have a responsibility to change society for the better, while **62%** of CMOs worry about the impact of their marketing activities on the planet and on society.

Intriguingly, **76%** of CMOs agree that consumers believe sustainable brands are worth paying more for; suggesting that for an increasing number of brands and business growth and societal good are intertwined.

The CMOs in our survey are experiencing different economic challenges and headwinds and have different views on the economic outlook for 2025; yet it is worth noting that those CMOs who believe most strongly in the transformative power of creativity are most likely to report positive business momentum.

89% of CMOs who experienced more than 10% revenue growth year on year agree that "Creativity is more important to my business than ever," and **86%** of those who experienced 5-10% growth. By contrast, those CMOs reporting flat or declining revenues were significantly less likely to agree: just **71%** of those reporting static revenues agreed, and **73%** of those who experienced revenue declines.

Similarly, those marketers most committed to creativity were most likely to anticipate additional marketing investment in 2025. **83%** of those anticipating that their budget will grow by 5% or above agree that creativity is more important than ever to the business, compared with **70%** of those anticipating flat or declining budgets.

HOW STRONGLY DO YOU AGREE WITH THESE STATEMENTS?

70%

Agree "I want an agency that can bring me what I need, not what I want."

79%

Agree that "The marketing in my organization is seen as a driver of business transformation"

79%

Agree "I want an agency that can solve my problems through the power of creativity"

AS AN INDUSTRY, WE ARE NOW IN THE ERA OF SUDDEN CHANGE.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR BRANDS, BUSINESSES AND AGENCIES

As an industry, we are now in the era of sudden change. Technology is evolving at exponential pace. Climate change is happening in the here and now, not the distant future, and is estimated to cost the global economy \$38 trillion by 2050.⁷ The political climate is more volatile than it has been for many decades.

The communications landscape we are building and working within sits at the very heart of many of these changes. The way we make, distribute, target and measure our work is changing. In ten-maybe five-years' time the outputs, the teams, and the processes we create will look fundamentally different. It's an exciting prospect.

So what will the future look like, and how do we embrace sudden change, not fear it? We see a world where culture, commerce and customer experience will converge as never before. All powered by communities of passion and interest. Accelerated by a production landscape transformed by the might of the creator economy (an estimated 40m creators are adding commercial value to brands today⁸) and the rise of Generative AI.

In this world, the role of agencies will change, on every level:

What we Do

Big brand ideas that win hearts and minds will matter more than ever. But those ideas will come to life in new ways. To thrive, we will need ideas that truly impact people, impact business, and impact society.

Impacting people through ideas that create culture and connect communities. Impacting society through ideas that create lasting change, not flashes of awareness. Impacting Business through innovation that transforms business models and routes to market.

How we Do It

As brands are built through partnerships and with communities, agencies will become orchestrators, curators and connectors. The agency of the future will be an ecosystem designed to connect and inspire the right talent around the right brief, powered by real time insight.

Why We Do It

The most exciting agencies will exist to partner their clients on a journey of transformation. Transforming their businesses for a world where growth is harder to come by and sustainability an ever more urgent imperative. Creativity will be needed more than ever, but it will be a new kind of creativity. A creativity that is applied across every aspect of a clients' business, from product to operations to supply chain to communication.

We call it Transformative Creativity.

APPENDIX

SOURCES

1 [The Cost of Eyeballs on Ads is Still Going up Fast, Dr. Grace Kite, LinkedIn, 2023](#)

2 [The Attention Economy, dentsu, 2024](#)

3 [Why Brands Can Strike Gold with Podcasts, Spotify](#)

4 [Consumer Vision 2025, dentsu, 2024](#)

5 [Live Commerce 2023, eMarketer, 2023](#)

6 [Consumer Vision 2025, dentsu, 2024](#)

7 [Climate change damage could cost \\$38 trillion per year by 2050, study finds, Reuters, 2024](#)

8 [How Your Business Should Tap into the Creator Economy, Harvard Business Review, 2024](#)

THANK YOU

ABOUT DENTSU CREATIVE

Dentsu Creative is a global creative agency network designed to unlock exponential growth for clients. We use Transformative Creativity as a differentiating, driving force to bring our capabilities together to positively impact people, business and society.

Established in June 2022, Dentsu Creative is integrated with dentsu's Media and CXM businesses in over 145 countries and regions, to offer Integrated Growth Solutions.

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ABOUT DENTSU CMO NAVIGATOR

Dentsu's CMO Navigator series is a global thought-leadership platform that provides insights from marketing leaders around the world on their evolving remit, priorities and challenges. This report, the first in the 2024 cycle of the CMO Navigator, offers a perspective on global CMOs' mindsets and priorities when it comes to creativity. Later in the year, this report will be followed by two additional CMO Navigator releases, focused on media transformation and customer experience transformation respectively.

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