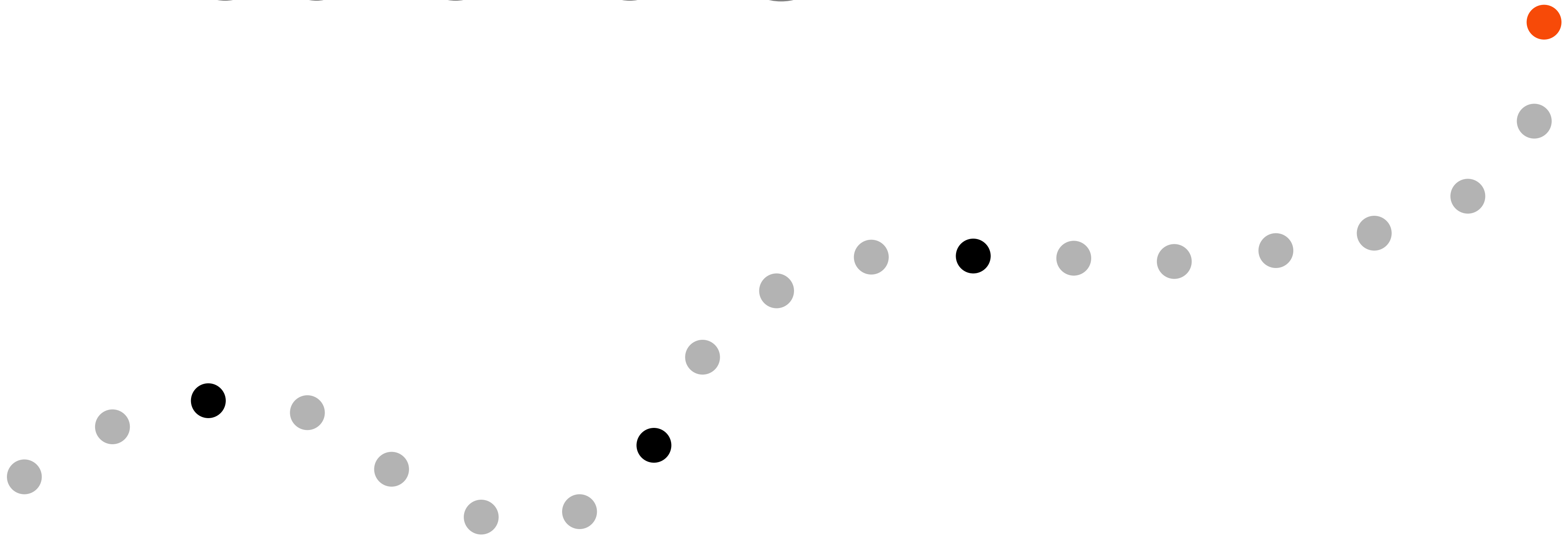


Creative Experience: The Evolution of CX



isobar

“This survey defines **Creative Experience** — how the intersection of data, creativity and technology will lead the future transformation of businesses and brands through experience.

It is a must-read for any marketer aspiring to deliver next-level customer experience. Brands today need to satisfy their customers in a beautiful way and having a creative experience approach to marketing is the first step to success.”



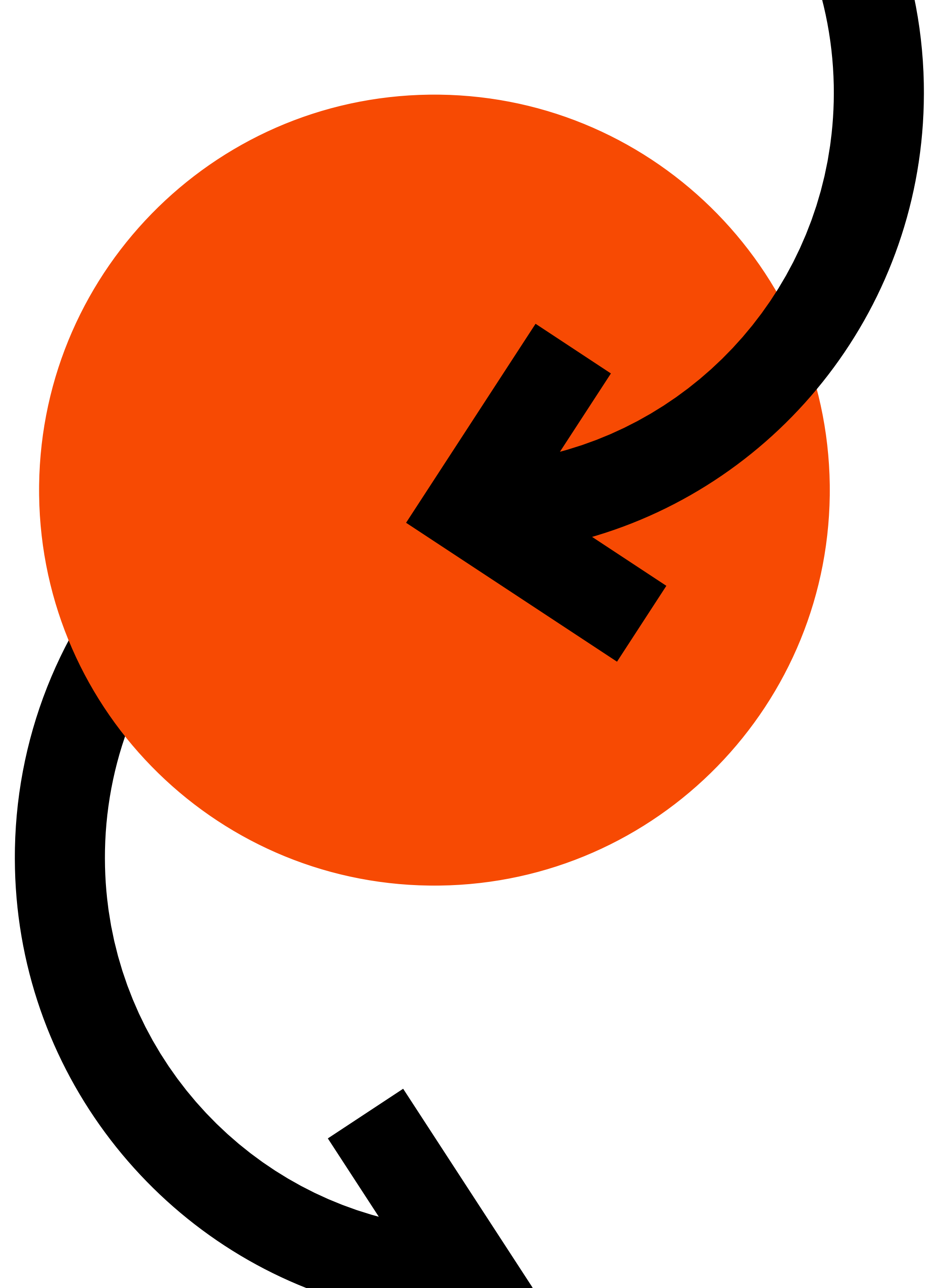
Jean Lin, Isobar Global CEO

Introduction	03
Speed Read	05
Key Findings Explored	06
Practical Tools & Frameworks to drive Creative Experience	11
Appendix	27

The Experience Economy was born out of the **rise of digital and technological advancements.**

Yet with Customer Experience becoming increasingly commoditised, investment in technology alone won't ensure long term success for brands.

CMOs are facing a new set of challenges that only a creative approach to experience can help solve.



Customer Experience as every marketer's battleground

Technology is changing human behaviour - from how we work and play, how we travel, shop, spend our leisure time and engage with brands. It has permanently transformed our expectations, enabling us to work more efficiently and to live healthier, more socially-connected lives, rich with opportunities to shape who we are through what we buy.

The digital economy has led to a rise in customer expectations, and concurrently, technology advances have triggered rapidly diminishing differences in product and service functionality. As a result, competition has peaked, and Customer Experience has become the only point of meaningful differentiation for brands.

CX: Today - Technology focused

Savvy CMOs are increasingly investing in Customer Experience to meet consumer expectations. As the cost of digital continues to fall, the use of technology in a Customer Experience is leading to these critical brand moments becoming more homogenous. With so many potential touchpoints available to them, brands have focused on achieving brand consistency and reducing friction, but at what creative cost?

We know there are many tools available to create great Customer experiences for brands; from technology platforms, to digital marketing software and AI-assistants. However in a world where brand experiences are becoming interchangeable, creativity and design is critical for differentiation and providing customer experiences that truly stand-out for consumers.

The new CX is Creative Experience

Creative Experience is an evolution of CX to create distinct and connected experiences that create a place for brands to live in people's lives. **Creative Experience sits at the intersection of data, creativity & technology and delivers holistic, highly-crafted, customer-centric brand moments that provide utility around the consumer and their specific needs.** These experiences are inspired by insights that use storytelling to resonate emotionally, whilst leveraging technology to unlock products and services that deliver value. Experience is the link between marketing communications and loyalty and CRM to build brand loyalty.

We believe Creative Experience is also critically important to drive commerce, as the gap between brand inspiration and brand transaction has never been closer and consumers demand simplicity in experience. This survey provides us with concrete evidence that creativity a critical component of CX, and that Experience is the future of brand building and commerce.

01

Marketers are facing tough challenges including a rise in customer expectations, increased competition and an unprecedented speed of change. 46% CMOs said they ‘struggle to deliver on customer expectations today’, but it is ‘the pace of customer expectations’ that is really holding back 57% business.

02

Businesses are investing in creativity as a priority to transform customer experience, with 47% of CMOs specifically looking to ‘invest in creativity’ next year, and 85% believing that ‘creativity and big ideas’ are important to the future success of the business.

03

Consistency is the most important thing? ‘A product or service that delivers consistently’ was considered to be the most important thing in delivering a good experience. However, only 44% of consumers considered a ‘brand’s ability to deliver consistently’ was an important factor - brands need to determine what the right balance is.

04

Marketers are increasingly dissatisfied with their creative output - while 62% of CMOs said ‘creative ideas’ are an agency’s most valuable asset. So creativity is an important opportunity to meet consumer expectations, deliver client needs and for agencies to thrive.

05

Marketers are playing a bigger role in business transformation with 80% due to expand their responsibilities to include ‘product and services’. But will their investments today help to build their tomorrow? Only 37% of CMOs are ‘investing in innovation’ to support the development of customer experiences next year.

06

Not one person ‘owns’ Customer Experience - there is a responsibility gap with 53% of the CMOs ‘believing marketing is responsible for developing the overall customer experience’, but only 36% said they actually had responsibility for delivering this task in their organisation.

07

Commerce is growing steadily but CMOs need to invest in direct relationships - whilst 40% of marketers say that ‘eCommerce is already important to the success of their business today’, it’s expected to be even more critical in future.

08

The three key ingredients for CX - what are the must-have items on every marketer’s CX shopping list? ‘Customer-centred business strategy’, an ‘innovative use of technology’ and ‘data analytics to personalise products and services’ were named as the most important ingredients to build CX.

A **relentless** pace of change

With advancements in technology and businesses born in the digital age on the rise (without legacy and armed with direct to consumer data), the competitive environment is constantly evolving and advancing at pace with 60% of CMOs reporting an ‘increased level of competition’ (an increase of 4% from 2018).

When we asked Marketers to describe the external challenges they face, 60% said they ‘struggle to deliver on customer expectations’. The ‘pace of increased customer expectations’ is holding back 57% of marketers in the delivery of customer experiences specifically, and in fast-growing markets like Germany 75% of CMOs report this as a problem.

Confidence is low as a result - 46% said that consumer expectations of their brand will increase to the point where they ‘struggle to deliver on these expectations’. And one of the top internal challenges CMOs faces is an ‘inability to transform the business’ quick enough (which has risen by 6% in the last year alone).

Marketers are **playing a bigger role** in business transformation

Today, the majority of CMOs believe that one of the primary roles of the marketing function is to ‘deliver business growth’ and an even bigger majority believe the role of marketing will be to ‘deliver business growth’ in two to three years.

In an era where brands are more than what they say, brands are what they do, marketers understand that they are expected to play an even bigger role in delivering business transformation and leading disruptive innovation in the next few years. However, does the allocation of business budgets reflect that? 50% of CMOs report that ‘securing long term investment’ is a top three internal challenge.

Not one person ‘**owns**’ Customer Experience

75% of CMOs agreed that delivering better customer experience requires ‘better internal integration’, with 41% of the people we surveyed said ‘responsibility for delivery’ sits in different parts of the business, and this holds back the ‘delivery of superior customer experiences’.

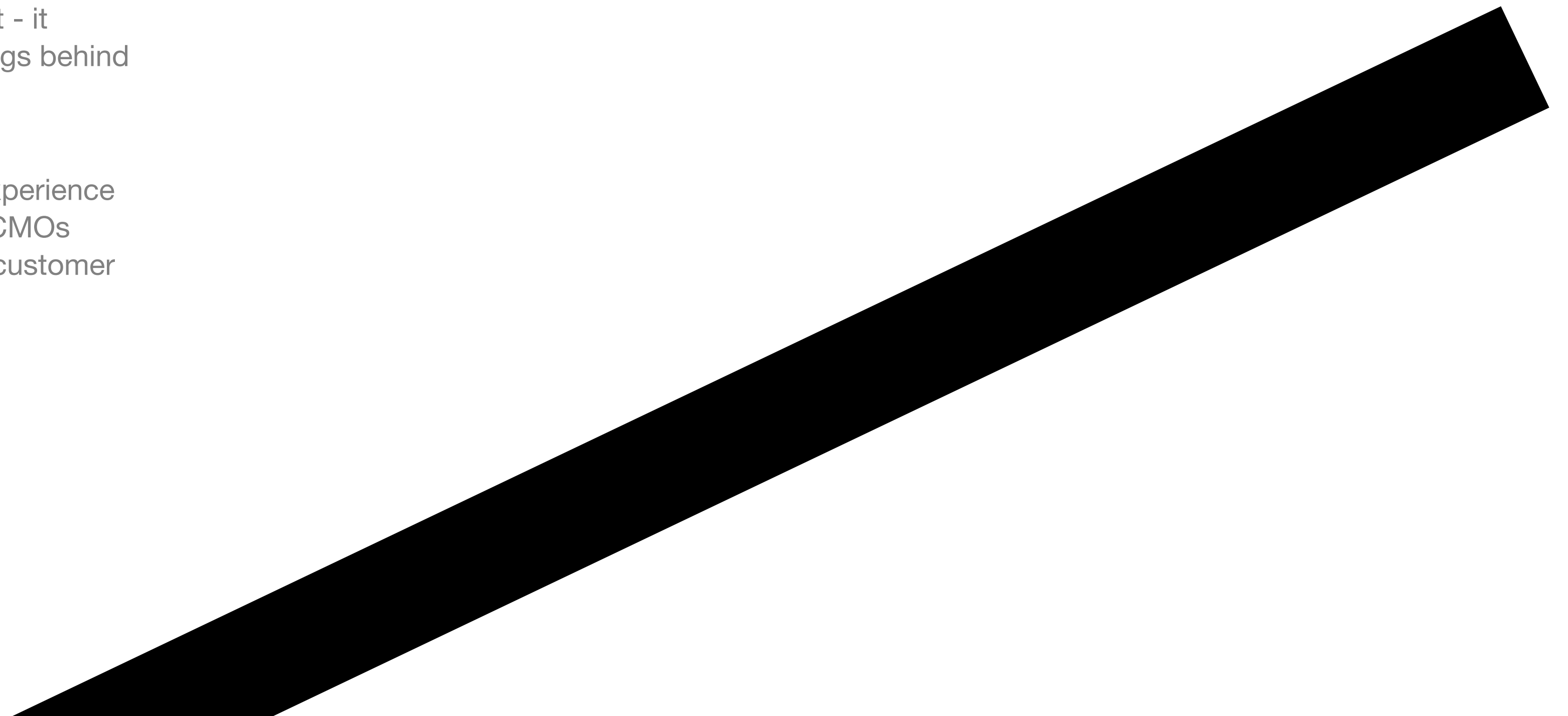
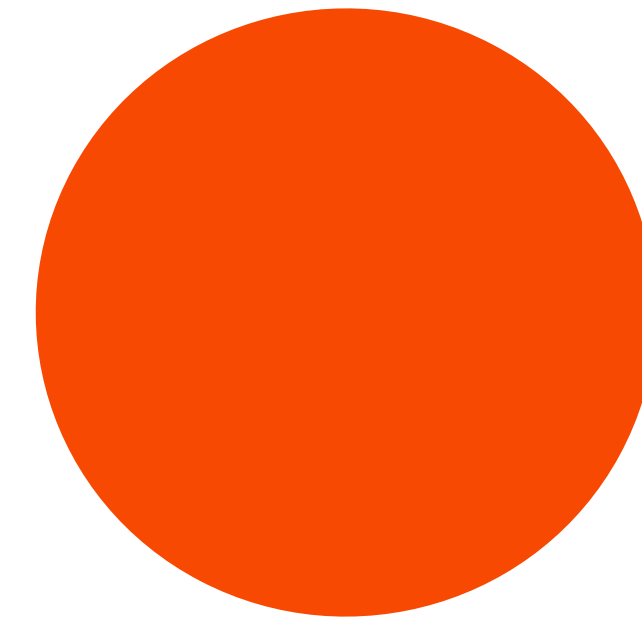
Across 1,000 CMOS in ten markets surveyed, CX is split across roles, from CMO, Chief Customer Officer, Chief Digital Officer, Chief Growth Officer, Chief Technology Officer, Chief Executive Officer and more, with CMOS being the largest group (36% on global average) responsible for delivering customer experience. There are, however, large market differences in the results, for example, 58% said CMOs are responsible in China, 52% said Chief Customer Officer in Russia, and 47% CEO in Japan.

Whilst 53% of the CMOS we surveyed said that the primary role of the marketing function lies in ‘developing the overall customer experience’, only 36% said they had ‘overall responsibility’ for delivering customer experience in their current organisation.

Brands are **missing** the CX bar

Between the speed of change, a 'CX responsibility gap' and a lack of long term marketing investment - it comes as no surprise that customer experience lags behind its potential.

75% of CMOs say delivering a better customer experience requires 'better internal integration' according to CMOs and 40% don't feel they are delivering 'seamless customer experiences and commerce' well.



Consistency is the **most important thing**?

Consistency means different things to different people. To brand marketers, consistency is used to describe the replication of branded content, but we view consistency of service as important specifically in customer experiences. When we asked CMOs what ‘good customer experience’ means, the majority said ‘a product or service that delivers consistently’ (64%), ‘consistent service across all touchpoints’ (54%) and ‘brand loyalty’ (49%). 79% predicted that they will ‘have to work harder to deliver consistently across all touchpoints of their brands’.

However, when consumers have been asked what is most important, ‘consistency’ is rated much lower relative to other factors including ‘trust and transparency’. Only 44% of consumers consider a ‘brands’ ability to deliver consistently’ was an important factor in increasing their trust levels in a business.

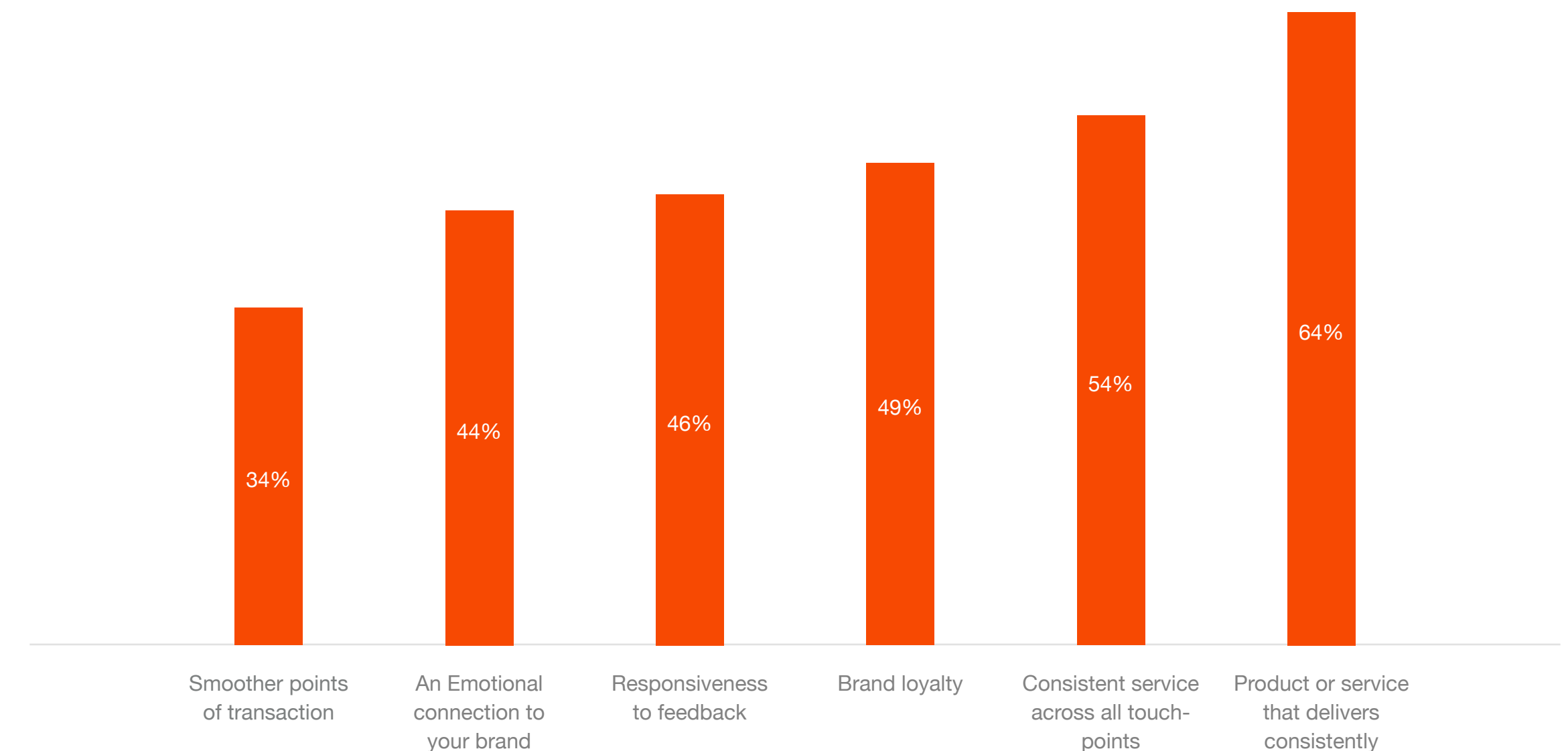
We believe that a focus on consistency within brand marketing has contributed to a uniformity of experience - with one brand indistinguishable from the next. In a bid to deliver on consumer expectations, marketers turn to the same techniques leveraging the same technology platforms with the goal of exponential growth and customer convenience. At the same time, they have divided and diversified their efforts across touchpoints but stopped short of creating channel and brand-specific strategies that are compelling and differentiated. So customer experience has stagnated - both across touchpoints and within brands.

“If it’s predictable, then it’s not creative.”

— Ronald Ng, Isobar Global Chief Creative Officer

We only need to look at the striking similarities between food delivery, travel, and supermarket apps to find that brands are prioritising functionality above all else. Which begs the question, is a focus on consistency conducive to building creative, and memorable experiences? In an age where personalisation is a key driver of brand loyalty, should marketers move from focusing on consistency to building brands through the use of creativity to create meaning?

What is a good Customer Experience?



Creativity & ideas are the **bedrock** of Experience

85% of CMOs said that ‘creativity and big ideas’ that build the brand and that make create an emotional connection are important to the future success of their business and 47% of CMOs will be making an ‘investment in creativity’ to enhance their customer experiences next year. This was followed by ‘Data and analytics’ (45%) and ‘Marketing Software’ (40%). Forrester’s conclusion in its June 2019 report ‘The Cost of Losing Creativity’ that experience demands investment in creativity also supports our findings.

Only through the smart fusion of creativity and technology will we be able to deliver a superior experience that doesn’t just digitalise experience, but distinguishes, transforms and augments brand experience beyond what was previously possible. 46% of marketers said that they are average, below average or weak in delivering ‘creativity and big ideas’ that build the brand and create an emotional connection.

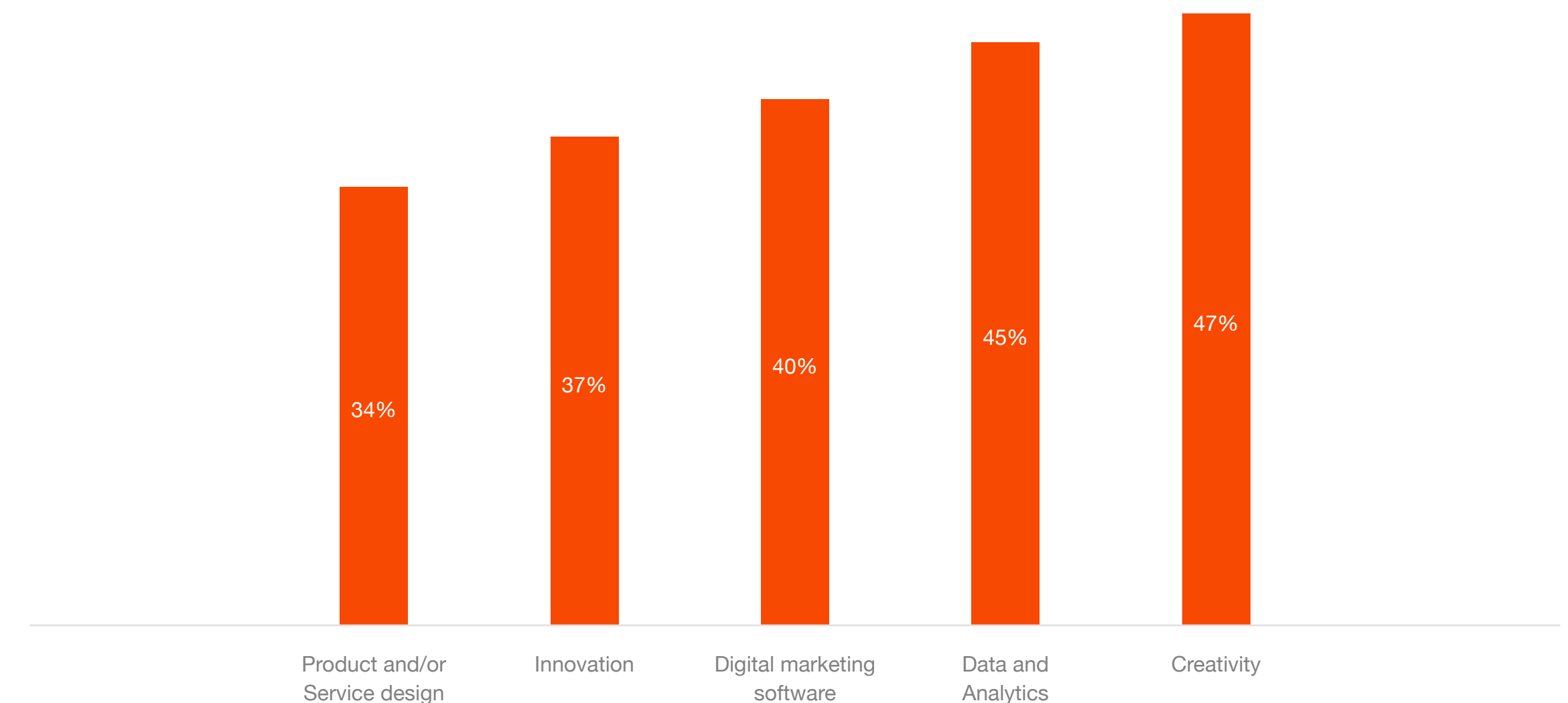
It’s therefore not surprising that 48% said that ‘creativity and ideation’ ranked top in importance to the success of their business in the next 2-3 years, and creativity would be receiving the lions share of investment, with 73% CMOs agree that cutting through the noise requires ‘more investment in creativity and big ideas’.

“Optimisation and personalisation are table stakes. Every experience a brand creates for the customer is an opportunity to build the brand. Transformation will only happen when brands are built through the best experiences they offer to people – seamless, frictionless, delightful and consistent on-brand experiences.”

— Ronald Ng, Isobar Global Chief Creative Officer

Forrester’s Jay Pattisall, argues in ‘The Cost of Losing Creativity’, that marketers will need to shift \$19B from technology to creativity. According to the Forrester ROI model, making this investment will garner \$66 billion for businesses. Forrester also showcased that the value of investing in creative differentiation over the next six years would be \$10 billion more. This shift in balance to enabling creativity to support technology investments would lead to making the technology investments working to their maximum potential.

What investments is your business making in Customer Experience in the next year?



Agencies ability to develop creative ideas and campaigns are an **important future source of differentiation**

When faced with big targets, and even bigger challenges, marketers are looking at their agency portfolios more closely. 62% of Marketers said that agencies ability to ‘develop creative ideas and campaigns’ is an important future source of differentiation - so creativity isn’t just critical to the survival of brands, it’s also critical to the survival of marketing agencies.

Tech and Data fuel a superior Customer Experience

Marketers understand that CX depends on the combination and collaboration across departments and skill sets. Whilst they are investing in creativity as a priority they are continuing to see the benefits of using technology and data to accelerate CX. In our survey CMOs said they believe the key ingredients to superior customer experience are ‘a customer-centred business strategy’ (64%) followed by an ‘innovative use of technology’ (53%) and ‘data analytics to personalise products and services’ (47%). This aligns with their investments for the next year with 47% of CMOs making an investment in ‘Creativity’ to enhance their customer experiences next year (followed by ‘Data’ 45% and ‘analytics’ and ‘marketing software’ (40%).

Innovation **lacks investment**

Half of CMOs have admitted to more short term strategies of two years or less. While many innovations can be viewed as incremental and additive to experience, in many cases innovation is seen as a longer term investment, particularly when it transcends campaigns or media innovation and addresses core needs of the business.

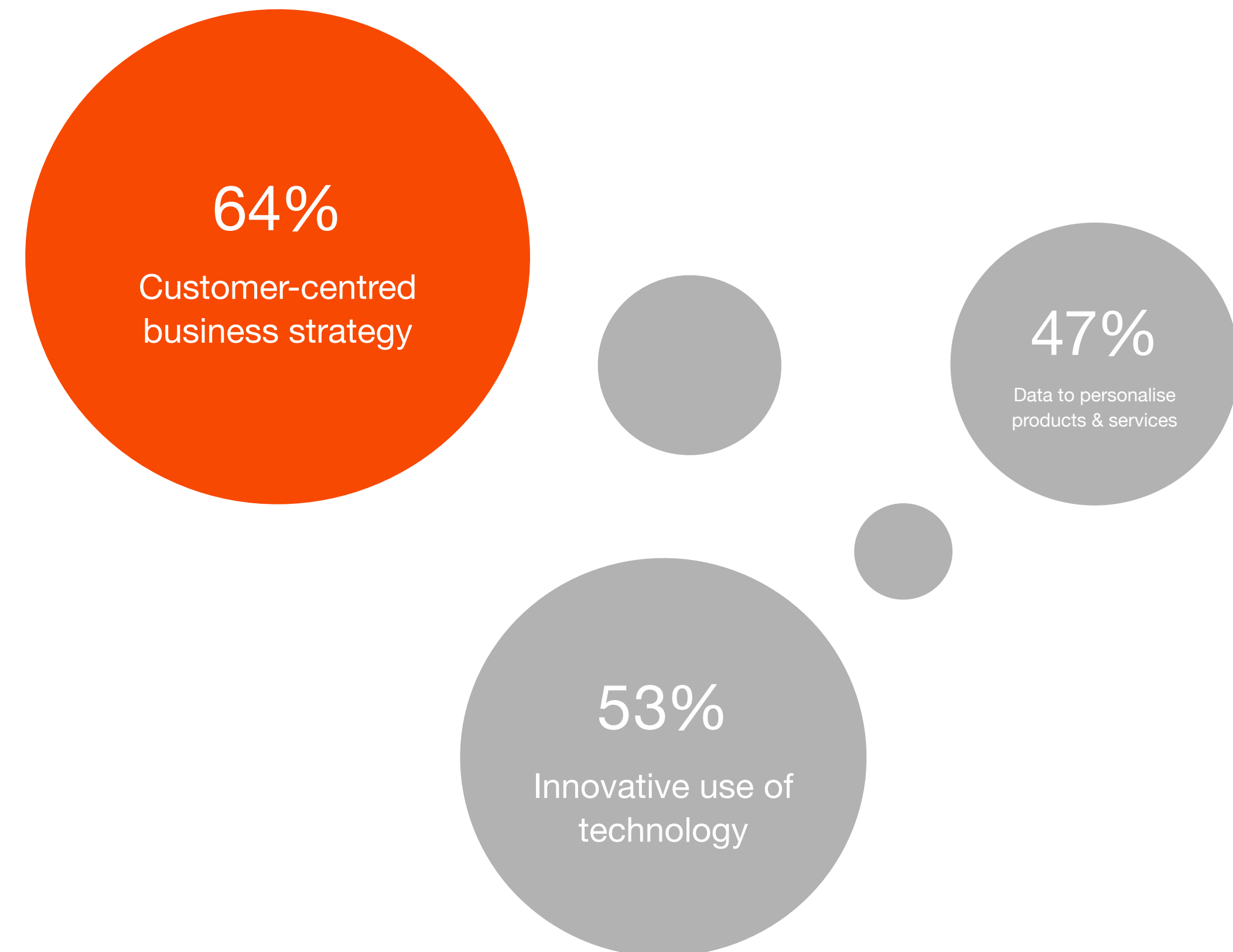
Considering experience is the last meaningful point of differentiation for brands, it is perhaps surprising that only 37% of CMOs said that they would be investing in improving their customer experiences through ‘Innovation’ next year. At the same time, 80% of marketers are set to take more responsibility for ‘product and service innovation’. When we asked CMOs about innovation, a higher proportion of CMOs were already using emerging technologies and the vast majority anticipate leveraging them in the future.

Taking a more broad, design-led approach to innovation, can lead to more rapid transformation of the customer experience.

With insights from 1,000 CMOs, we have identified **5 focus areas** for CMOs to enable the best Customer Experience for their brand, through leveraging the combined power of data, technology and creativity:

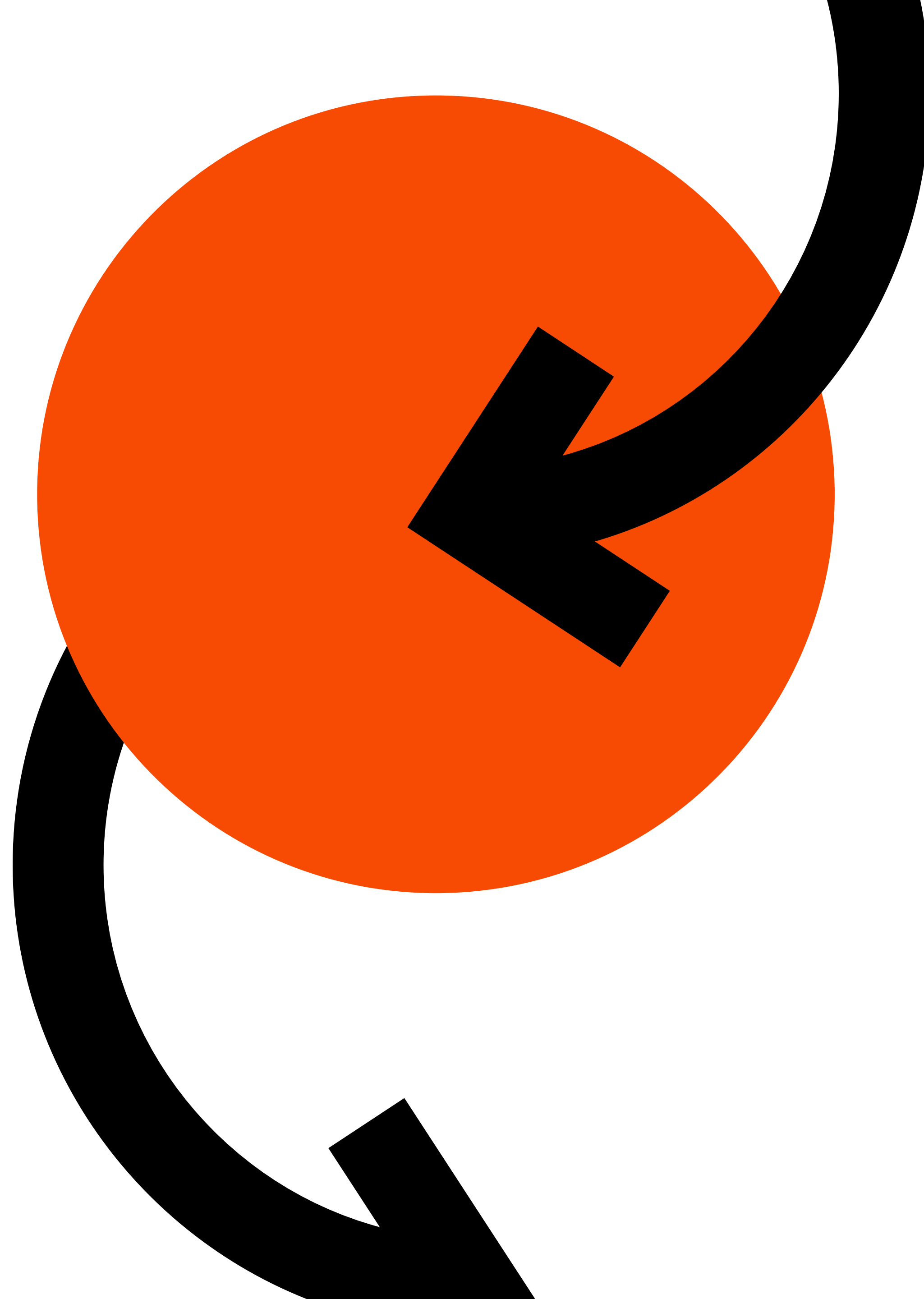
- Developing a Transformational Strategy powered by creativity
- Evaluating Technology architecture to underpin experience success
- Investing in Commerce through a D2C platform strategy
- Measuring Innovation to increase investment to drive business results
- Utilising Modern Creativity to create Experiences that resonate

What are the 3 key ingredients for delivering superior Customer Experiences?



01

Developing a
Transformational
Strategy
powered by
creativity



1. Developing a transformational strategy powered by creativity

In today's digital economy, businesses need a new approach to embrace change. As technological advances have led to an imbalance between supply and demand, as well as diminished product functional differentiation, real transformation strategies are no longer about tinkering around the edges and optimising current business value chains but increasingly about re-imagining the core in order to be a disruptor. As supply outstrips demand and the customer is inundated with choices, the classical product-market fit about finding a market for a product, is replaced by finding a product for the market. Transformation strategies, therefore, have to start with meeting customers unmet needs by designing and delivering brand experiences.

79% of CMOs agree that they need to transform their business through digital technologies, not just optimise it.

This problem is also exacerbated by the average marketing strategy planning for only 2 years or less, compounding a lack of long-term thinking by CMOs. However, Businesses can no longer rely on incremental improvements to customer experiences to achieve growth in revenue. So optimisation won't cut it - and whilst transformation strategy is tough, it is the only means of survival.

“As commoditisation becomes ubiquitous, designing and delivering total brand experiences is the real last hope for a brand to be distinctive, memorable and mitigate the risk of disruption.”

— Sandipan Roy, Isobar APAC CSO

Total brand experience is the delivery of a distinctive brand purpose to customers and employees in a meaningful manner, and is the engine for real transformation strategy. The best way to transform customer experience is to put the customer at the centre of business - from awareness to the transaction to advocacy. This is agreed by 64% of CMOs who listed customer-centred business strategy as a key ingredient in building superior customer experiences.

“To be successful, businesses need to design meaningful customer experiences, and our approach is first to start with experience and work backwards through the different parts of the value chain to transform them.”

— Jean Lin, Isobar Global CEO

CMOs see benefits of a customer-centred strategy going beyond customer experience - citing how it increases 'long term sustainability of the business', supports the 'product offer developing in line with customer expectations' and an 'increase in the effectiveness of communications'. In total, a transformational strategy enables a brand to deliver its purpose through the entire purchase and usage funnel, which then creates a virtuous cycle of preference, purchase, usage and bonding.

How can we leverage this customer-centric thinking to transform Customer Experience?

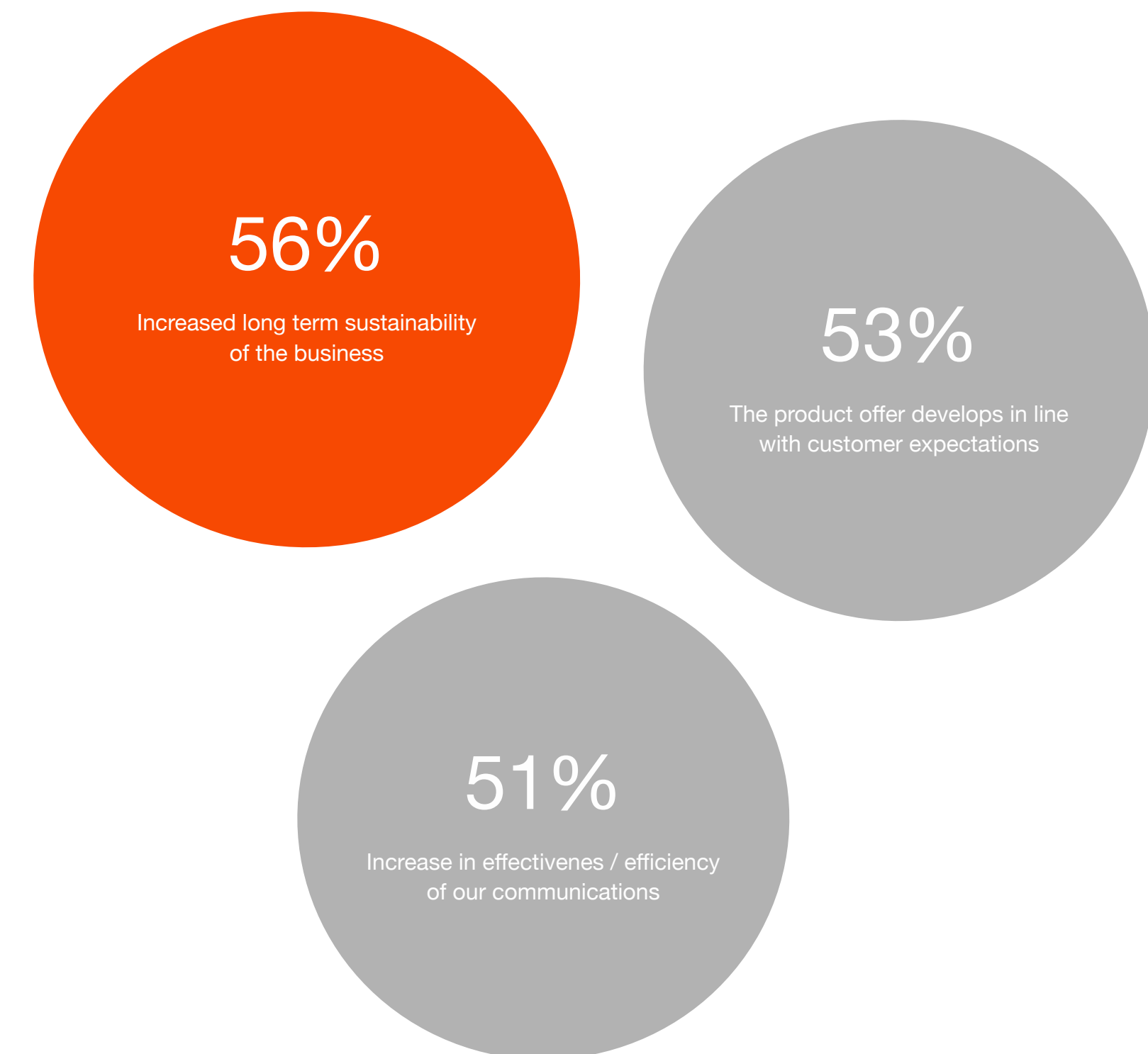
Firstly, businesses need to create the backbone of their experience strategy by determining why the business exists, then the business needs to clarify the markets unmet need, where it needs to transform to deliver the experience, and how to enable that transformation. To be able to answer those questions, businesses need to adopt a 3-phased approach:

1. **Craft the brand purpose** and meet unmet needs across the customer journey with meaningful and distinctive experiences.
2. **Transform parts of the value chain** ie value proposition, business model, product functionality and portfolio architecture to deliver these experiences.
3. **Create enablers within the business** ie organisation design, partner ecosystem, processes, tech and data to facilitate the transformation.



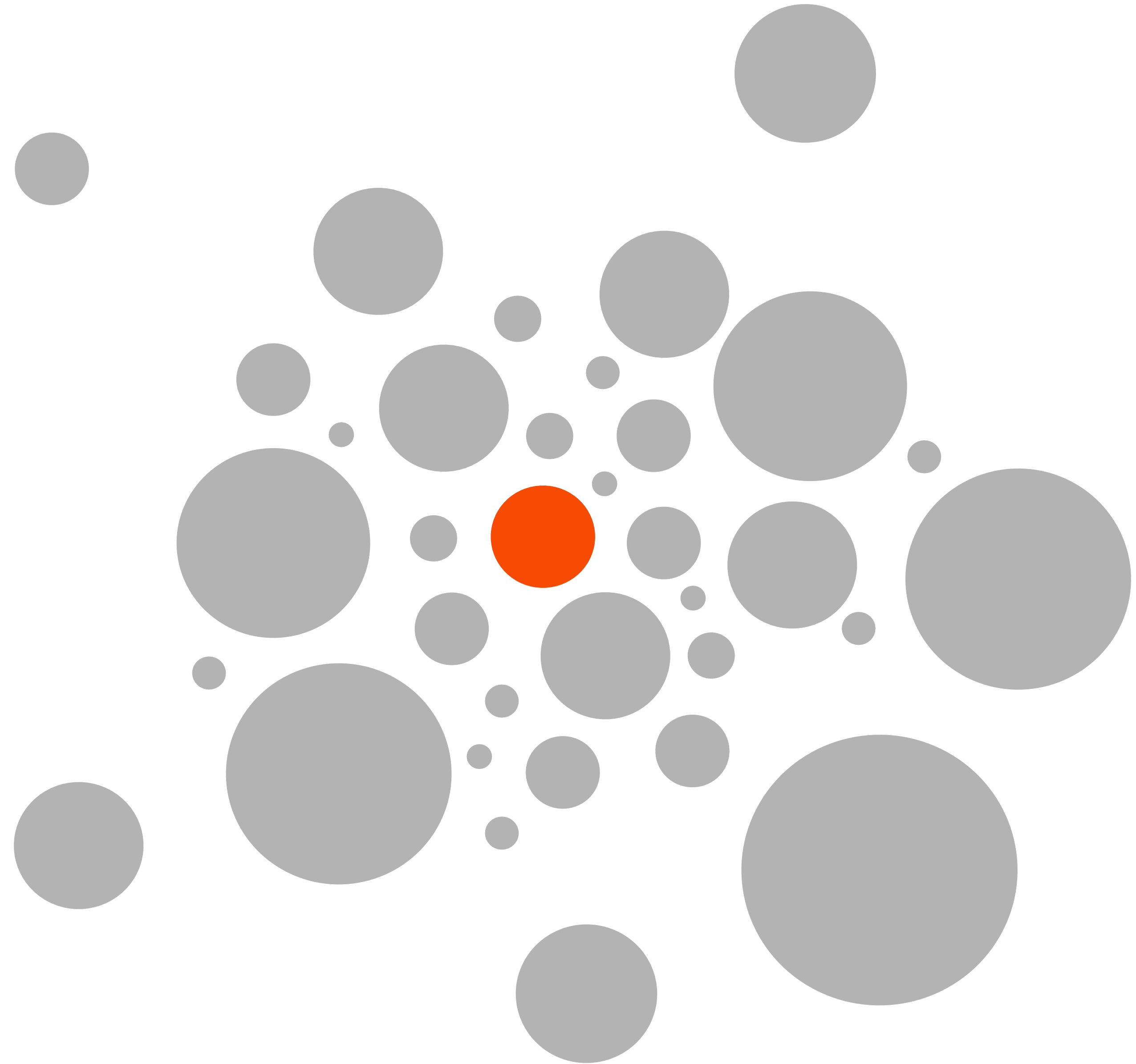
Isobar has a history of providing local and regional consulting programmes and digital transformation services for blue-chip brands. These engagements include the US team delivering the digital omnichannel strategy for adidas and Zwilling and in China Isobar developed the new online learning product/platform for WSE (Wall Street English). Cosin Consulting Linked by Isobar was the first business and technology consultancy brand acquired by a marketing company in Latin America. It has delivered more than 2,500 projects in the last decade and they have developed solutions to 75% of all biggest companies in Brazil, including all private banks and retail companies, improving their business performance in the market. Cosin has also created marketing solutions across industries such as CRM, Marketing ROI, ecommerce and media performance.

What do you think are the 3 benefits to placing the customer at the centre of your experience thinking?



02

Evaluating
Technology
architecture to
underpin experience
success



2. Evaluating technology architecture to underpin experience success

The technology canvas has expanded beyond recognition. Whilst it has provided marketers with a wealth of devices, channels and platforms to ensure reach, CMOs are struggling to manage and differentiate their brands online. Marketers have leveraged technology to meet increased consumer expectations of functionality, but many are struggling to build the technological architecture that extracts data insights to meet the emotional needs of the consumer.

“Technology and advancement in data science is unlocking the insights in customer engagement channels that informs marketers to make better business decisions and draw inspiration.”

— Vikalp Tandon, Isobar Global CTO

Legacy systems are a barrier to delivering customer experiences for 38% of marketers, with many markets of varying technological maturity. Re-platforming and platform implementations are on the rise as marketers realise that CX requires interoperability to provide data, insights and support customer experiences. This is also supported by the increase in Headless Commerce models - with 20% of marketers having already adopted Headless architecture patterns to boost their platform agility, with another 38% looking to leverage headless architecture in the coming years.

Platform relationships will continue to be important for brands because they are an integral part of the data flow, enabling the personalised delivery of experiences across all channels be it physical or digital.

For a successful CX strategy, CMOs need to balance the focus on brand awareness through reach and brand loyalty through engagement, by leveraging creative thinking and intelligence from data to design systems.

Brands have also invested in so-called ‘emerging technologies’ to optimise their efforts, with Artificial Intelligence already being used by 29% of marketers and Machine Learning being used by 36%. AI is set to be the highest growth area within emerging technologies with 46% of marketers expecting to use it in the coming years. Many technology partners including Salesforce and Adobe are providing black box AI to drive personalisation and recommendations.

This allows brands to gain a step ahead with minimal investment, but over a period of time this strategy is limited until Adobe and Salesforce are able to provide more of an open AI platform. Notably, Google (GCP) and Microsoft (Azure) are providing open AI platform capabilities for Marketers to bring differentiated models that learn brand and product context, customer behaviors and competitive actions to optimize channels, communication and frequency.

Conversational platforms are helping to humanise the channels of communication, with brands increasingly building highly sophisticated Voice (Smart Speaker) and Chatbot applications to drive Customer Service and certain Commerce Scenarios. 38% of Marketers said they are already using Voice technologies with another 36% expecting to use them to deliver better customer experiences in the coming years.

The last big frontier in Emerging Technology is leveraging IOT platforms to drive engagement and commerce. There is significant variation within markets for AI adoption, depending on digital saturation and maturity in addition to governmental support of emerging technologies.

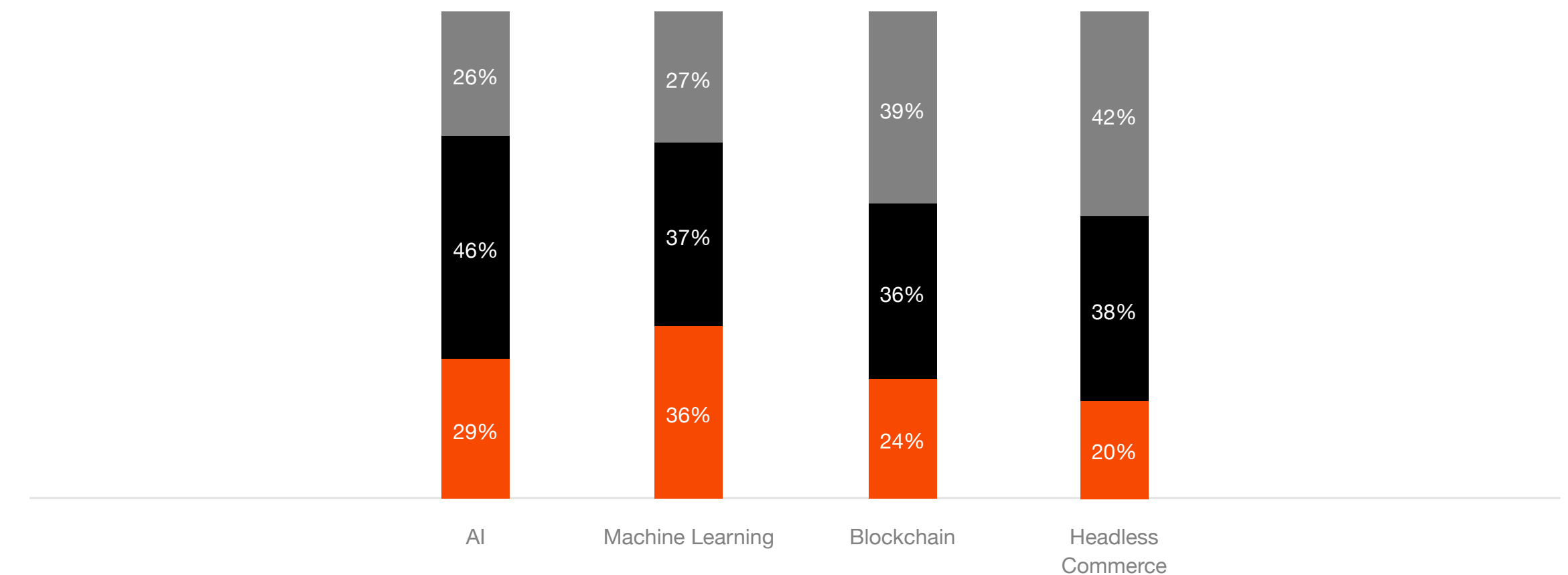
“IOT and AI embedded in the products that consumers buy is fast becoming the first digital interaction in any physical space. Marketers are starting to look at IOT in building front line communication strategies where they see phenomenal ability to get consumers attention to engage.”

— Vikalp Tandon, Isobar Global CTO

Isobar's 5 step approach to technology in CX experiences

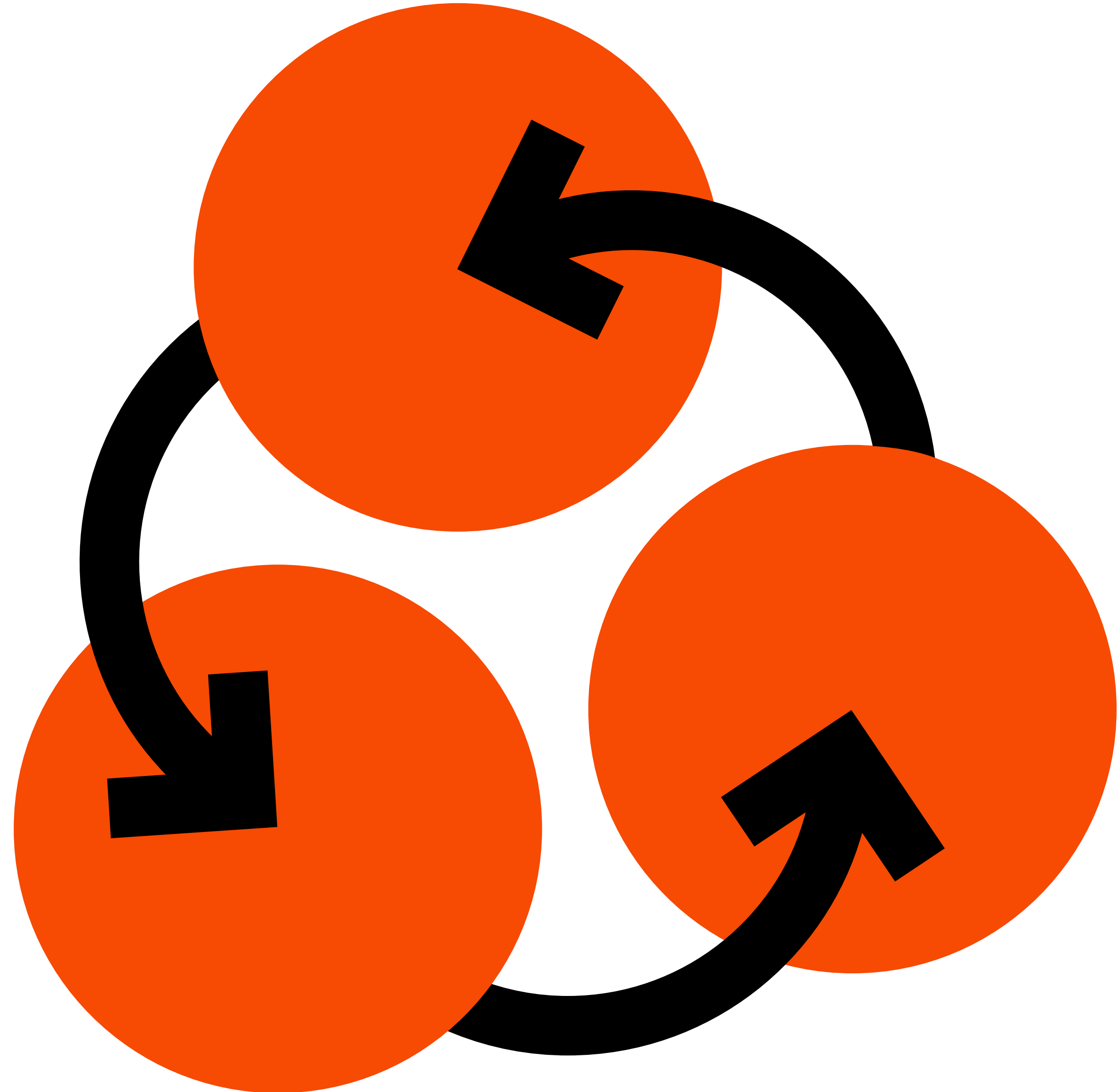
1. Understand current state of Digital Maturity.
2. Define the future state for all channels of engagement - web, social, mobile, physical, customer service, IOT and partner channels.
3. Create a Technology Roadmap based on desired maturity, effort and corresponding measurable impact on engagement, conversion and retention. This identifies systems that need to be replaced, consolidated, enhanced or retained in alignment with the roadmap.
4. Define data framework that manages the data at rest and flow. Developing a cohesive Data Model and defining the sources of data, data flow for enrichment, segmentation and summarisation.
5. Define key organisational changes and process improvements to get the most value out of technology investments.

What emerging technologies do you already use and anticipate using to deliver a better Customer Experience?



03

Investing in
Commerce through
a Direct-to-
Consumer platform
strategy



3. Investing in Experience-led Commerce through a Direct-to-Consumer platform strategy

In a digital economy where automation, big data and technology are available to us as powerful tools that drive commerce, marketers need to combine these capabilities with creativity to bridge the gap between brand inspiration and brand transaction.

Whilst 40% CMOs say that eCommerce is important to their business today, there is an increasing number of CMOs who feel that eCommerce will be important in the next 2-3 years with 88% saying customer experience and commerce will be important to the future of their business. Despite this, 40% of CMOs admit that they are average, below average or weak in delivering customer experience & commerce experiences that are 'seamless and consistent' across all channels. Commerce continues its torrid pace of growth and disruption in almost every global market with about 15% of retail sales now coming from online. In many categories such as apparel, home goods, cosmetics that the online share of retail is reaching almost 25%. Forecasts suggests that Commerce will account for over 60% of all online interactions by 2020*.

84% of CMOs said that data collection management and analytics that drive real consumer insight is important to the future of their business. From Direct-to-Consumer in the US to Marketplaces in China, to Retail Commerce in Europe, data and market insights has never been more important to brands by helping them understand how people buy. CMOs believe the top three important factors to drive transaction /commerce within customer experiences are clarity of product/service information, clarity around delivery time, options and cost and payment methods and methods.

“Product differentiation is becoming more difficult for brands that are constantly competing against other retailers who resell their own products, making it more expensive to be in the top of marketplace listings.”

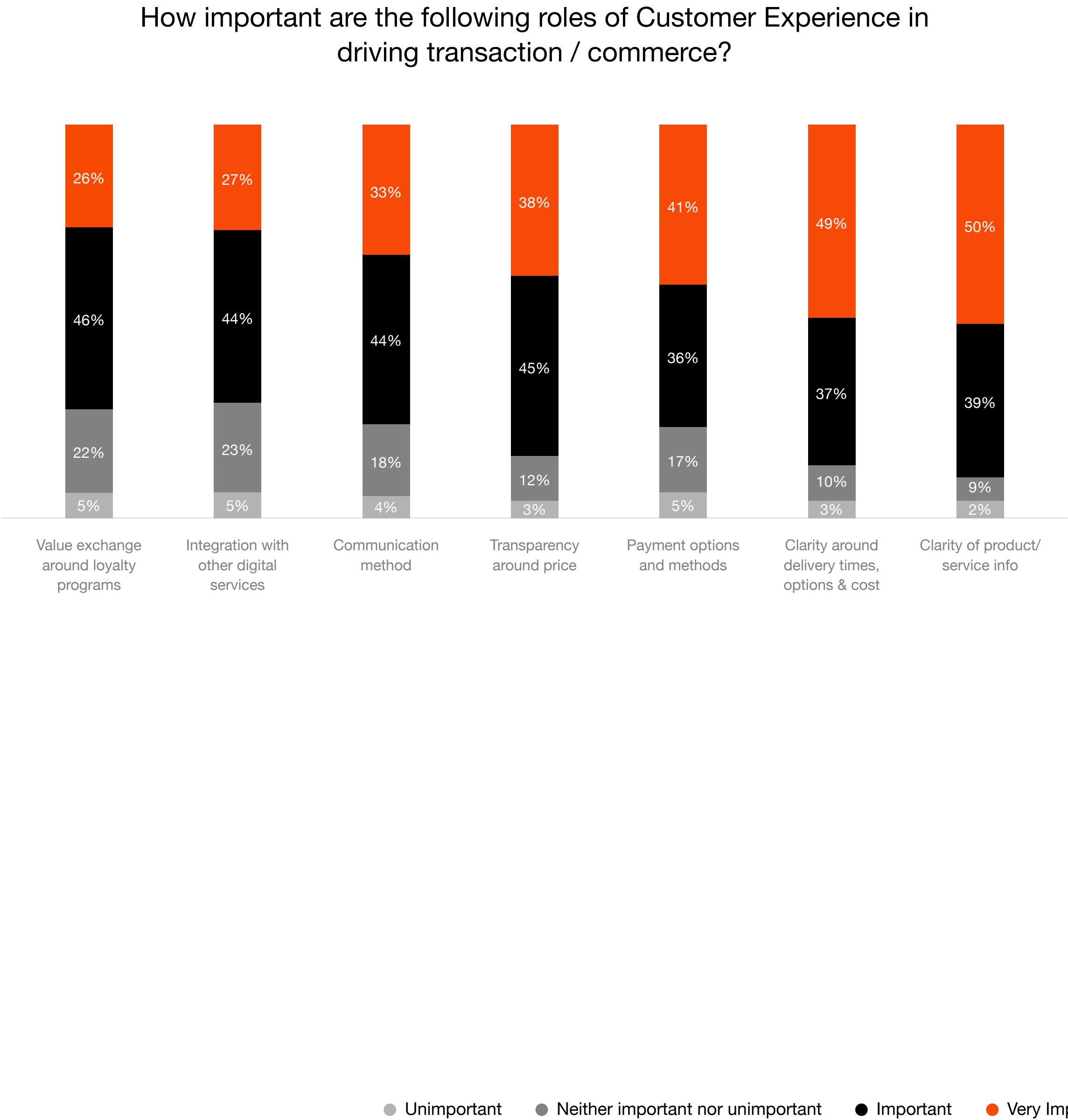
— Shawn Mishra, SVP & Global Managing Partner - Commerce at Isobar

To win the battle with customer experience, many CPG companies and retailers need to diversify their commerce strategies and invest in Direct-to-Consumer omnichannel platforms. DTC platforms most likely will not immediately provide the revenue and growth or financial ROI that marketplaces can. However, they can provide the much needed data needed for a 360-view of the customer to provide 1-1 personalisation. They enable businesses to truly engage with consumers across segments, listen to them, and drive brand loyalty.

This was confirmed in our report, where Data Analytics that 'personalise brand products and services' are named as a key ingredient for delivering superior customer experiences and a 'lack of owned data points is holding back businesses in delivering customer experiences for 42% of marketers. Finally, by investing in DTC platforms, businesses can position their brands and control their product pricing and value much more effectively. To power their commerce experiences, marketers need a DTC blueprint to help develop the insights and brand strategy, and identify the customer experiences in the commerce funnel that are end-to-end, and delivered with speed, agility and minimum cost.

Here are 6 considerations when developing your CX DTC blueprint:

- **Brand, customers and competitive insights:** Marketers must have clear insights around their brand and key categories, their customers and prospective customers, and their competitors.
- **Markets, segments and channels:** As customer expectations and power of channels vary across markets and segments, business must decide what markets to focus on.
- **CX and journey mapping:** This important exercise helps businesses understand how their customers engage with their brand, digitally and physically, today and in the future, and the strengths and opportunities across each touchpoint in terms of products, experience, data, and technology.
- **Technologies and platforms:** Evaluate current platforms and technologies to determine where the gaps are today as well as tomorrow and align their technology roadmap to their CX Commerce strategy.
- **Insight, analytics, and data:** This is a continuous process that helps businesses ensure they are on the right course, tangible and incremental progress is being made, and their organisation is realising the right value and driving growth.
- **Organisation culture, alignment and capabilities:** Strategies will not achieve the desired results unless businesses make a hard and candid review of their organisation in terms of culture, structure and capabilities and drive change.



04

Measuring
Innovation to
increase investment
to drive business
results



4. Measuring innovation to increase investment to drive business results

Innovation through emerging technologies will help CMOs shape their business and differentiate their brands, as CMOs believe an ‘innovative use of technology’ is a key ingredient for building superior customer services.

While the perception of innovation might be a novel use of emerging technology, today, emerging technologies are simply enablers of experience. True innovation relies on a customer-centric approach to the design of new products and services and the experiences they provide for customers.

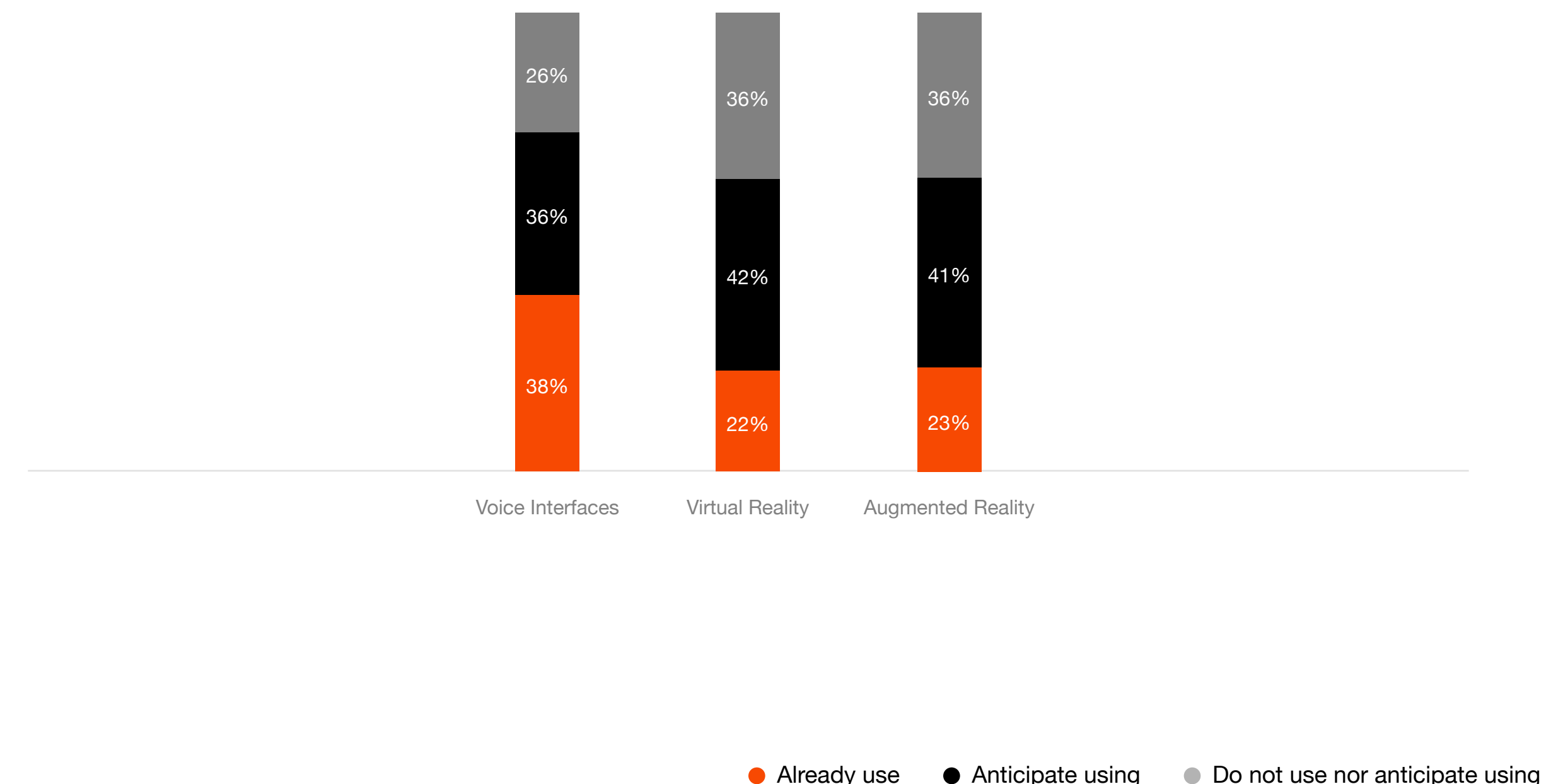
If we look at the technologies that Marketers are already using to deliver customer experiences, 38% use Voice Technologies, 36% use Machine Learning and 29% already use AI. Notably, these technologies lend themselves to measurement and can better demonstrate ROI for brands that other technologies like VR. However, tracking continues to be a fundamental challenge that constrains innovation and investment.

“Our approach to Innovation includes a design-led and heavily customer-centric approach that is intended to define new opportunities for our clients and to maximise their investment in transformation our innovation services help enterprise clients define their own approach to innovation, and to work with them to define, prototype, test and commercialise impactful new products and services.”

— Dave Meeker, Isobar Global Director of Emerging Technologies
Chief Innovation Officer, Isobar US

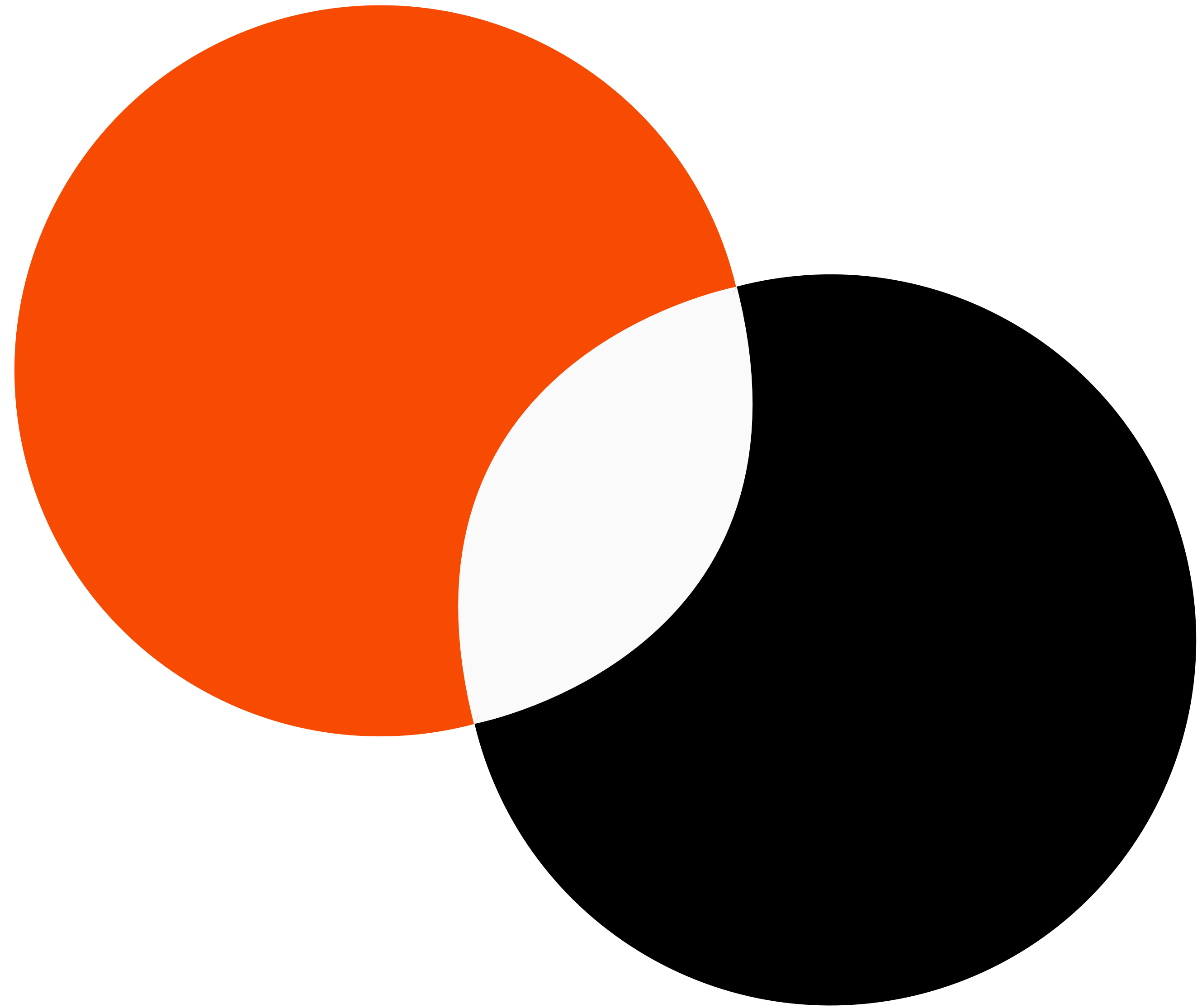
When we looked at the technologies that CMOs anticipate using 46% CMOs said AI, 42% anticipated using VR and 41% anticipated using AR. This is likely to be dependent on an improved use of data to help inform a deeper understanding of the emotional drivers within customer experiences. One such tool for marketers to use is MindSight®, an emotion science technique, created by Isobar, that measures consumer insights and translates them into expected actions.

What emerging technologies do you already use and anticipate using to deliver a better Customer Experience?



05

Utilising Modern
Creativity to create
experiences that
resonate



5. Utilising Modern Creativity to create experiences that resonate

Once upon a time the creative idea and the illustration of the idea built brands and moved people to buy. But today, brands are more than what they say, they have to be what they do. The brand narrative and the experience of the brand are becoming one and the same. Marketers work with technology, data and machine intelligence now and that delivers great functional benefits, but that aren't differentiated.

CMOs are looking to invest heavily in creativity so the brand narrative can be combined with the utility, benefits of technology and AI to be expressed through moments that have real meaning.

The creative brand idea and the experience of the brand are no longer separate - they are integrated seamlessly to augment the consumer experience. The thinking goes that if every touchpoint is designed to be a part of the overall brand experience to build brands, (traditional brand comms, digital/social, products & services, retails, voice etc), brands will stand out, and people will give those brands a bigger share of attention and wallet. So not only do more creative executions enhance customer brand saliance, but they also help bring more people into the overall customer ecosystem.

“Delightful brand experiences that leverage digital, data and storytelling will build brands, and won't just be seen as support for larger emotional brand communications.”

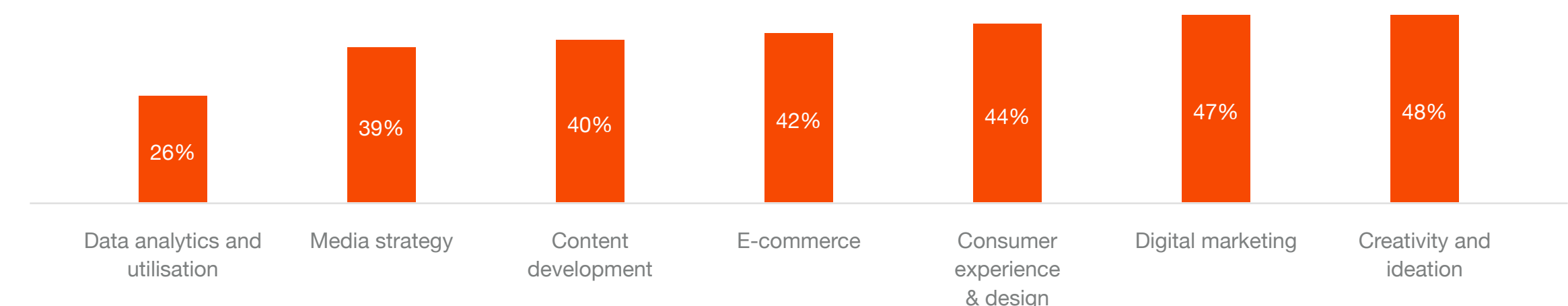
— Ronald Ng, Isobar Global CCO

Not to simplify and cite an overused example, but Apple has served its customer's amazing experiences, by simple rules:

1. Identifying fundamental needs
2. Continually changing the business to deliver these needs
3. Being consistent, intelligent and disciplined across all touch points

So what needs to happen to bolster creativity and ensure CX success? Marketers need to shift their thinking around technology, data and creativity. Technology and the response it illicit can be an addictive medium for consumers, so we need brand experiences to connect with us emotionally to get cut through. Marketers need to view data and technology as a fuel for creativity - not an adversary - because it enables brands to imagine the future.

What elements of your marketing strategy are important to the success of your business in 2-3 years?



KFC Pocket Store

Creativity holds the key to avoiding the curse of sameness, while also uncovering new ideas that can transform the brand. KFC China transformed itself from a perceived legacy brand into a 'tech company disguised as a fried chicken business' business through the innovative use of technology to connect with Millennial consumers.

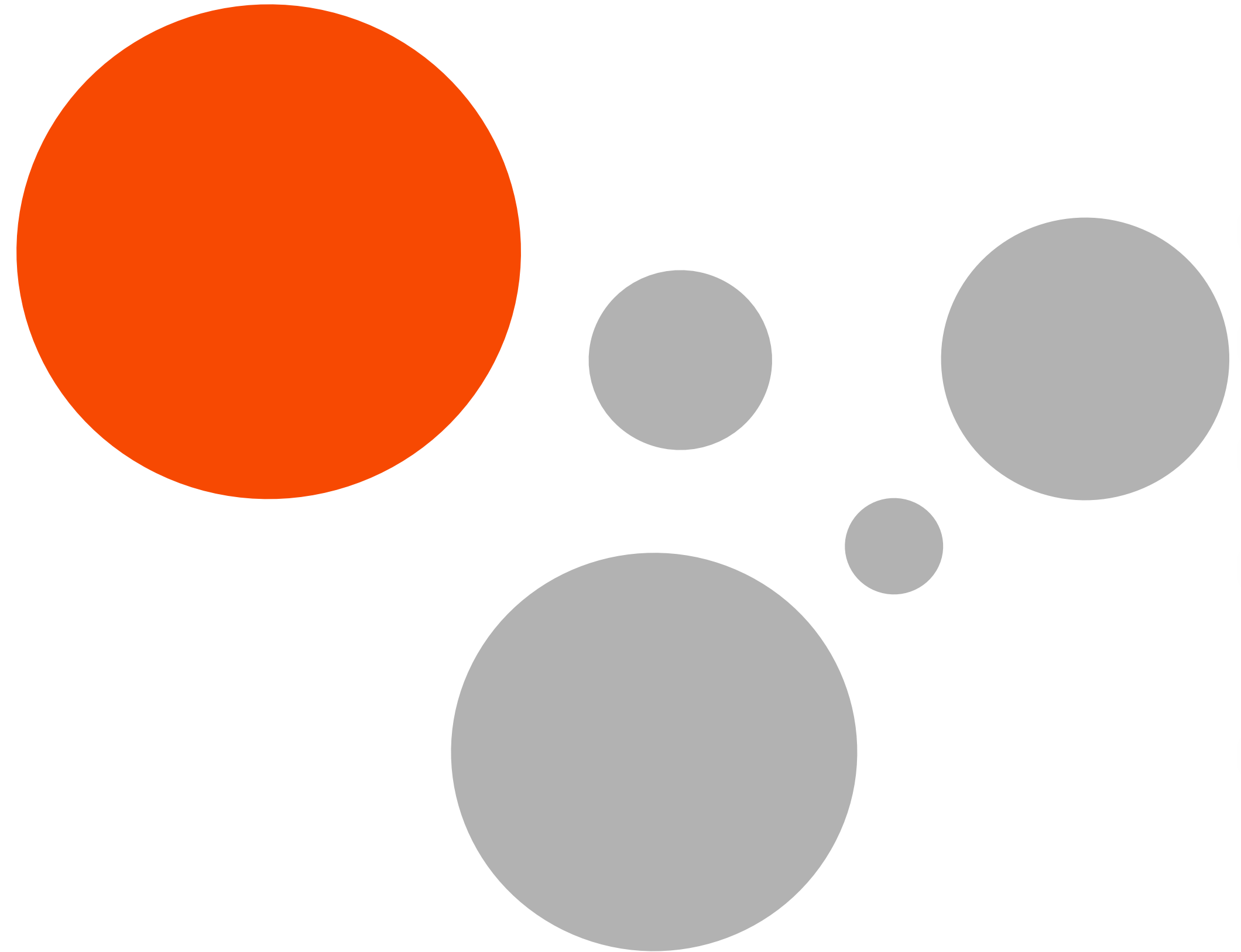
By reinventing the retail experience across its 5,900+ restaurants, and integrating all memberships into one platform, KFC earned 175 million loyalty memberships.



The future is CX: creative, connected and commercial customer experience.

Here are **five take-aways** to build your roadmap:

- Create an Experience Strategy that leverages creative thinking balanced with technology investments to deliver growth and transformation
- Evaluate technology spend, to create a technology roadmap and investment strategy
- Invest in the power of D2C strategy and building owned data to drive commerce
- Drive innovation through measurement to deliver business results
- Utilising Modern Creativity to create Experiences that resonates



About the report

To give insight into the world of the marketer today and their view of the future, Isobar’s CX Survey (a bespoke section of the Dentsu Aegis Network CMO report - [download here](#)) spoke to 1,000 CMOS or those in equivalent positions, from across ten markets: Australia, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

We worked with Kadence International to access our sample of CMOs and fieldwork was conducted in May 2019.

The respondents represent a broad spectrum of company sizes. One-fifth of the companies have annual revenues of <\$250,000 and a similar proportion has revenues of >\$500 million. Respondents were drawn from a range of industries and sectors with the largest representation include Technology, Retail, Food & Beverage and Finance & Insurance.

Contributors

Contributors to Isobar’s survey include people from across the network:

Ronald Ng, Isobar Global CCO

Caroline Dean, Isobar Global CMO

Sue McCusker, Isobar Global Chief Client Officer

Sandipan Roy, Isobar APAC CSO

Dave Meeker, Isobar US CIO

Simon Gill, Isobar EMEA CXO

Shawn Misra, Isobar Commerce VP

Hannah Ainsworth, Associate Marketing Director, Isobar Global

Teresa Pereira, DAN Strategy Partner

With special thanks to Tim Cooper and Katherine Allward and the Dentsu Aegis Network team.

Sources

[‘The Cost of Losing Creativity’](#)
[Digital buyer penetration worldwide from 2016 to 2021](#)
[DAN Survey Report](#)

Contact

[Sue McCusker](#) - Isobar Global Chief Client Officer

isobar