



Straight-talking

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

WTF is digital experience?

...and what does it mean for **marketers** and **IT**?



Foreword



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For the best part of 15 years, Magnolia's CMS has helped to bridge the divide between marketing and IT. Our open source platform was designed to give marketers the flexibility they needed to create truly compelling content, while providing IT teams with reassurance that their web systems were operational, compliant and secure.

15 years ago, this divide was driven by the rise of digital marketing, with marketers and IT teams battling it out for control of their business' analytics, customer data, SEO and website designs. Now, in 2019, we are seeing a new divide emerge – a divide driven by the rise of digital experience.

Today's businesses operate in an experience economy. Regardless of whether you're selling products or promoting services to consumers or B2B buyers, true differentiation is achieved by crafting unique, positive and memorable experiences for customers. With more and more of these experiences taking place in the digital environment, it's vital that both marketers and IT teams work together to deliver the best possible digital experience for the end customer.

The question is, are these departments planning to work together to develop such experiences? Or, will the 'landgrab' mentality prevail, with digital experience becoming one more silo in the longstanding IT / marketing disconnect? Even more importantly, what will the commercial implications be for brands that fail to adopt a cross-channel digital experience approach?

It's this question that we set out to answer in the following research report. By surveying over 200 IT professionals and 200 marketers across both the UK and US, we have developed unique insights into the emerging DX landscape and the attitudes both groups hold in relation to their peers.

Whether you work in marketing or IT, we hope that this report will provide you with greater insight into the DX space and how a combination of the right tools, technology and continued collaboration can help you create the best possible digital experiences for your brand.

Methodology

This report incorporates data from a study of 100 in-house marketers in the US, 100 in-house marketers in the UK, 100 senior IT decision makers in the US and 100 senior IT professionals in the UK. The study was commissioned by Magnolia and conducted by independent research house Censuswide. The study was completed in June 2019.

Die disconnects, die!

Ten years ago, marketing and IT had a rocky relationship. Many of IT's favourite little jobs — such as editing the company website, optimising for search, or managing customer databases — started getting snapped up by pesky digital marketers.

For these marketers, IT's approach seemed painfully slow, failing to provide the fast turnaround needed for reactive campaigns. In contrast, IT treated the new digital marketers like a bunch of ungrateful teenagers, with no respect for process, compliance or data privacy.

In recent years, all this has changed.

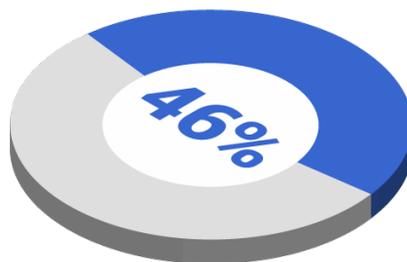
Partially thanks to brilliant content management systems (like ours), IT has grown more and more comfortable with marketing teams "owning" digital platforms. By providing marketers with flexibility and IT teams with peace of mind, great CMS design helped keep everyone happy.

The result of this change? More collaboration, more awesome digital content, and better business results. The war was over and everybody won.

But then... came digital experience.



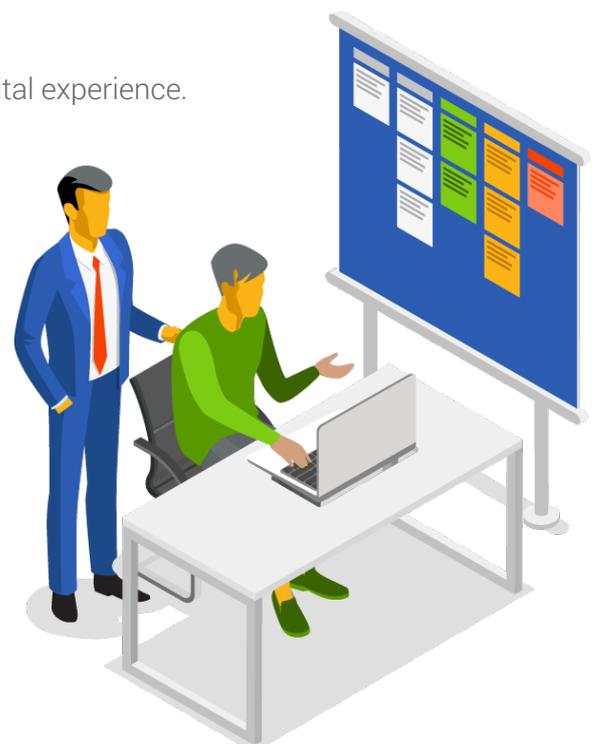
80% of marketers collaborate with IT every single week



46% of marketers collaborate with IT on projects every day



70% of IT teams are working with the CMO at least once a week



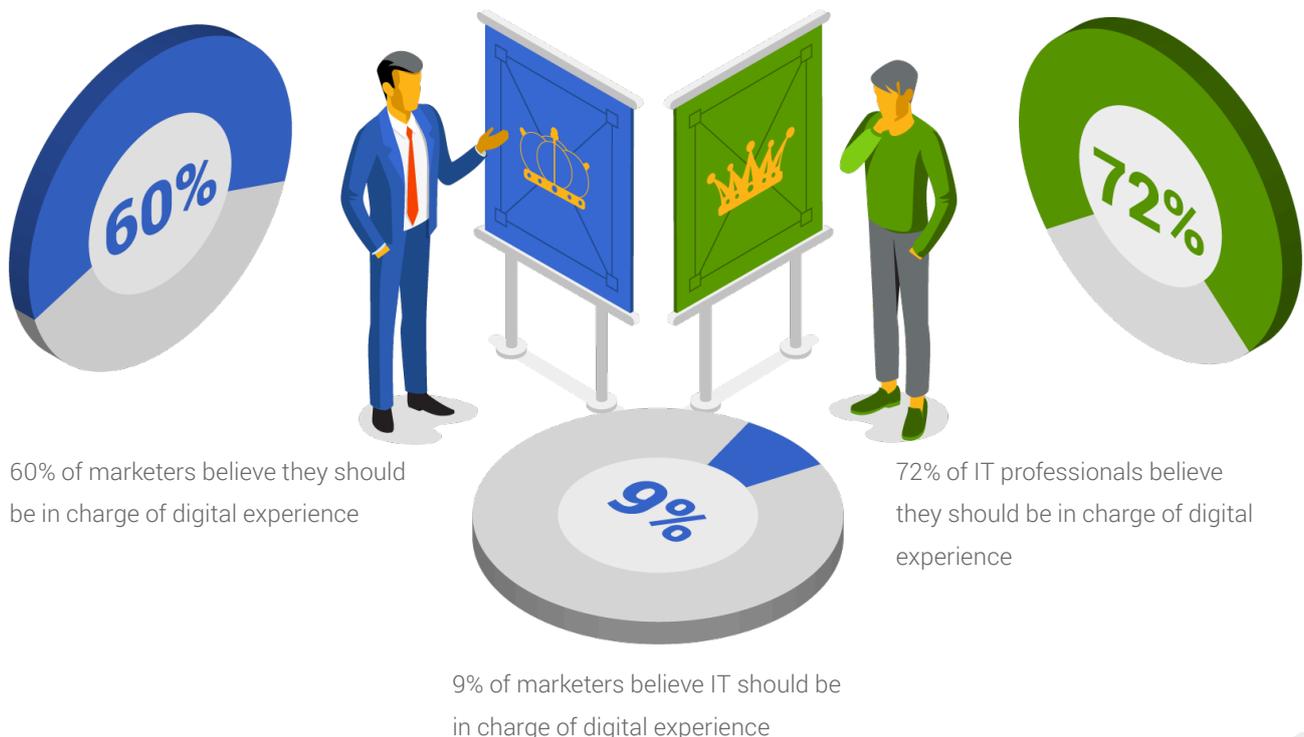
Digital experience is coming...

In 2019, both marketing and IT teams have become obsessed with a new element of online business – *digital experience*.

With numerous definitions across the web, digital experience broadly refers to the careful shaping of every digital touchpoint to provide the best possible experience for both customers and employees.

The problem? Nobody's quite sure what this actually entails, or whose responsibility it is to get it done. As it stands, 60% of marketers argue they should be in charge of DX. But, surprise, surprise, IT teams disagree, with 72% saying digital experience must be their responsibility.

Marketing has traditionally owned the customer experience (CX) and a strong argument could be made that DX should be no different. But, IT teams have also been instrumental in selecting new digital technologies to improve the customer and employee experiences. Both groups honestly feel they have a right to claim this new ground.



The worst of both worlds

Once again, we find ourselves faced with a marketing and IT disconnect, a disconnect that is not only damaging for businesses but – ironically – bad for the digital experience itself.

With no clear ownership, digital assets are proving slow for marketers to implement and are ultimately being delivered to a far lower standard than they should be. At the same time, 24% of marketers say they're frustrated by the lack of communication between marketing and IT, and 20% say they are annoyed by the lack of ownership and accountability.

But it's not just marketers that are being left frustrated. 58% of IT teams believe that marketing doesn't appreciate their work and 1 in 5 say that marketers don't even understand what they do.

As marketing and IT teams grapple for ownership of the emerging DX landscape, this problem is only going to get worse. Neither group knows where the other stands, and very few working in these fields really know what 'digital experience' means for them.

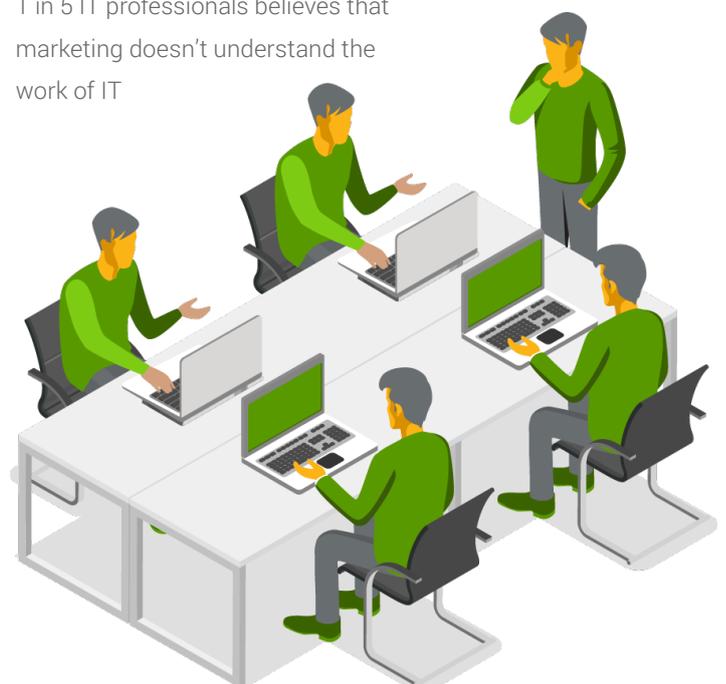


32% of marketers are frustrated by how slowly digital assets are launched



24% are frustrated by the lack of communication between marketing and IT

1 in 5 IT professionals believes that marketing doesn't understand the work of IT



A breakdown in communication

So what lies at the heart of this divide? Is it simply a 'grab for power' from both marketers and IT professionals desperate to claim ownership of the new DX landscape? Or, does the emerging disconnect run deeper than that?

Our research suggests that, for both marketing and IT, the DX divide doesn't stem from a desire to work in silos. In fact, 59% of respondents say that they're keen to work more collaboratively in future. Instead, the emerging divide may simply be a case of communications breakdown.

The field of digital experience has become swamped with buzzwords and jargon, making it harder than ever for teams to collaborate and to know what is (and isn't) their responsibility. In order to create great digital experiences, IT and marketing need to work together deliver clear, straight-talking solutions that both customers and employees can benefit from. As it stands however, that simply isn't the case.

29% of IT teams say marketers use too many buzzwords

84% of marketers don't understand the work of IT teams



39% of IT professionals don't really know what 'Digital Experience' means

77% of IT teams don't understand the buzzwords marketers use

Lost in translation

From 'omnichannel solutions' to 'big data' a whole host of badly-defined digital buzzwords are adding to this communications breakdown – further widening the disconnect between marketing and IT.

Almost a quarter (23%) of IT teams believe that marketers use too many buzzwords, with 21% saying they don't know what marketers mean when they ask for 'omnichannel' content, and 24% saying they don't know what a 'call to action' is online. But it's not just IT teams who are being left baffled by buzzwords. 23% of marketers don't fully understand what IT means by 'big data' while 24% don't know what 'machine learning' is. 29% also admit that they don't understand what IT teams mean by 'CSS' and nearly a third (31%) don't know what an 'API' is.

In the face of this communications breakdown it's more important than ever for businesses to drop the jargon and adopt a straight-talking attitude to digital experience.



IT jargon that marketers don't understand:

- 31% don't know what an **'API'** is
- 29% don't know what **'CSS'** stands for
- 24% don't know what **'machine learning'** is
- 23% don't understand the term **'big data'**
- 10% don't know what **'cookies'** are



Marketing buzzwords that IT teams don't understand:

- 21% of IT professionals don't know what **'omnichannel'** means
- 28% of IT professionals don't know what **'ABM'** means
- 24% of IT professionals don't know what a **'call to action'** means

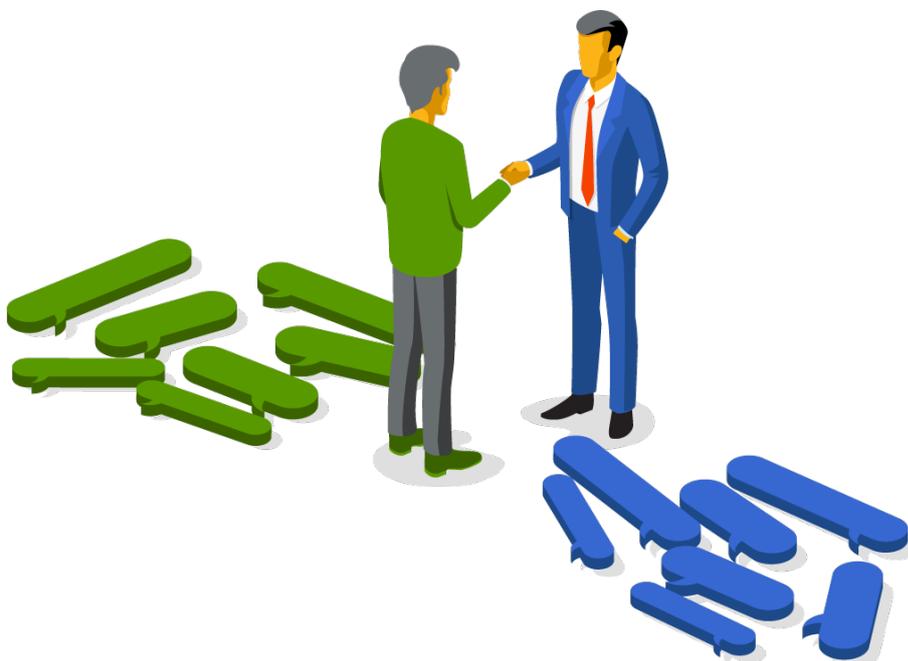
Bridging the divide

Instead of worrying about lofty ideas of who should 'own' digital experience, both marketers and IT teams need to drop the jargon and think instead about how they can work together to deliver the best results. "Experience" is not some new discipline that needs to be controlled, it's an age-old idea that both marketers and IT teams have always been responsible for.

To achieve this, those working on both sides of the divide must work hard to abandon the buzzwords that have done nothing but confuse what they are trying to achieve. In their place, we need a return to straight-talking solutions that work for everyone across the business – from marketers, to developers, to leaders, to IT teams.

Ten years ago, the content management system played a pivotal role in helping marketers and IT teams to collaborate effectively and ensure that their systems supported both vital compliance and security considerations without compromising on content quality.

In the age of digital experience, the new wave of increasingly advanced, [java-based CMSs](#) will have an equally important role to play.



A straight-talking solution

At Magnolia, we've spent over 15 years developing a straight-talking CMS that works for everyone.

Our developers understand that both marketing and IT teams have a role to play in shaping digital experiences, but that these groups also have different objectives, different working styles and different ways of communicating.

Too many content management systems are weighted towards one of these two groups, either optimising the experience for marketers at the expense of IT, or focusing solely on technical considerations without thinking about content quality or customer experience.

At Magnolia, we wanted to design a straight-talking, intuitive CMS that provides simplicity and flexibility for both marketers and IT teams. Where monolithic platforms have become too complex for either marketing or IT teams to use, Magnolia cuts through the jargon, letting each department know what expectations and metrics are needed to meet their goals.

Whether through our minimalist, drag-and-drop interface or our nine-minute IT installation process, Magnolia CMS swaps complexity for simplicity, security and straight-talking content management — designed for the era of digital experience.

Learn how to bridge the gap to bring ease and flexibility back to both IT and Marketing departments:

www.mgnl.io/bridge-gap

Or, to see who else is adopting the straight-talking approach, read our case studies:

<https://www.magnolia-cms.com/clients.html>



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