

The AI Marketing Maturity Study

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Dashboards

**BUSINESS
IMPACT**

Insights

Media &
Personalisation

Propensity
Modelling

Creative &
Content

Measurement
& Insights

Introduction: The AI Marketing Maturity Study

The MMA (Marketing & Media Alliance) is a non-profit industry body representing 800+ brands, agencies, and technology companies worldwide. At MMA India, we're committed to Advancing Marketers' Ability to Create Value through our industry reports and benchmarking efforts.

In keeping with these values, we have launched the AI Marketing Maturity Study in Partnership with EY, and Powered by Mobavenue, which showcases the extent to which brands and marketers are integrating AI across Creative & Content; Measurement & Insights; Propensity Modeling; and Customer & Sales Journeys.

To meet the core requirements of the report, the survey was intentionally conducted among a select cohort of 60+ senior leaders, including CMOs, Senior Marketers, Digital Heads, CTOs, VP-Marketing, and AI in Marketing Leaders. Designed to explore AI use cases beyond media and spotlight those delivering measurable business impact, the report brings together perspectives from across 11+ key industry verticals such as FMCG, CPG, Technology, Entertainment, BFSI, Real Estate, and more.

The effort was undertaken so that the insights emerging from the report reflect the true context of the report. It also attempts to uncover the extent of IMPACT being experienced by brands and marketing practitioners. The report features a POV section with select marketing leaders.

How Can This Report Help You?

This report helps you benchmark your organisation's AI maturity, identify capability gaps, and understand where AI is delivering real marketing impact.

It enables you to:



Benchmark your progress across key marketing functions



Learn from industry perspectives and practical experiences



Identify areas that need stronger adoption, alignment, or investment



Shape clearer priorities and next steps in your AI journey



Understand how peers are applying AI across the marketing value chain

Ultimately, the report is designed to help marketers pivot from experimentation to an always on strategic adoption of AI in marketing to drive business impact.

Foreword

Marketing has changed more in the last five years than in the two decades before.

We moved from spray-and-pray media to intent-led precision. From gut feel creatives to “evidence backed” storytelling at scale. From buying audiences to shaping demand occasions. I’ve seen this play out firsthand at MakeMyTrip and Goibibo; where our teams who once spend days briefing agencies on mass campaigns are now running real-time experiments, reading signals, and engaging in individualised conversations with millions of travellers. The role didn’t just evolve. It expanded.

AI has accelerated this shift beyond anything we anticipated.

The feedback loop between insight and action; once measured in weeks or months; now operates in real time. Personalisation at scale is no longer an aspiration; it is the baseline. But the real power of AI is not in automation. It lies in compounding. Every workflow AI touches generates sharper data.



Raj Rishi Singh

CMO and CBO – Corporate
Flights & GCC



Sharper data drives better decisions. Over time, those decisions don't just improve efficiency, they become a durable competitive moat.

At MakeMyTrip, our scale offers a unique vantage point. Every search is declared intent. Every abandoned booking is unmet need. When AI connects insight, activation, and outcome in a closed loop, the impact is no longer incremental; it becomes structural.

That is why this study is timely.

The EY-MMA findings show that Indian marketing is not moving slowly - it is moving unevenly. While content and creative have scaled rapidly, adoption in areas like propensity modeling and end-to-end customer journeys; where AI's compounding value is highest; remains fragmented. This divergence matters. In AI, advantage compounds. The gap between leaders and laggards widens faster than most realise. The constraint is no longer technology or budget. It is the ability to connect AI to measurable outcomes.

That is a capability challenge. Those who solve it will not just operate more efficiently; **they will redefine how marketing creates growth.**"

Foreword

AI Is No Longer the Edge. Maturity Is.

Why maturity, not adoption, will define marketing's next advantage

This study by Marketing + Media Alliance (MMA) India, in partnership with EY and powered by Mobavenue, was built to answer that question with rigour, not rhetoric.

Across 60+ senior marketing leaders, spanning 11 sectors and surveyed in Q1, 2026, one truth emerged with clarity: what began as experimentation is now delivering measurable business impact. The shift is real. But it is uneven.

The 5 signals are clear -

- 1. AI has moved from promise to performance.** 84–88% of adopters across the four pillars report medium to high business impact.
- 2. Creative is the entry point.** It is the most evolved AI use case, but 65% still operate through stand-alone AI tools.



Moneka Khurana

Country Head & Board Member



3.Measurement is the pressure point. The need for real-time, trusted intelligence is driving 50% of marketers to build in-house capability.

4.Propensity is the maturity marker. 57% full-stack integration makes it the clearest signal of where AI maturity is beginning to take shape.

5. Journeys are still in transition. Customer and sales use cases remain agency-supported, while 26% are moving toward in-house development.

The edge is shifting. The next advantage will not come from having silo AI stacks, but from building AI ecosystems part of the system.

As currently tools are being deployed. Use cases are being activated. But the full-stack integration that connects insight to decision-making to execution to continuous learning still remains the exception, not the rule.

That is the opportunity this study is designed to offer and inspire a standard that challenges every one of us to reach to advance marketers ability to create AI value in their journey to build AI ecosystems around the tools and leverage it for growth.

We hope you find it useful, honest, and worth acting on.

Foreword

Stories, Scale, and Impact — The future of AI-driven marketing leadership

EY, jointly with MMA, surveyed Chief Marketing officers (CMOs) across various sectors to understand how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is shaping the future of marketing. This is the first edition of the report and was designed to identify trends in AI use cases, which have evolved beyond experimentation and delivering business impact.

Our study focuses on the following four pillars of AI:



Content & creative:

35% of marketers have evolved full stack AI use cases, with tech partners playing a critical role



Measurement & insights:

43% of marketers have evolved full stack AI use cases, with in-house tech development evolving



Amiya Swarup

Partner
Marketing Advisory Services



Shape the future
with confidence



**Propensity modeling:**

57% of marketers have evolved full stack AI use cases, with tech partners playing a critical role

**Customer and sales journey:**

54% of marketers have evolved full stack AI use cases, with tech partners playing a critical role

The study also identifies a preference for scalable, vendor-supported AI tools over proprietary in-house systems, indicating a pragmatic approach to AI investment.

Marketers who master the orchestration of AI-enabled workflows will unlock new levels of storytelling at scale and impactful growth.

We hope you find this report useful and insightful.

Key Perspectives from the AI Council

Voices from the AI Council - MMA India

Aditya Sharma

Head Media & Performance
The House of Abhinandan Lodha



AI breakthrough for us happened when we stopped asking AI to think for us, instead, we built an AI that learned on data logic, emotions, and human intuition.

Sujay Ray


Head - Consumer Experience,
Content and Advocacy
Loreal




For us at L'Oréal, AI is about listening - By decoding the unique signals we receive from our consumers, we are able to offer personalized beauty experiences exactly when they are needed most. By shortening wait times and enhancing satisfaction (NPS), this digital precision actually brings us closer, creating deeper and more authentic human connections.

**Karan Khanna**Co-founder & COO
Huella Services

AI is helping marketing become far more intelligent, not just more automated. It can reduce media waste, generate deeper analysis at speed, and make creative, audiences, and delivery work in a far more connected way. That is where the real shift is, moving from manual optimization to adaptive systems that drive sharper efficiency, better decisions, and stronger business outcomes.

**Anil Pandit**Managing Partner -
Data Strategy and Partnerships
Publicis Media

AI marketing maturity will no longer be judged by how many models we deploy, but by how little we notice them - when governed, autonomous systems quietly wire every channel, turning data into decisions, decisions into experiences, and experiences into a compounding asset of trust at human scale.





Vaseem Ahmad

AVP - Digital Transformation &
Product Head of Audience Manager
Publicis Media



Many brands are launching AI pilots and testing personalization engines but don't have a systematic way to assess their own maturity. The results of this study will give a clear framework to evaluate real impact. To all CMOs - make your voice count!



Ankur Jain

Associate Vice President,
Customer Interaction Suite
Tata Communications



Today AI Maturity in marketing means stopping intelligence leakage - every click, call, and conversion becomes a governed signal, not lost insight. Enterprises have to be ready for marketing to become autonomous: always-on agents sense intent, craft offers, execute acquisition, and learn profitably, transparently.



Statistical Insights Emerging from the Study

Knowledge Partner



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Industry speak!
Methodology and disclaimers

Study on the State of AI adoption across marketers in India

Adoption and business impact

Executive summary



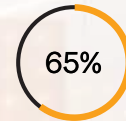
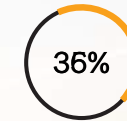
Content and creative

AI is embedded across content and creative workflows — from creation to distribution to performance analytics

Majority of the marketers are using external agencies to discover their AI journey

Business impact across all the use cases is well established, and is the most evolved and extensively AI use case in marketing

Full stack AI **Standalone AI**



Executive summary

2

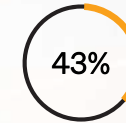
Measurement and insights

Measurement and insights are critical components for marketers, with increasing asks for real-time single version of truth

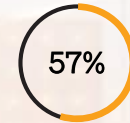
Substantial confidential and strategic data is pushing marketers to develop and deploy tech in-house

Report automation and campaign response driver demonstrated high and medium impact across marketers who have deployed AI. CLTV shows lower adoption, but has established high impact.

Full stack AI



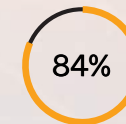
Standalone AI



In-house tech development



High and medium business impact



Executive summary



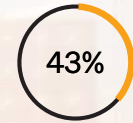
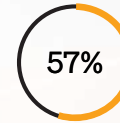
Propensity modeling

Remarkably, 57% of the marketers have evolved full stack AI integration across propensity use case

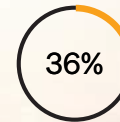
Agencies support majority of marketers in building the use case

Among adopters, the impact is largely medium, indicating early gains. Propensity modelling is a crucial next frontier for AI-driven customer and sales decisioning.

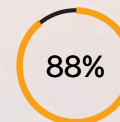
Full stack AI **Standalone AI**



In-house tech development



High and medium business impact



Executive summary



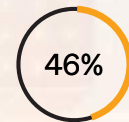
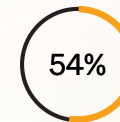
Customer and sales journey

Adoption was seen across the entire customer and sales journey use cases

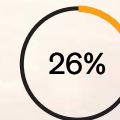
Majority of the marketers are using external agencies to discover their AI journey

Sales process automation shows a strong perceived impact, yet adoption remains moderate

Full stack AI Standalone AI



In-house tech development

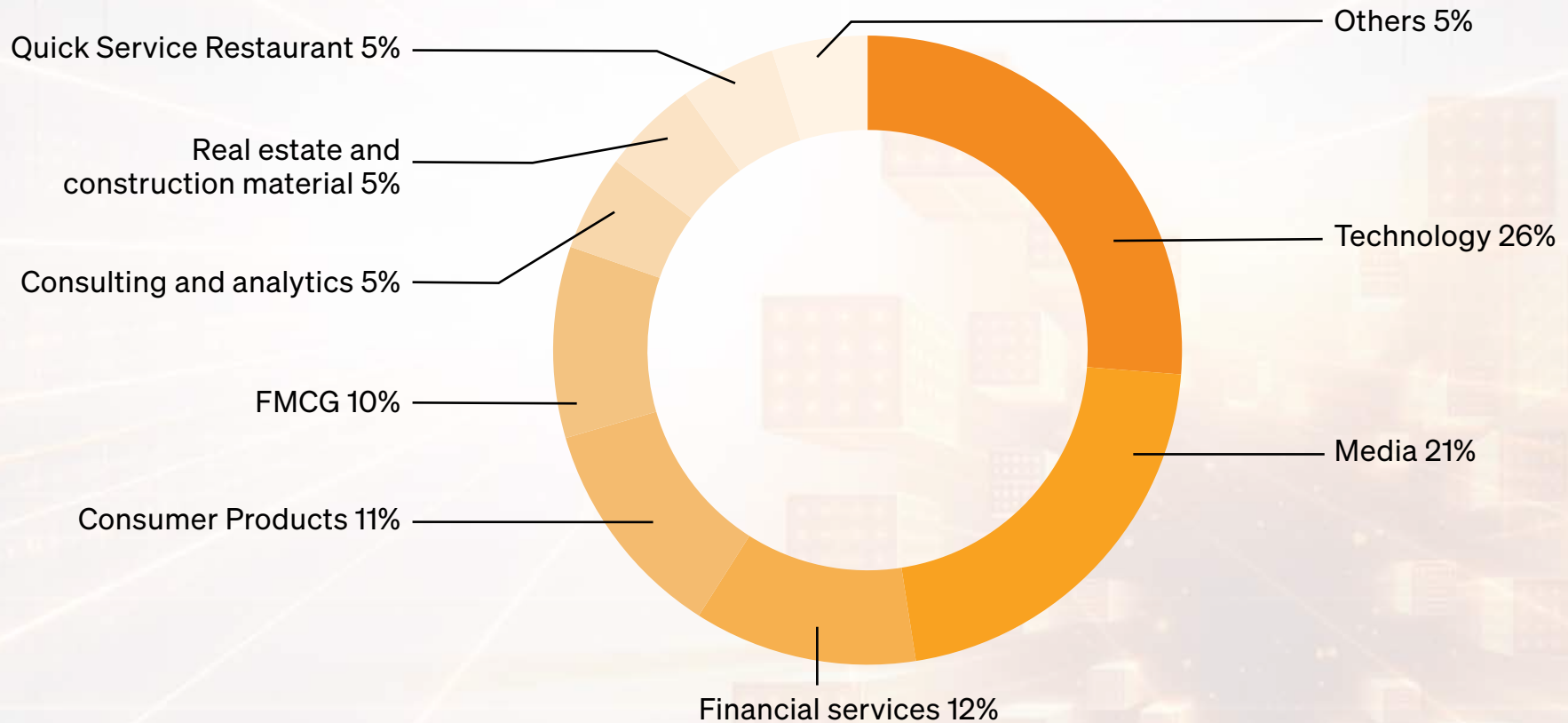


High and medium business impact



Respondent profile

In February 2026, EY surveyed 60 marketers across 11 sectors in India. Against a rapidly evolving AI landscape, this section outlines priorities and challenges shaping marketers' decisions in deploying and scaling AI use cases.

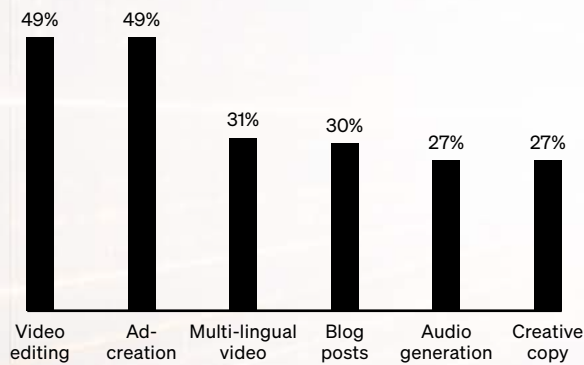


Content and creative

35% of marketers have evolved full stack AI use cases, with tech partners playing a critical role

Full stack AI integration

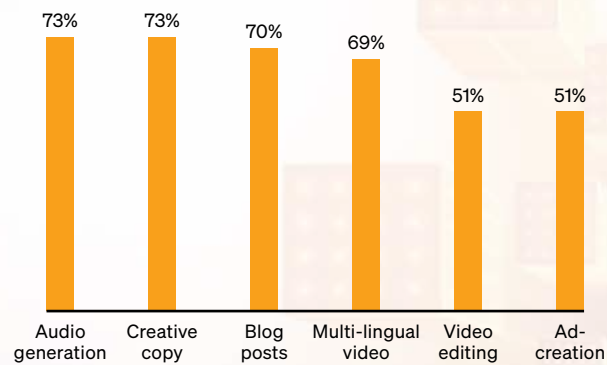
~35% marketers using AI have full stack integration of video and ad-creation



- AI is enabling marketers to integrate end-to-end content lifecycle —from creation to distribution to performance analytics

Standalone AI integration

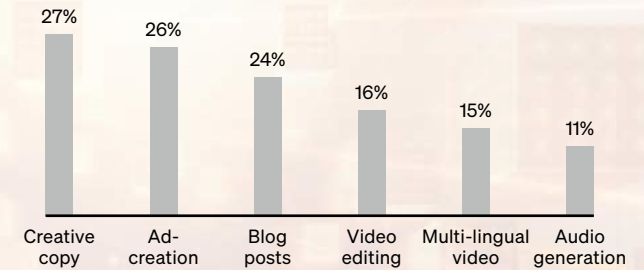
~65% of marketers using AI are still experimenting with standalone solutions



- Majority of marketers are still in experimentation with standalone solutions

In-house or tech partnership

~20% marketers using AI are building in-house capabilities



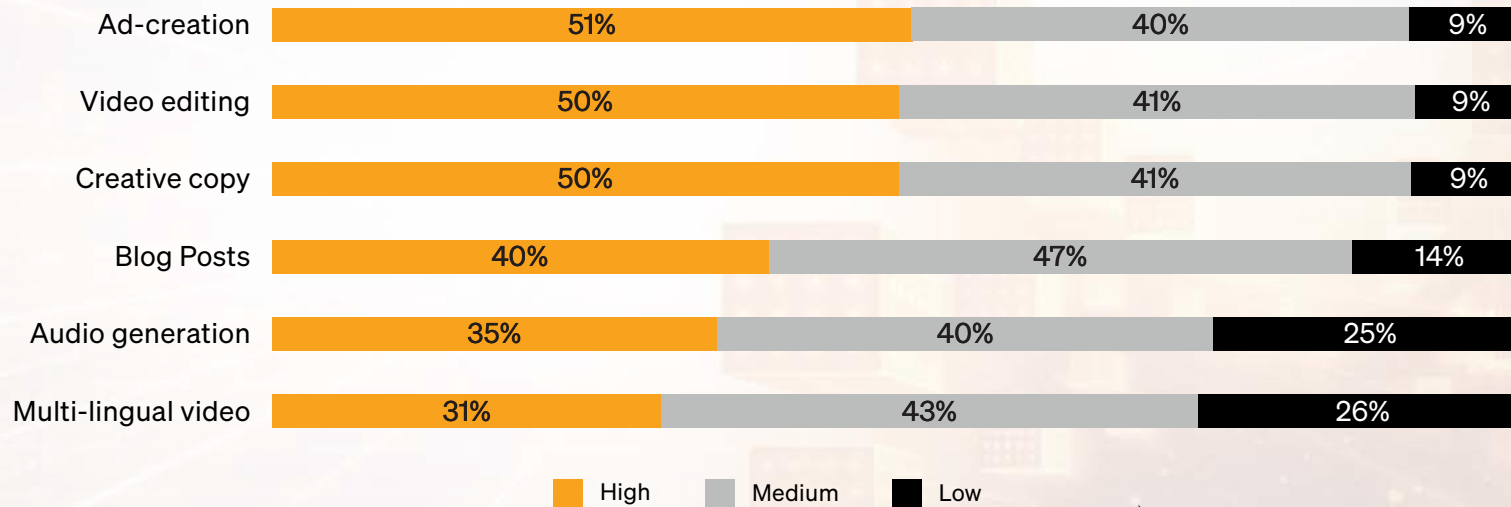
- Majority of the marketers are using external agencies for discovering their AI journey

Content and creative

85% of marketers established a high to medium impact on business through AI integration

Business impact of AI integration

Marketers have established high and medium business impact across use cases



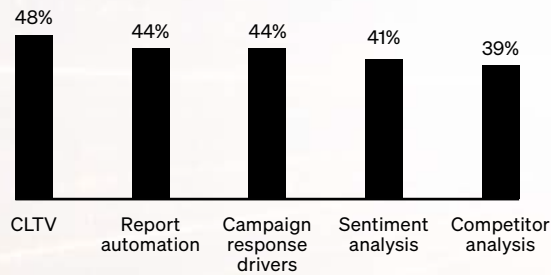
• Business impact across all the use cases is well established, and the most evolved and extensively AI use case in marketing

Measurement and insights

43% of the marketers have evolved full stack AI use cases, with in-house tech development evolving

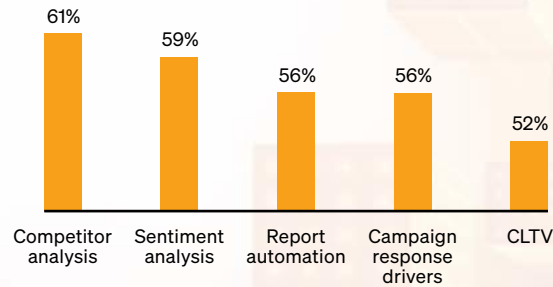
Full stack AI integration

~43% of marketers using AI have full stack integration



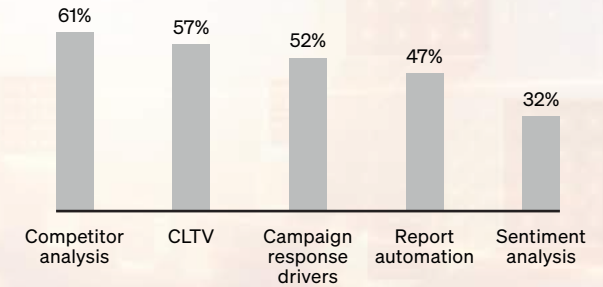
Standalone AI integration

~57% of marketers using AI are experimenting with standalone solutions



In-house or tech partnership

~50% of marketers using AI are building in-house capabilities



- Measurement and insights are critical components for marketers, with increasing ask for a real-time single version of truth
- Customer Lifetime Value (CLTV) and report automation are fairly evolved use AI cases, and is clearly visible with marketers adopting it as part of full stack AI

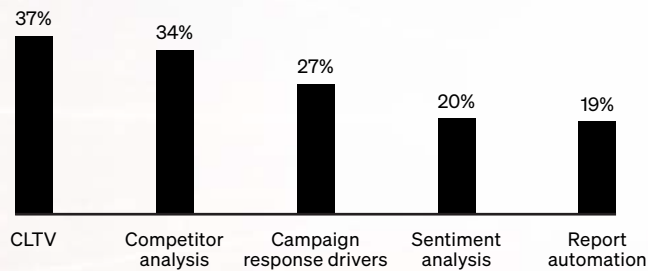
- As measurement & insights includes substantial confidential and strategic data, development and deployment will largely sit with the brand

Measurement and insights

As AI use cases evolve, attributable business impact is moving from medium to high

Not using AI

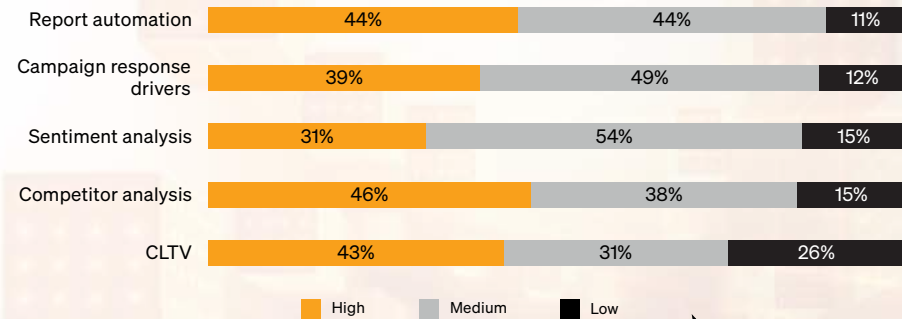
~27% of the marketers are yet to start their AI journey



- While a quarter of marketers are yet to start their journey, 43% of the marketers who have started the journey have evolved to full stack implementation, with 50% of them building this in-house

Business impact of AI integration

~84% of marketers have established high and medium business impact by using AI integration



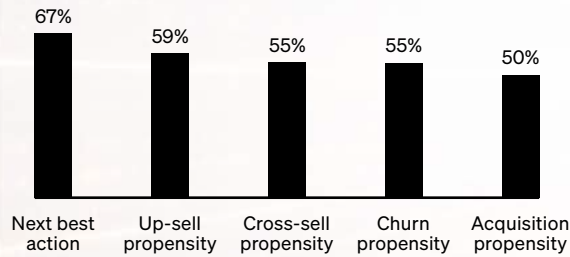
- Report automation and campaign response drivers have demonstrated high/medium impact across marketers who have deployed AI
- CLTV shows lower adoption but has clearly demonstrated high impact by marketers

Propensity modeling

57% of marketers have evolved full stack AI use cases, with tech partners playing a critical role

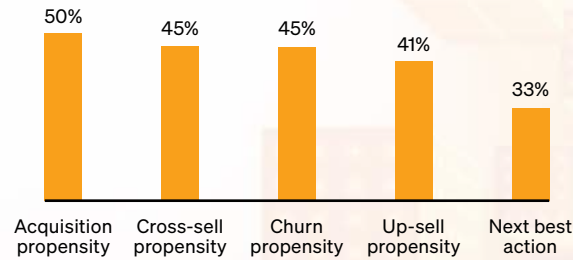
Full stack AI integration

~57% of marketers using AI have full stack integration



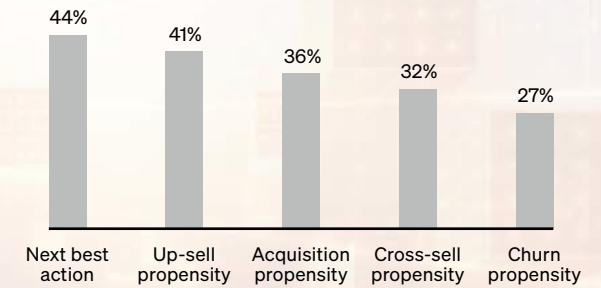
Standalone AI integration

~43% marketers using AI are experimenting with Standalone solutions



In-house or tech partnership

~36% marketers using AI are building in-house capabilities



- Remarkably, 57% of the marketers who use AI have evolved full stack AI integration across propensity use case
- Transition from standalone/experimentation stage to full stack has been highest for use cases for propensity modeling

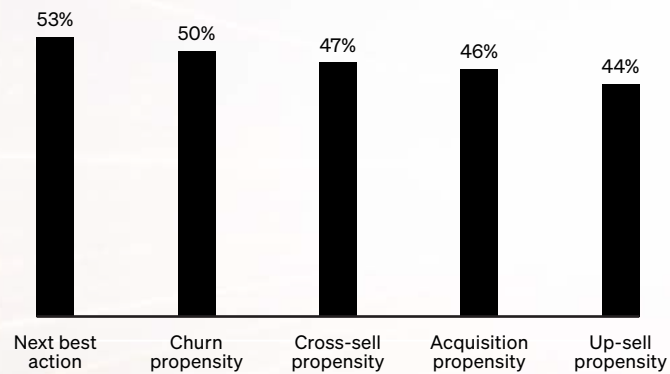
- About 36% of the marketers are building various propensity models in-house, while agencies support majority of the marketers in building the use case

Propensity modeling

Advanced AI adoption remains limited, even though early value is evident

Not using AI

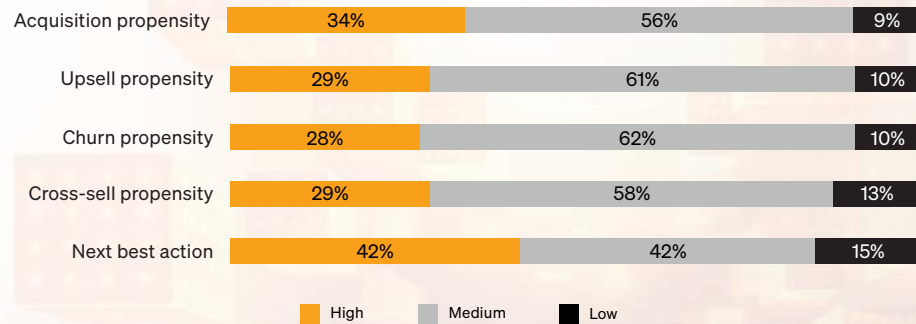
~48% are yet to start their AI journey in



- Non-usage dominates across all propensity model use cases, with ~48% not using AI, making this one of the least mature capability sets in the study

Business impact of AI integration

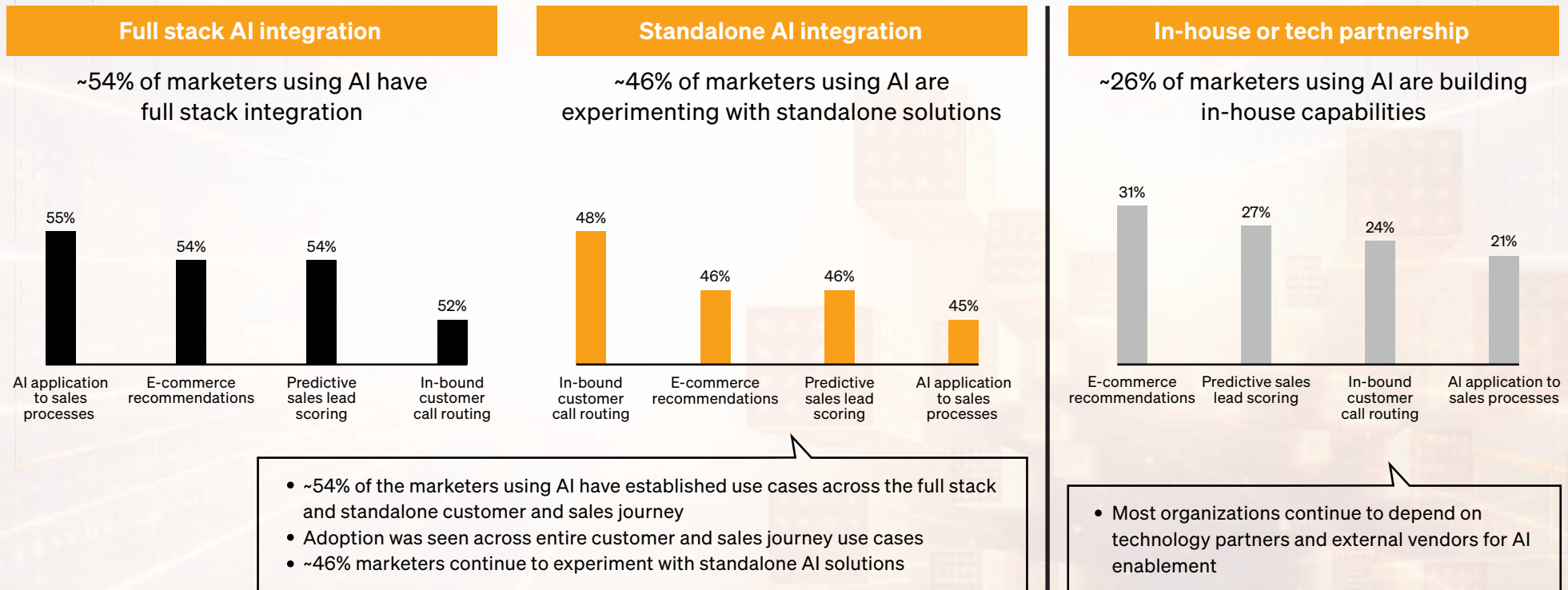
~88% of marketers have established high and medium business impact by using AI integration



- Early implementation demonstrate meaningful business impact, making it a critical next frontier for AI-driven customer and sales decisioning

Customer and sales journey

54% of the marketers have evolved full stack AI use cases, with tech partners playing a critical role

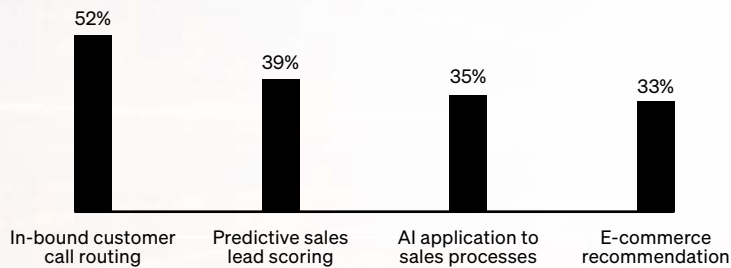


Customer and sales journey

AI-led customer journeys show a strong impact, but adoption is yet to scale

Not using AI

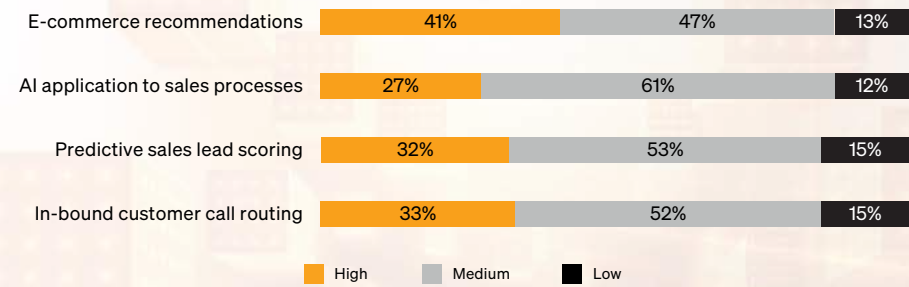
~40% are yet to start their AI journey in



- Higher non-usage in inbound call routing suggests that real time, system-integrated AI use cases face more adoption barriers than recommendation or analytics-led applications

Business impact of AI integration

~86% of marketers have established high and medium business impact by using AI integration



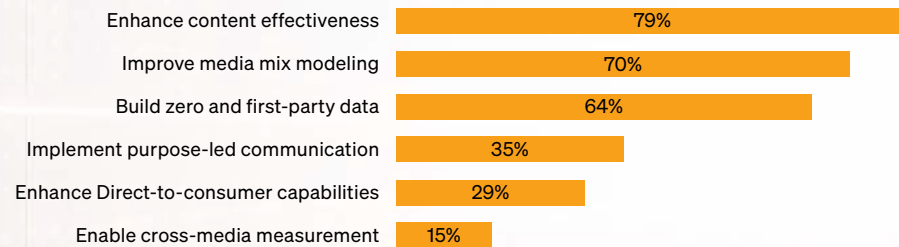
- Sales process automation shows a strong perceived impact, yet adoption remains moderate

Stories, scale and impact

CMO priorities for 2026

Content effectiveness, media mix and 1P data will be the top priorities for marketers in 2026

Most important priorities for 2026

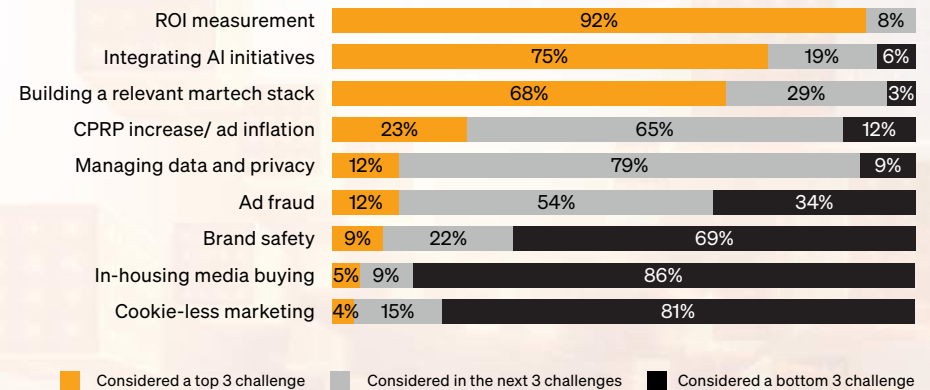


EY Marketer Survey 2025 | % of total respondents selecting answer options in their top 3 priorities

- Content effectiveness and media-mix modeling are highest on the agenda of a marketer
- This is reflective on prioritization of use cases for AI

ROI measurement, AI and martech continue to be the top challenges for marketers even in 2026

Key challenges for 2026



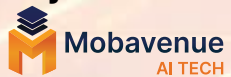
- ROI measurement and integrating AI initiatives are the top challenges identified by marketers

Source: Stories, scale and impact: Unlocking India's M&E economy - EY-FICCI Report 2025

Key Insights From Industry Representatives



Tejas Rathod



Rohit Bhasin



Sandeep Pandey



Kirthiga Reddy



Saurabh Jain



Why AI Marketing Maturity Hinges on Integration, Not Adoption

Most enterprises I speak with are genuinely enthusiastic about AI. They have tools in place, pilots underway, and teams using AI across planning, creative production, channel selection, and campaign execution. AI adoption, in the conventional sense, is no longer the challenge. The harder question is what comes after it, and that is where most organizations are still finding their feet.

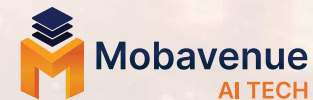
The data reflects this tension. Standalone AI tools dominate usage across creative and content functions, peaking in audio production and multilingual video. Yet the study also shows that AI delivers its strongest business outcomes when it operates in a connected manner. Programmatic ad buying, for instance, is reported to have a high business impact by over 45% of respondents, and email automation follows closely. Both are structured, end-to-end workflows. That pattern is not coincidental.

When brands say they are using full-stack AI, it is worth pressing on what that means. From where I sit, full-stack covers the entire lifecycle: budgeting, planning, asset creation with built-in brand compliance, execution, reporting, CRM integration, and a feedback loop that feeds learning back into the next cycle. Very few organizations have this working end-to-end.



Tejas Rathod

Co-founder & CTO



What they have, more often, is a set of capable but disconnected point solutions. Planning tools do not connect to execution platforms. Creative systems operate in isolation from analytics. Feedback loops remain manual. That disconnection is not a minor inefficiency. It is the primary reason the gap between AI capability and marketing impact remains wider than it should be.

Propensity modeling makes this concrete. Overall adoption in this area remains low, with over half of respondents not yet using AI for next-best-action or churn workflows. Yet among those that do, particularly with integrated tools, perceived impact is among the strongest in the study. The difference is not model sophistication. It is whether the output is connected to something actionable.

Another defining aspect of the current landscape is the gap between capability and readiness. Integration alone is not enough if the organization is not ready for it. Governance, compliance, and responsible deployment are still unsolved at scale. AI-generated assets require human review, not because the technology falls short, but because brand guidelines and contextual judgment cannot yet be fully encoded into any system. This is not a problem to be engineered away. It is a reality to design around, with structured checkpoints and accountability built into the workflow from the outset.

The next phase of this industry will not be defined by who has adopted the most AI tools. It will be defined by who has built the most coherent system around them. Integration is not a technical problem. It is a strategic one. The organizations that solve it will move from using AI to accelerate tasks, to using AI to fundamentally change how marketing creates lasting impact.

AI-Driven Full Funnel Growth: Consulting Case Compendium

Mobavenue AI Tech Limited

As digital ecosystems become increasingly fragmented, brands face challenges in delivering consistent, measurable outcomes across the consumer lifecycle. Mobavenue AI addresses this through an AI-native, unified growth platform built on the A³ Framework - Awareness, Acquisition and Activation.

Across multiple industries, Mobavenue demonstrates that:

- AI-led targeting significantly improves conversion efficiency and improves ROAS.
- Cross-screen orchestration enhances engagement continuity and recall for businesses.
- Cohort-based, signal led and contextual targeting outperform traditional demographic approaches
- Lifecycle orchestration drives compounding growth beyond campaign-led execution

This document presents select case studies demonstrating how AI-driven decisioning, real-time optimization, and omnichannel execution translate into measurable business outcomes.

Methodology Framework

Mobavenue's approach is anchored in a structured AI-driven growth methodology:

Data Signal & AI Decision Layer

- 1st & 2nd party data, context, and behavior signals
- Machine learning-based cohort modeling
- Predictive bidding and intent scoring
- Real-time decisioning (<15 ms latency)

Execution Layer & ML- Powered Optimization Loop

- Programmatic DSP across mobile, web, streaming TV, CTV, OEM and DOOH ecosystems
- Continuous feedback-driven learning
- Dynamic budget allocation and creative-led optimisation driven by signals

Case Study 1: Awareness Framework

AI-Driven Hyperlocal Awareness for Retail Footfall Optimization

Client Context

A global casual wear retailer with 2,500+ stores worldwide

Business Objective

Drive high-quality awareness for a seasonal collection while increasing store-level relevance and potential footfall.

Key Challenge

Traditional awareness campaigns lacked localized precision, leading to inefficient reach and weak attribution to physical store visits.

Execution

- AI-powered hyperlocal targeting across CTV, streaming, and mobile ecosystems.
- Geo-fenced CTV campaigns within a 10 km radius of stores
- Sequential retargeting via mobile devices using cross-device mapping
- Pin code-level targeting refined to a 5 km radius
- Household sync enabled continuity across screens

Key Takeaway

Hyperlocal AI targeting with cross-screen orchestration drives large-scale awareness, proximity relevance, and conversion potential.

Measurable Impact



12M+ users reached across key cities



Activation across 6+ high-priority markets



Coverage across 14 store clusters



Significant uplift in localized engagement and cross-device recall

Case Study 2: Acquisition Framework

Scaling High-Intent User Acquisition Through Cohort-Based Targeting

| Client Context | Business Objective | Key Challenge |
|---|---|--|
| A leading omnichannel beauty and lifestyle e-commerce platform. | Acquire high-value users with strong purchase intent while maintaining cost efficiency. | Broad targeting resulted in suboptimal conversion rates and rising customer acquisition costs. |

Execution

- AI-driven cohort segmentation and intent-based targeting.
- Identification of high-frequency online buyers through behavioral cohorts
- Time-based targeting aligned with peak browsing windows
- Deployment on high-intent inventory including keyboard search placements
- Continuous optimization through ML-based bidding models

Key Takeaway

AI-powered cohort targeting enables precision acquisition at scale by focusing on behavioral intent rather than demographic assumptions.

Measurable Impact



~30% increase in campaign scale



~20% reduction in CAC



Stable conversion rates of 20–25%

Case Study 3: Activation (Retention & Retargeting) Framework Full-Funnel Growth Through Omnichannel AI Orchestration

Client Context

A leading quick-commerce platform operating in highly competitive urban markets.

Business Objective

Increase transactions, improve repeat usage, and expand market share.

Key Challenge

Fragmented user journeys across acquisition, engagement, and retention limited lifecycle value creation.

Execution

- Mobavenue deployed a full-funnel AI strategy across Awareness, Acquisition, and Activation.
- Omnichannel deployment across mobile, app ecosystems, and DSP networks
- Targeting users in serviceable pin codes with prior commerce intent
- Retargeting and reactivation using AI-driven segmentation
- Continuous optimization across campaign stages

Key Takeaway

AI lifecycle orchestration shifts growth from acquisition to compounding engagement and retention.

Measurable Impact



50% increase in campaign scale quarter-on-quarter



100% growth in repeat user engagement



Stable CAC maintained during scale




Case Study 4: Awareness Framework Enhancing Consideration Through Sequential Cross-Screen Storytelling

| Client Context | Business Objective | Key Challenge |
|--|---|--|
| A leading consumer electronics brand in India. | Strengthen brand recall and consideration for premium product categories. | Fragmented media consumption disrupted storytelling continuity and reduced recall. |

Execution

- Mobavenue used AI-driven cross-screen sequential storytelling via DSP.
- CTV-first exposure to drive high-impact awareness
- Influencer-led storytelling integrated into campaign flow
- Household-level sync for sequential messaging
- Mobile retargeting to reinforce recall

Measurable Impact

-  Significant improvement in brand recall metrics
-  Increased engagement across multiple touchpoints
-  Higher completion rates for video-driven storytelling

Key Takeaway

Sequential storytelling across devices improves message retention and drives stronger mid-funnel consideration.

Conclusion

Mobavenue's AI-native platform unifies fragmented digital journeys into a measurable growth engine, integrating data signals, AI decisioning, and omnichannel execution to drive lifecycle-driven growth beyond isolated campaigns.

Disclaimer

The information presented in this document is based on campaign-level data, internal analytics, and partner platform insights. Performance metrics may vary depending on category, geography, and campaign conditions. This document is intended for informational purposes only and does not constitute a guarantee of future performance.

Why the Real Opportunity in AI-Powered Marketing Is Smarter Growth

The next chapter of AI in marketing will not be defined by the number of tools an organization adopts. It will be defined by how effectively those tools are connected to business outcomes. That is the real shift now underway.

For some time, AI was viewed primarily as a productivity layer, useful for speed, efficiency, and task automation. That remains important, but it is no longer sufficient. The larger opportunity lies in using AI to create sharper consumer understanding, faster decision-making, and more meaningful growth.

In that sense, the real value extends beyond efficiency and towards effectiveness at scale.

Stage One: Efficiency in Content and Creative

The most visible proof point is in content and creative development. AI is already helping reduce the effort involved in repetitive, high-frequency work.



Rohit Bhasin

President

Head – Business Banking and
Chief Marketing officer



It enables teams to create more assets, in more formats, across more languages and audience variations, with greater speed and consistency than traditional workflows allow.

This matters, particularly in a market where relevance and responsiveness are becoming non-negotiable. But this is still only the first stage of maturity.

Efficiency gains are valuable, yet they mark the beginning of the journey rather than its destination.

The Larger Opportunity: Predictive Intelligence

The more transformative opportunity lies in AI's predictive role. As marketers gain access to richer signals on **customer behavior, preferences, context, and intent**, AI can help convert those inputs into sharper insights, stronger segmentation, and more relevant messaging.

At this stage, AI begins to function beyond an execution support layer and increasingly informs better marketing judgment. It helps marketers understand customers more deeply, respond with greater precision, and move from broad-based communication to more informed engagement.

This is the point at which AI supports a shift from cost optimization to growth creation. When insights, creative choices, media decisions, and feedback loops begin to inform one another in real time, marketing does not just become faster — it becomes materially smarter.

The Maturity Gap

That said, most organizations are not yet operating in this integrated model. AI may be deployed across creative production, measurement, reporting, and optimization, but these functions often remain loosely connected. As a result, many brands are still using AI in fragments rather than across the full marketing cycle.

True maturity will come when AI can support an end-to-end loop, from insight generation to campaign execution to ongoing optimization and learning. Until then, many organizations will remain in partial adoption modes, capturing pockets of value without fully realising AI's strategic potential.

What This Means for Marketing Leadership

This shift has important implications for the role of the marketer. The marketer of the future will not simply be a user of tools. They will be responsible for shaping systems, training AI-enabled workflows, and translating brand strategy into machine-assisted execution.

Success will depend less on isolated experimentation and more on the ability to connect AI-led efficiency with measurable business outcomes.

The Strategic Imperative

The message is clear: AI in marketing must move beyond task automation. Its real promise lies in building a connected, learning-led ecosystem, one that helps brands understand customers better, act faster, and grow more intelligently.

That is where the next competitive advantage will be built.

The Next Advantage Will Come from Agility, Not Scale

Adoption Has Moved Faster Than Maturity

AI has moved beyond experimentation. The strategic question now is not whether brands are adopting it, but where it is creating meaningful business value.

At present, the clearest progress is in content and creativity. This is where AI has found the fastest path into marketing operations, accelerating always-on content, improving turnaround times, and enabling greater personalization at scale. It is the most visible proof point of adoption because the value is immediate, tangible, and easier to operationalize.

The Real Gap Lies Beyond Content

Beyond content, however, maturity drops sharply.

In areas such as measurement, propensity modeling, insights, and decision support, many organizations are still in early-stage exploration. Interest is high, but production-level adoption remains limited.



Sandeep Pandey

CEO & Co-Founder



The constraint is not ambition. It is integration, trust, and the ability to embed AI meaningfully into real marketing workflows.

Legacy Infrastructure Still Matters, But It Is Not Enough

The large enterprise platforms that once defined marketing technology still play an important role as systems of record and data infrastructure. But they are no longer sufficient on their own.

AI-led marketing demands a more flexible model, one that combines foundational enterprise data with faster, more adaptive intelligence layers and specialist solutions built for specific outcomes.

The Winning Stack Will Be the One That Works Best

That has important implications for how leadership should think about the next phase.

The advantage will not come from having the largest stack. It will come from having the most effective one. In practice, that means the winners are likely to be organizations that can combine scale with agility: strong data foundations, but also the willingness to work with newer, sharper, and more specialized partners where needed.

Relevance Matters More Than Incumbency

This is already visible in the market. Brands are increasingly willing to look beyond legacy partners when they need speed, customization, and better problem-solving in areas such as measurement, automation, and advanced analytics.

The shift is subtle, but significant: relevance is starting to matter more than incumbency.

Trust Will Determine Enterprise Adoption

For AI to move from pilots to enterprise value, however, one condition is essential: **trust**.

Marketers must have confidence in the reliability of outputs, the fit with business processes, and the ability of these systems to support decisions, not just automate tasks.

The Leadership Imperative

That is the real inflection point. The next wave of AI maturity in marketing will not be defined by the loudest claims or the broadest platforms. It will be defined by solutions that are usable, interoperable, and directly tied to business outcomes.

For leadership teams, the implication is clear: the future of marketing AI will be shaped less by legacy scale, and more by the ability to deploy intelligence with precision, agility, and confidence.

AI Search Is the New Marketing Battlefield. Are You Ready?

Be First, Not Forgotten: What AI search means for marketers in India

I've had a front-row seat to two platform shifts that rewrote the rules of marketing – the rise of the internet and the explosion of mobile. What we're living through right now feels different. Faster. More fundamental. AI platforms aren't just a new channel. They're becoming the primary screen where discovery, consideration, and decision happen together – in a single conversation.

The numbers tell you how real this is. India accounted for about 19% of the global user base of leading AI assistant apps in 2025 – ahead of the United States at 10%. India now has 100 million weekly active ChatGPT users, making it one of OpenAI's largest markets globally. ChatGPT leads with 180 million monthly active users in India, followed by Google Gemini at 118 million and Perplexity at 19 million. And who's driving this? Users under 30 account for 80% of ChatGPT usage in India – a generation that is AI-native from the start.



Kirthiga Reddy

CEO & Co - Founder



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Here's a thought for every marketer to understand: your brand may be far less visible than you think.

Across the brands we work with at OptimizeGEO, we see an average visibility gap of 40% on the queries that matter most to them. And here's the nuance that surprises even the most sophisticated teams – there's a meaningful difference between what AI says when someone searches for your brand by name, versus what it says when someone asks an unbranded question. Ask "Which sunscreen gives the best protection?" and a brand that ranks brilliantly on Google may not appear at all. You may be winning on brand queries and losing entirely on category queries. That's the gap that costs you consideration.

But here's what excites me: what you learn from your AI search performance is a gift to your entire marketing organization. The insights cascade into content strategy, partnerships, technical site health, paid media, channel strategy, packaging, positioning, and pricing. It's not a silo. It's a system.

The enormous shift to a zero-click world has implications for every pillar of your marketing. Insights become richer because consumers express intent in natural language, giving you a real-time window into how your category is being researched.

Content and creative must become more precise, useful, and AI-discoverable – the goal is to be the answer, not just rank near it. Personalization becomes more dynamic because the context AI surfaces is far deeper than a click ever revealed. And measurement requires the biggest transformation of all – most tools were built for a world of clicks and visits, and they are simply not equipped for a world where discovery and decision both happen inside the AI platform.

The brands that act now will have a compounding advantage. In India – with this scale and this pace of AI adoption – that window is narrowing fast. Market share is won and lost at times of disruption. Congratulations to MMA for this landmark AI Marketing Maturity Report to enable marketers to be on the winning side.

Case Study: Business Intelligence Group

Business Intelligence Group (BIG) runs global awards programs recognizing excellence across 10 categories, with honorees including Amazon, PepsiCo, and Ford. When BIG partnered with OptimizeGEO, their AI Visibility Score stood at just 25%. Within 10 months: visibility tripled to 75%, AI-attributable traffic grew 151%, and revenue from AI-referred customers doubled – with 58% of those customers completely new to BIG. AI search didn't just improve a metric. It became a new growth channel.

Read the complete case study on the Optimize Geo website.

The Enterprise Edge: Own Your AI Advantage

Recently, I was having a discussion with a friend, and he mentioned that he had onboarded an AI platform for three dashboards. Two chatbots and a recommendation engine nobody asked for. When I asked what business problem any of it is going to solve, there wasn't a clear response. That moment made me realise everything about where most organizations sit on the AI maturity curve: buying tools they don't need to solve problems they haven't defined.

Here's what we've learnt trying to build a full-stack AI ecosystem at The House of Abhinandan Lodha – competitive edge is never in the model you buy, rather it is always in the data and intelligence that you already own – systems like ERP, CRM and even accounting platforms which have quietly recorded the pulse of the business for years. Every transaction, every service call, every pricing conversation. AI can't build that intelligence. But sure, it can unlock patterns, highlighting unseen problems, and scale decisions. It's about making that fundamental shift in improving decision making.



Saurabh Jain

CMO

THE _____™
HOUSE OF
ABHINANDAN
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We didn't outsource that shift at HoABL, we structured it in-house. Our AI stack includes a WhatsApp bot and an AI voice bot that guides customers through their buying journey, and an intel-AI-agent system that guides online sales team members in real time, evaluates every consumer interaction across twelve distinct dimensions, and prompts improvements instantly. The system picks up buying-intent signals throughout the conversation, from reactions to pricing, to the amenities that spark genuine interest, to moments when customers benchmark us against competitors. These signals are processed through our AI engine and converted into real-time cues for sales managers, helping them address concerns before they turn into objections and keep conversations moving in the right direction. But the technology is only half the story. The other half, and the more important one, is about improving overall consumer experience and buying journey frictionless.

In two years, AI has jumped from being a generative chatbots to being used for writing codes to know build skills. I'm sure the next wave will outperform systems twice their size with a fraction of the resources. The strategic question isn't "Are you AI ready?", it's about how you evolve and adopt to a change this fast.

While the industry argues over what percentage of marketing AI will eventually own, we're not waiting for a number. We're operating, building and iterating every week. One critical guardrail stays paramount through all of this: consumer data is sacred. DPDP or GDPR aren't compliances to follow, they're trust infrastructure. AI that mines the data and doesn't follow through with best-fitted results will be rejected over AI that earns consumers' trust by making their experience better.

The climb to AI maturity is dynamic and not a linear one. But for those willing to embed it into their operations at the deepest level, the reward isn't just speed or savings. It's a genuine command over the consumer journey—and that's the only competitive edge that compounds, especially as technology accelerates.

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend a special thank you to all our key contributors and leadership who made this report possible and a success.

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A Special Thank you to our AI Council Members

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Growth strategy & planning
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About the MMA

The Marketing + Media Alliance (MMA) is the only trade association that unites the entire marketing ecosystem- CMOs, MarTech, AdTech, media, and marketer-supported companies—working collaboratively to architect the future of marketing while delivering growth today. Led by CMOs, the Alliance drives marketing change by tackling unanswered questions and challenging entrenched assumptions. We are unapologetically committed to science and inquiry, knowing that transformative impact only comes from constructively disrupting the status quo. Through peer-driven collaboration, the Alliance helps members aggressively adopt proven, science-backed practices. Each year, MMA Global invests millions in breakthrough research to deliver unassailable truths, actionable insights, and practical tools. By enlightening, empowering, and enabling marketers, we shape the future of marketing and propel business growth.

Disclaimer

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