

Forrester predicts "less is more" for marketing

Until now, marketers have resorted to frequency and volume to reach fragmented audiences. However, with more and more frustrated consumers blocking ads, a new report from Forrester shows that, in 2017, marketing will shift from volume-based advertising strategies toward quality experiences across the entire customer life cycle.

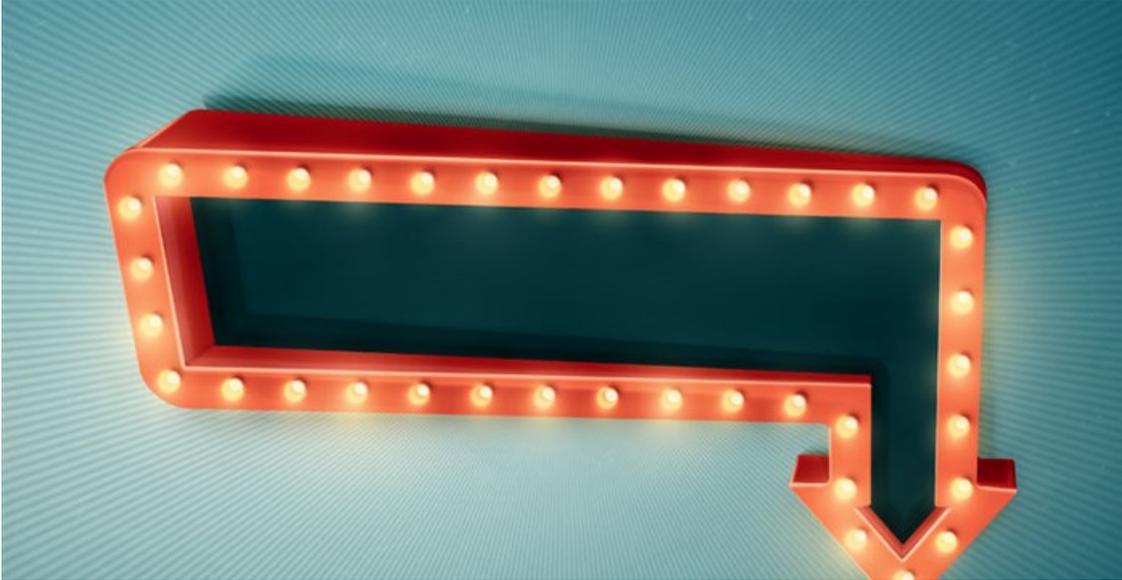


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According to Forrester Data almost a third of US adults are using ad blockers and 48% say they actively avoid ads on websites. This will force marketers to focus on quality rather than quantity.

What's more, the company expects this trend to have an impact on more than just the marketing department.

Fewer, better quality ads

The move to produce better quality ads that are less intrusive and more targeted has been supported by the formation of new standards and new industry groups, such as Interactive Advertising Bureau's (IAB) proposed new LEAN ad standards and the newly formed Coalition for Better Ads.

In response to the call for fewer, better quality ads, Forrester believes that publishers will respond by lowering the ad inventory on their sites and raising the cost of available ad space.

“Publishers will not just improve ads in 2017, they will also start to limit the total number delivered. This modulation won’t lower total spend, as greater buyer sensitivity to ad experience, more sophisticated targeting, and enhanced attribution let premium publishers justify higher pricing, at least to themselves,” writes Brigitte Majewski, Forrester B2C VP, research director and lead author of the report, [‘Marketing Predictions 2017: The Dawn Of ‘Less Is More’ In Marketing’](#).

“Behemoth Facebook already claims to be running out of ad inventory in its news feed as it balances ad revenue opportunity with user experience. But don’t worry, the social network has plenty of richer ad options in the wings such as retail ads that show in-store availability.”

This shift in attitude will also impact offline advertising: Forrester predicts TV-led campaigns will be superseded by integrated campaigns where mobile, social, and search will build on the reach and awareness of the TV narratives.

Outdoor advertising, meanwhile, will be impacted by digital signage, beacon, and geofencing technologies that will combine with improved data and measurement.

Ad and marketing tech will consolidate

Marketers rely on technology to help them manage and measure spend and efficacy. According to Forrester’s 2016 Global Business Technographics Marketing Survey, more than 50% of B2C marketers are planning, implementing, or expanding their implementations of their enterprise marketing software suites.

“Despite the thousands of solutions in the marketing technology space, the days of buying an application for every use case are over. Vendors will have to adjust to marketers’ new demands for easy access to insights from multiple sources and better management of end-to-end customer journeys,” warns Majewski in the report.

Data offers competitive advantage

In the predictions report, Forrester says improvements in advertising quality are reliant on more and better data for identification, targeting, and performance across the campaign life cycle. This will help marketers see potential beyond the narrow confines of mass advertising.

The report indicates that as marketers lead their businesses to become customer obsessed, they will begin to connect systems of insight with systems of engagement. Forrester sees this affecting the agency space as companies look to partner with data-centric agencies that can help deliver the analytics required to run quality campaigns.

“While customer insights services providers built their business around customer data, the same has not been true for massively influential creative agency partners. As marketers strive to organise around the customer, their strategic agency partners are following suit by doubling down on data platform investments and organisational changes that tap data to unlock creative potential,” writes Majewski.

Forrester’s predictions of a move from quantity to quality will shift the focus for marketers in the year to come. However, the reliance on better information and the ability to measure and manage their new strategies will also impact the technology department.

The report sums up the shift by pointing out that quality is only achievable when better customer insight drives better targeting, deeper personalisation, and better measurement. With the carrot of new social, mobile, and IoT data driving opportunity, Forrester believes marketers must prepare to go from insight to action in 2017.