



10 things brand managers need to know in 2020

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Introduction

In today's increasingly competitive landscape, what should brands do to analyze and improve brand awareness and strengthen brand equity?

“Recent research predicts 2020 is going to be an “interesting” year for marketers across South East Asia.”

Professionals across the region anticipate customer slow growth, while budgets may remain uncertain. More than two-thirds of marketers state they will have to make some sacrifices to their budgets, which they say are “just enough”.

This is interesting because despite the challenges faced, marketing and advertising has never been more important to the bottom line.

In 2019 we saw countless examples of businesses flying high thanks to how their brand was perceived in the market, from capitalizing on issues of huge consumer interest through demonstrating a clear response to global challenges. But for every winner, we also saw a number of brands suffer due to how consumers viewed their brand and what it stands for.

As we usher in the new decade, this new state of play presents a huge opportunity for brand managers. I truly believe there has never been a more exciting time for the industry. Using modern brand management and research tools, marketers can use deep consumer insights to validate, guide, and tailor programs as well as conduct and measure real, meaningful work that adds to the bottom line.

01

There will be a pivot to brand-led marketing

After years of focus on performance marketing, more companies realize long-term brand strength is important. Toward the end of 2019, we saw iconic brands— including Unilever, Coca-Cola, Adidas and TripAdvisor—acknowledge under investment in brand marketing in recent years.

This pivot back to brand-led marketing increases the importance at which marketers are able to monitor brand performance over time, and the subsequent drivers on the experience delivered.



02

Brand experiences will eclipse advertisements

To immerse consumers in the brand, the best businesses will launch experience-led activations. Giving customers a taste of what is on offer will boost loyalty, satisfaction, and ultimately conversion and retention.



03

Identify the brand touchpoints that matter most

The experience premium— where consumers are willing to pay more for better experiences—will be even more important in 2020. Every brand experience a customer has, whether it is seeing an ad on a billboard, seeking online assistance, or browsing instore, will be influenced by pre-existing perceptions; and it will impact future decisions too. To delight customers, brands will use experience data to pinpoint the key moments in the customer lifecycle to ensure they exceed expectations.

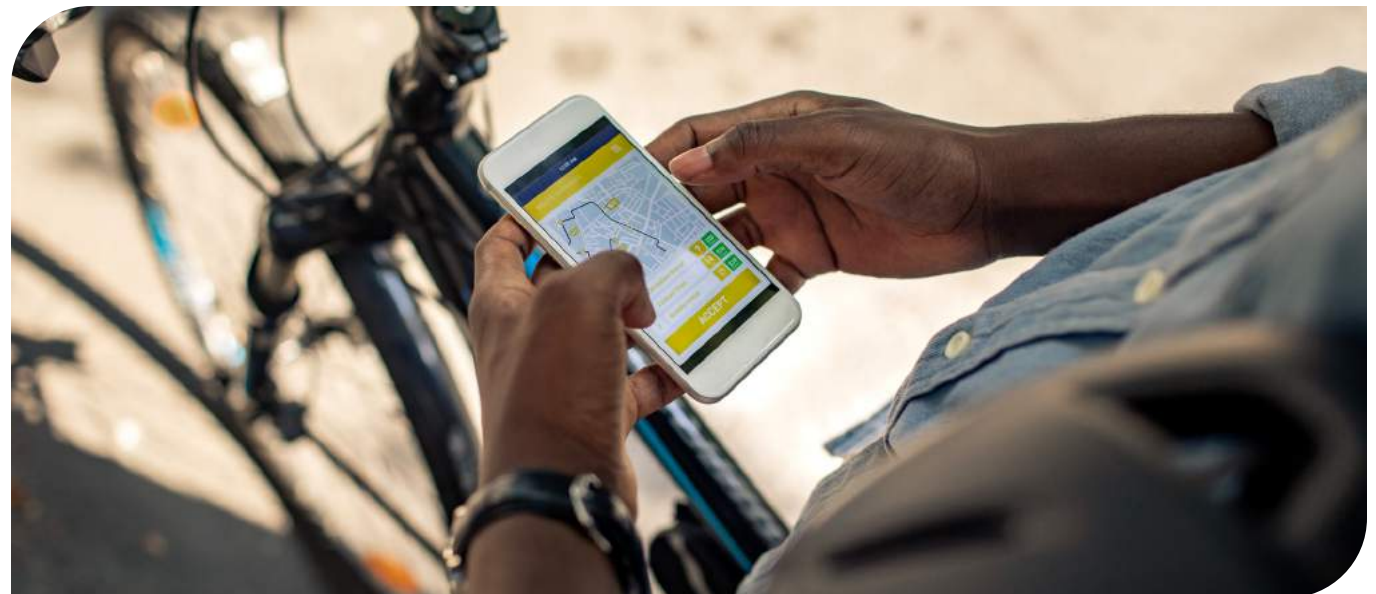


04

Embrace always-on brand tracking

With attention on the long-game, lengthy and periodic brand tracking surveys will become obsolete in 2020. Instead, marketers will adopt leaner and ongoing pulse surveys into the brand experience. This agile approach enables marketers to better understand their ongoing brand health and to conduct quick deep dives into potential areas of growth and opportunity.

One Singapore company, comparison site Finder, benefited by embracing a modern approach to brand management. Real-time insights into brand performance has enabled the company to lift brand awareness by 23%, boost its Net Promoter Score by eight points, and achieve record revenues within 10 weeks using this platform.



05

Hybrid C-suite roles will be on the rise, as CMO roles fall

Roles like Chief Customer Officer, Chief Growth Officer and Chief Experience Officer will become more common as Chief Marketing Officers realize that their remit is too narrow for the expectation that exists. Leaders know they need to own the customer experience as well as be the growth and innovation hub of the enterprise. This demands a new role definition, which many companies like Virgin, Coca-Cola, Unilever, Kimberly-Clark, and McDonald's have already embraced. Who will be next?



06

Operational and experience data join forces

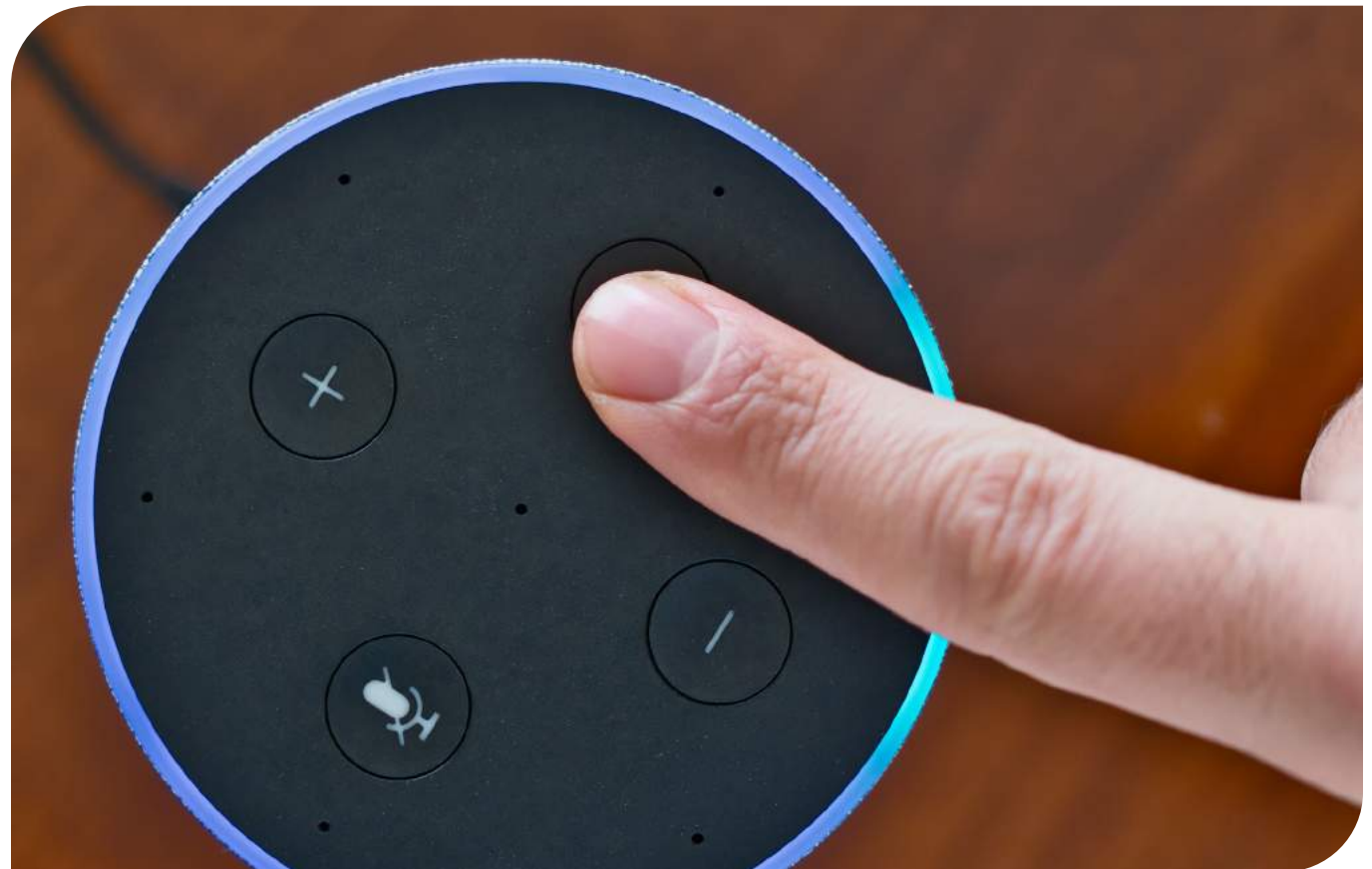
Gone are the days of simple brand metrics, such as market share and top-line growth. To win the hearts and minds of customers, businesses need to marry operational data with experience data giving insight into perceptions and preferences. This will allow marketers to optimize their campaigns, promotions and launches accordingly. Companies will also be able to use this data to model what consumers want before the market demands it, which ensures brands will remain ahead of the customer decision curve.



07

Ride the wave of automation

After a few years of caution, customers will place less value on whether they are the recipient of a human- or tech-generated response. To capitalize on the impact of AI-powered systems and chatbots, businesses must ensure their brand management platforms offer intelligent diagnostic tools.



08

Stop focusing on “Likes”

Facebook and Instagram are both trialing the removal of ‘likes’ from posts, which means companies will need to find new ways to ensure updates are seen. Experience management will equip companies with deeper consumer insights so they can create content that is relevant and resonates emotionally—all of which increases the likelihood customers will share or talk about it online.



09

Videos will get even shorter

Emerging video platforms like TikTok and Quibi—a new mobile-first short-form video streaming platform—present new opportunities for marketers and brands to reach new audiences. We are already seeing new brand partnerships form as a result, and refreshing and unique innovative content that grabs attention.



10

Bring brand expertise back in-house

More brands will seek to move their research needs in-house, driven by the realization that today's modern research platforms are powerful and easy to use. While cost savings are a driver for bringing this expertise in-house, the durable business benefits allow brands to own their brand experience data and the insights that enable everyone in the company to make faster informed decisions.



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