MANUFACTURING
B2B MANUFACTURING CONTENT MARKETING
2016 BENCHMARKS, BUDGETS, AND TRENDS — NORTH AMERICA

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Greetings, Content Marketers,

Welcome to our third annual report on the content marketing practices of business-to-business (B2B) manufacturers in North America.

While manufacturing marketers reported lower overall effectiveness at content marketing this year, they expanded their use of content marketing tactics. They also became more effective with those tactics, closing the gap between usage and effectiveness that we observed last year.

At the same time, the usage and effectiveness ratings for social media platforms decreased slightly. YouTube is still the platform manufacturing marketers say is most effective, which isn’t surprising considering that videos are at the top of the list of most widely used tactics.

Read on for more comparisons with last year, as well as with the overall sample of B2B marketers who took our annual content marketing survey.

Yours in content,

Joe
**USAGE & EFFECTIVENESS**

**Does your organization use content marketing?**

81% SAY YES

Last year, 82% of manufacturing marketers said they use content marketing.

Content marketing is defined as “a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience—and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.”

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*2016 B2B Manufacturing Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs*
How would you describe your organization’s content marketing maturity level?

50% SAY YOUNG/ FIRST STEPS PHASE

This was a new question this year. In general, effectiveness levels are greater among manufacturing organizations that have higher levels of content marketing maturity. Among those who reported being the most effective:

- 58% were in the sophisticated/mature phase
- 26% were in the adolescent phase
- 16% were in the young/first steps phase

How Manufacturing Marketers Assess Their Content Marketing Maturity Level

SOPHISTICATED
Providing accurate measurement to the business, scaling across the organization

MATURE
Finding success, yet challenged with integration across the organization

ADOLESCENT
Have developed a business case, seeing early success, becoming more sophisticated with measurement and scaling

YOUNG
Growing pains, challenged with creating a cohesive strategy and a measurement plan

FIRST STEPS
Doing some aspects of content, but have not yet begun to make content marketing a process

Overall, how effective is your organization at content marketing?

18% SAY THEY ARE EFFECTIVE

Last year, 26% of manufacturing marketers said their organizations were effective at content marketing. Having a documented content marketing strategy helps in this regard: 44% of manufacturing marketers who have one say their organizations are effective at content marketing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effectiveness Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Effective</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at All Effective</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Effective</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For this survey, we define effectiveness as “accomplishing your overall objectives.” We refer to those who rate their organizations as a 4 or 5 (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being “Very Effective” and 1 being “Not at All Effective”) as the “most effective” or “best-in-class” marketers. The 1s and 2s are considered the “least effective,” while the 3s are neutral.

In your organization, is it clear what an effective or successful content marketing program looks like?

32% SAY YES

Percentage of Manufacturing Marketers Whose Organizations Have Clarity on Content Marketing Success

- 32% Say Yes
- 44% Say No
- 24% Unsure

This was a new question this year. 60% of manufacturing marketers whose organizations are in the sophisticated/mature phase of content marketing say they have clarity (vs. 39% of those in the adolescent phase and 16% of those in the young/first steps phase).

Does your organization have a content marketing strategy?

Percentage of Manufacturing Marketers Who Have a Content Marketing Strategy

- Yes, and it is documented: 18%
- Yes, but it is not documented: 50%
- No: 27%
- Unsure: 4%

Last year, 20% of manufacturing marketers said they had a documented content marketing strategy, 50% had a verbal-only strategy, and 25% had no strategy.

A documented content marketing strategy influences overall effectiveness: 45% of the most effective manufacturing content marketers have a documented strategy. By comparison, only 11% of the least effective have a documented strategy.

Manufacturing marketers who have a documented content marketing strategy get better results with many of the tactics, social media platforms, and paid advertising methods they use (i.e., they rate them as more effective).
Does your organization have an editorial mission statement for the primary audience you target?

- 21% HAVE A DOCUMENTED EDITORIAL MISSION STATEMENT
- 50% No
- 24% Yes, but it is not documented
- 5% Unsure

This was a new question this year.

45% of the most effective manufacturing marketers have a documented editorial mission statement. In contrast, 61% of the least effective do not have a documented editorial mission statement or are unsure.

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### How Often Manufacturing Marketers Meet to Discuss Their Content Marketing Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biweekly</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only when it is necessary</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When compared with the overall sample, the most effective manufacturing marketers meet more frequently (45% of the most effective manufacturing marketers meet daily or weekly).

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*2016 B2B Manufacturing Content Marketing Trends—North America: Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs*
How valuable are team meetings in helping your organization to be more effective at content marketing?

When compared with the overall sample, the most effective manufacturing marketers are extracting more value from their content marketing meetings (68% of the most effective say meetings are valuable).

Compared with 2015, how much content will your organization produce in 2016?

74% SAY THEY WILL PRODUCE MORE

Approximately three out of four manufacturing marketers plan to produce more content in 2016 vs. 2015, regardless of company size, effectiveness, maturity level, or presence of a content marketing strategy.

Expected Change in Manufacturing Marketers’ Content Creation (2015 vs. 2016)

- More: 74%
- Same Amount: 18%
- Less: 3%
- Unsure: 4%

Manufacturers’ Content Marketing Tactic Usage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactic</th>
<th>Usage %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations/Photos</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Person Events</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media Content – other than blogs</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eNewsletters</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Studies</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles on Your Website</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Papers</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Presentations</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print Magazines</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Number Used: 13

Note: Fewer than 55% of B2B manufacturing marketers said they use the following tactics: Microsites/Separate Website Hubs (54%), Webinars/Webcasts (54%), Branded Content Tools (51%), Infographics (51%), Digital Magazines (42%), Mobile Apps (41%), Research Reports (38%), Print Newsletters (32%), eBooks (27%), Books (20%), Virtual Conferences (20%), Podcasts (16%), and Games/Gamification (9%).


Which content marketing tactics does your organization use?

89% USE ILLUSTRATIONS/PHOTOS AND VIDEOS

The average number of content marketing tactics that manufacturing marketers use increased from 12 last year to 13 this year.

Manufacturing marketers continue to embrace video as a content marketing tactic (last year, 87% said they used video vs. 89% this year).

Other notable increases were reported for illustrations/photos (82% last year vs. 89% this year) and in-person events (79% last year vs. 87% this year).

However, the tactic with the largest increase was online presentations (52% last year vs. 64% this year).

Use of the other tactics shown on the accompanying chart increased slightly, except for eNewsletters and print magazines (which decreased very slightly), and articles on your website (which decreased by seven percentage points).
How effective are the tactics your organization uses?

75% SAY IN-PERSON EVENTS ARE EFFECTIVE

Of all the content marketing tactics that manufacturing marketers use, the accompanying chart shows the 10 they say are most effective. As they did last year, manufacturing marketers say in-person events are the most effective tactic (66% last year vs. 75% this year).

The effectiveness ratings for all tactics shown here have risen compared with last year. The largest increases were for:

- Illustrations/Photos (55% last year vs. 67% this year)
- Online Presentations (43% last year vs. 54% this year)

Note: Percentages comprise marketers who rated each content tactic as 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = “Very Effective” and 1 = “Not at All Effective.”

Note: Additional content marketing tactics with effectiveness ratings include: Virtual Conferences (51%), Research Reports (51%), Branded Content Tools (49%), Mobile Apps (49%), Microsites/Separate Website Hubs (47%), eBooks (45%), Blogs (44%), Social Media Content – Other than Blogs (41%), Digital Magazines (41%), Books (40%), Print Magazines (38%), Print Newsletters (34%), Games/Gamification (27%), and Podcasts (25%).

Which social media platforms does your organization use to distribute content?

87% USE YouTube

Like last year, manufacturing marketers said they used an average of five social media platforms. YouTube is still the platform they use the most (89% last year vs. 87% this year). Use of each of the platforms shown here decreased slightly (within four percentage points) over last year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media Platform</th>
<th>Usage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google+</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Fewer than 30% of manufacturing marketers said they use the following social media platforms: Instagram (25%), Pinterest (17%), SlideShare (16%), Vimeo (14%), iTunes (10%), Tumblr (4%), Vine (3%), Periscope (3%), Medium (2%), and Snapchat (2%).

How effective are the social media platforms your organization uses?

66% SAY YouTube IS EFFECTIVE

Manufacturing marketers say YouTube is the most effective social media platform they use (last year, 66% said it was effective—same as this year). Effectiveness ratings for each of the other platforms shown here decreased slightly (within four percentage points) over last year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media Platform</th>
<th>Effectiveness Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google+</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Percentages comprise marketers who rated each social media platform as 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = “Very Effective” and 1 = “Not at All Effective.”

*Note:* Effectiveness ratings for additional social media platforms are not reported here due to low incidence of use.

Which paid advertising methods does your organization use to promote/distribute content?

Like last year, manufacturing marketers said they used an average of four paid methods to promote/distribute content.

While it is still the most often used paid method, the usage of print or other offline promotion decreased from last year (85% last year vs. 79% this year).

The use of promoted posts increased the most (38% last year vs. 45% this year).

The use of all the other methods shown here increased or decreased slightly.
How effective are the paid advertising methods your organization uses to promote/distribute content?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Effectiveness Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search Engine Marketing (SEM)</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Advertising (long-form paid content placement on external sites)</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print or Other Offline Promotion</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Ads (e.g., Facebook ads, LinkedIn ads)</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoted Posts (e.g., Facebook promoted posts, promoted Tweets)</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Online Banner Ads</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages comprise marketers who rated each paid advertising method as 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = “Very Effective” and 1 = “Not at All Effective.”

Although print or other offline promotion is the paid method that manufacturing marketers use most often, they report greater effectiveness with search engine marketing (SEM), which was their most effective paid method last year as well (52% last year vs. 61% this year).

While manufacturing marketers’ use of promoted posts increased over the last year, the effectiveness rating decreased (39% last year vs. 29% this year). The effectiveness ratings for all of the other methods shown here varied slightly.
Which content offers does your organization ask its audience to subscribe to?

71% SAY eNEWSLETTERS

82% of manufacturing marketers extend at least one content subscription offer. Nearly all who extend subscription offers focus primarily on eNewsletters.

Content Offers Manufacturing Marketers Ask Audience to Subscribe to

- eNewsletters: 71%
- Blogs: 35%
- Online Community: 17%
- Video Series: 15%
- Print Magazines: 10%
- Digital Magazines: 6%
- Podcasts: 5%
- Other: 4%
- Do Not Extend Offers: 16%

### Organizational Goals for Manufacturers’ Content Marketing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Awareness</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Generation</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Retention/Loyalty</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Nurturing</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Evangelism/Creating Brand Advocates</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upsell/Cross-sell</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Percentages comprise marketers who rated each goal a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = “Very Important” and 1 = “Not at All Important.”

The most effective manufacturing marketers place more importance on every content marketing goal shown here when compared with the overall sample.
## Important Metrics That Manufacturing Content Marketers Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales Lead Quality</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website Traffic</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEO Ranking</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Lead Quantity</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Conversion Rates</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Lift</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase Intent</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Lift</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase Intent</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Percentages comprise marketers who rated each metric a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 = "Very Important" and 1 = "Not at All Important."

Manufacturing marketers rated sales lead quality, sales, and website traffic most highly in terms of how important they are to measuring the effectiveness or success of their organization’s content marketing program.

**Note:** Additional metrics with importance ratings include: Data Capture (64%), Qualitative Feedback from Customers (61%), Time Spent on Website (60%), Customer Renewal Rates (55%), Subscriber Growth (51%), Inbound Links (50%), and Cost Savings (40%).
The Most Important Metric That Manufacturing Content Marketers Use

- **Sales Lead Quality**: 38%
- **Sales**: 25%
- **Brand Lift**: 19%
- **Sales Lead Quantity**: 6%
- **Website Traffic**: 6%
- **Responses with less than 6%**: 6%

When presented with the same list of metrics shown on p. 21 of this report—and asked, “which is the most important metric that your organization uses”—manufacturing marketers most often cited sales lead quality.

*Responses with less than 6% include: Higher Conversion Rates (5%), SEO Ranking (3%), Subscriber Growth (3%), Qualitative Feedback from Customers (2%), Data Capture (1%), Social Media Sharing (1%), Time Spent on Website (1%), Purchase Intent (1%), and Other (2%).

Approximately what percentage of your organization’s total marketing budget (not including staff) is spent on content marketing?

21% is the average

Manufacturing marketers allocate less of their total budget, on average, to content marketing when compared with their B2B peers overall (21% vs. 28%). Last year, manufacturing marketers allocated 22%, on average.
How do you expect your organization’s content marketing budget to change in the next 12 months?

Nearly half (49%) of manufacturing marketers plan to increase their content marketing spending during the next 12 months vs. 51% of B2B marketers overall. Last year, 47% of manufacturing marketers said they planned to increase spending.
What are your organization’s top five content marketing challenges this year?

65% say producing engaging content

The challenges that manufacturing marketers face are very similar to those experienced by all B2B marketers. Like their B2B peers overall, manufacturing marketers cite producing engaging content as their top challenge.

Top Five Content Marketing Challenges for Manufacturers

- Producing Engaging Content: 65%
- Producing Content Consistently: 62%
- Measuring Content Effectiveness: 57%
- Measuring the ROI of Content Marketing Program: 57%
- Producing a Variety of Content: 34%

Note: Other challenges from the list (aided) include: Lack of Budget (30%), Lack of Buy-In/Vision from Higher-Ups Inside Our Organization (28%), Understanding/Choosing Technologies Needed (26%), Gaps in Knowledge and Skills of Internal Team (25%), Lack of Integration Across Marketing (24%), Finding/Training Skilled Content Marketing Professionals/Content Creators (20%), Implementing the Technology Already in Place (14%), and Other Challenges (5%).

What are the top five priorities that your organization’s internal content creators will focus on this year?

82% SAY CREATING MORE ENGAGING CONTENT

Top Five Priorities for Manufacturers’ Content Creators

- Creating More Engaging Content: 82%
- Better Understanding of What Content Is Effective — and What Isn’t: 71%
- Finding More/Better Ways to Repurpose Content: 58%
- Creating Visual Content: 52%
- Better Understanding of Audience: 40%

Note: Other priorities from the list (aided) include: Becoming Better Storytellers (39%), Content Optimization (38%), Content Curation (23%), Content Personalization (20%), Becoming Stronger Writers (16%), and Other Priorities (3%).

Manufacturing marketers, like B2B marketers overall, cite creating more engaging content as their top priority for content creators. Their other priorities closely match those cited by B2B marketers overall.
## Differences Between B2B Manufacturing Content Marketers and B2B Content Marketers Overall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MANUFACTURING MARKETERS</th>
<th>OVERALL SAMPLE OF B2B MARKETERS*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considers organization to be effective at content marketing</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization is clear on what an effective or successful content marketing program looks like</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describes organization as sophisticated/mature</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets daily or weekly to discuss content marketing program</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finds meetings extremely or very valuable</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a documented content marketing strategy</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a documented editorial mission statement</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of content marketing tactics used</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of social media platforms used</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of paid advertising methods used</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of total marketing budget spent on content marketing (average)</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans to increase content marketing budget in next 12 months</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


DEMOGRAPHICS

B2B Manufacturing Content Marketing 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—North America was produced by Content Marketing Institute and sponsored by Lionbridge.

The sixth annual content marketing survey, from which the results of this report were generated, was mailed electronically to a sample of marketers using lists from Content Marketing Institute, MarketingProfs, the Association for Data-driven Marketing and Advertising (ADMA), the Business Marketing Association (BMA), Blackbaud, Industry Week, New Equipment Digest, and WTWH Media.

A total of 3,714 recipients from around the globe—representing a full range of industries, functional areas, and company sizes—completed the survey during July and August 2015. This report presents the findings from the 214 respondents who said they were B2B manufacturing marketers in North America.

Sections of this report compare the manufacturing respondents with the overall sample of 1,521 B2B marketers from North America, whose responses were previously presented in the Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs report, B2B Content Marketing 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends—North America.

Additional reports based on the annual survey are available at www.contentmarketinginstitute.com/research. Special thanks to MarketingProfs for their assistance with the annual survey and the B2B North America and B2C North America reports.

Size of B2B Manufacturing Company (by Employees)

- Large (1,000+ Employees): 41%
- Midsize (100-999 Employees): 35%
- Small (10-99 Employees): 20%
- Micro (Fewer than 10 Employees): 3%

B2B Manufacturing Job Title/Function

- Content Marketing Leader for Overall Program: 60%
- Traditional Marketing/Paid Media: 42%
- Writer: 40%
- Website/Technology: 36%
- Editorial Lead: 30%
- Internal Content Curator: 25%
- Designer: 18%
- Audience Development: 17%
- Sales: 13%
- Agency/Freelance Relations: 12%
- Community Management: 10%
- Influencer Relations: 10%
- Other: 10%

Note: Multiple responses permitted.
Thanks to all the survey respondents and survey distribution partners who made this study possible.

About Content Marketing Institute (CMI)

Content Marketing Institute is the leading global content marketing education and training organization, teaching enterprise brands how to attract and retain customers through compelling, multi-channel storytelling. CMI's Content Marketing World event, the largest content marketing-focused event, is held every September in Cleveland, Ohio, USA, and the Intelligent Content Conference event is held every spring. CMI publishes the bi-monthly magazine Chief Content Officer, and provides strategic consulting and content marketing research for some of the best-known brands in the world. CMI is a 2012-2015 Inc. 500/5000 company. Watch this video to learn more about CMI. View all CMI research at www.contentmarketinginstitute.com/research.

About Lionbridge

As the world’s largest marketing localization firm, Lionbridge combines language expertise and operational capabilities to enable more than 800 world-leading brands to engage their global customers with the greatest impact. We provide industry-leading translation and localization services, as well as highly scalable global marketing solutions to fuel customer loyalty, enhance client service, ensure brand messaging, and drive global growth. By leveraging our global operating model, flexible approach to technology, and deep language and cultural expertise to support global marketing execution, brands are able to deliver local relevance on a global scale.