



The Future-Proof Marketer in 2015

Digital marketing's skills gap crisis and the new breed of marketer to solve it

Why this matters

At the outset of 2015, marketers are finding their transition to digital marketing stymied by an industry-wide digital skills gap. Unable to tap into the enormous potential of technology in marketing, the digital skills gap is the industry's most pressing crisis today.

- 90% of marketers currently report suffering from a skills gap, and cannot find the skills that they need in the job market.
- The digital skills gap represents lost productivity, and consequently, costs money.
- This comes at a time when marketing is shifting budgets and campaigns to digital, increasing the cost of the skills gap.

The solution is a new breed of marketer, one skilled in six essential areas of digital competency. We'll lay out what those are, and how you can develop an action plan to bring your team's digital skills to where they need to be.

This is how marketing will close its digital skills gap

You've probably experienced marketing's digital skills gap firsthand. You could even be part of it yourself.

Maybe you've been frustrated when a piece of content that you spent hours crafting couldn't climb past the third page of search results. Or maybe someone once showed you a shortcut to a computer task you perform daily, revealing how inefficiently you'd been doing it before. Small skills deficiencies might not seem important on their own, but when they extend throughout an entire industry and touch nearly every digital operation, as they do presently in marketing, they spell disaster.

Going into 2015, 90% of marketers consider themselves under-skilled at digital marketing.¹

This means everything from small sub-optimizations to unfamiliarity with basic marketing functions such as measuring ROI. At the same time, 93% of digital marketers report that it is "harder to recruit people with the right skills than ever before."²

Under-skilled and unable to hire the problem away, the result is a pervasive skills gap that translates to lost productivity and obsolescence for individuals and companies alike. **The solution is a new type of marketer entirely, one skilled in both traditional and digital expertise.** This unique combination is what it takes to conquer the skills gap in 2015 and beyond.

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*CMOs believe technology is the single most important force shaping marketing now. However, the pace of change means that **the gap between the skills that marketers have and the skills that they need is growing.***

”

Lorna Walker

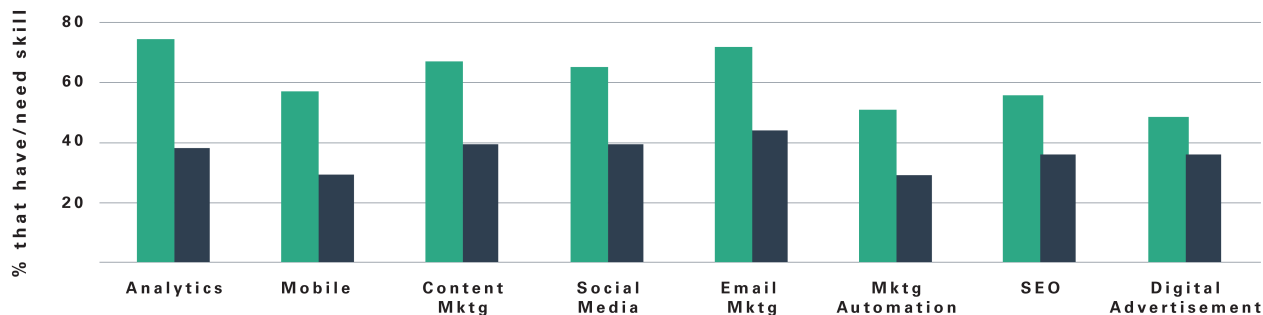
Professor of Business & Management Regent's University, London

Marketers don't have the right **digital skills**.

Marketers currently operate with incomplete skill sets, and have for a long time. Most industry research indicates that marketers largely recognize their own skills deficiencies, but that hasn't gotten them any closer to solving the problem.

- Just 1 in 5 current marketers has the digital proficiency they would require of an entry-level candidate⁴
- Only 8% of large companies feel that their employees are strong across all areas of digital marketing⁵
- 77% report “missing skills” to be their critical obstacle to achieving digital transformation⁶

Self-reported skills gaps between **skills marketers need** and **skills they have** in key areas.



Source: Online Marketing Institute / ClickZ / Kelly Services

Marketers self-report a skills gap that averages over 25% per digital skill. The largest talent gaps belong to the most important skills: analytics, social media, email marketing, content marketing, and mobile.

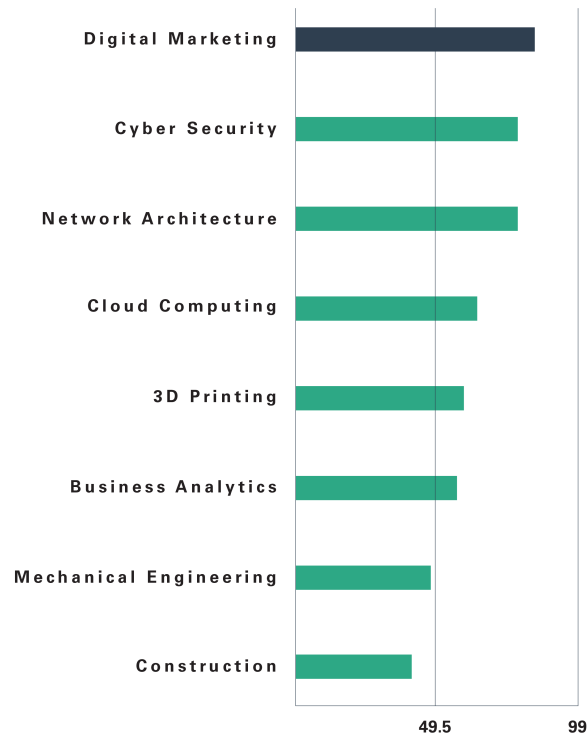
Marketers can't obtain skills through **hiring**.

The labor pool is also lacking digital skills. This is partly due to an economy-wide digital skills gap among job candidates, but marketing recruiters suffer under the added challenge of needing to find a truly unique blend of proficiencies.

A digital marketing's toolkit combines new and old skillsets. Technology hasn't changed the fundamental role of the marketer, only the methods by which that role is fulfilled. Marketers will always need traditional marketing competencies like creativity, aesthetic sensibility, and communication. In 2015, they need to transpose these competencies to an environment driven by big data, automation, and other numerate skills.

Job candidates who excel in both sets of skills are rare. Consequently, digital marketing is among the hardest jobs to hire across the entire economy, even relative to other data-heavy jobs. This is bad news for marketing managers looking to hire their way into digital proficiency.

Relative difficulty of hiring by job, 0 - 99



According to hiring data compiled by Wanted Analytics, digital marketing is a harder skillset to hire than network architects, business analytics, cloud computing, or engineering.⁷

“

A digital marketer is someone who can talk about strategy, marketing branding – all traditional stuff, but in digital terms. Who could talk to the technical side, could communicate commercially with a client, and who could then produce a digital marketing plan for a business. That doesn't exist in the market place. There's a definite gap in the market.

”

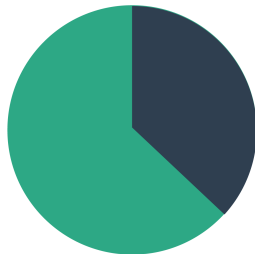
**Creative Director,
branding agency**

“Developing a Digital Marketer Model,” Royle & Laing, 2014⁸

Case study:

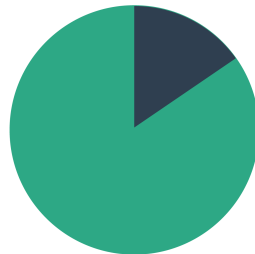
The challenge of measuring complete ROI

To take one fundamental metric as an example, here's what marketers say about measuring the full return on investment (ROI) of marketing operations.



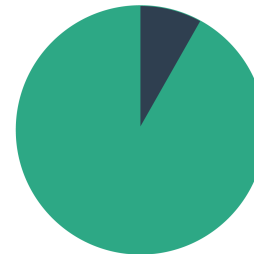
37%

of all marketers are confident that they can measure the ROI of their **social media activities**¹¹



16%

can measure ROI across **all areas of digital marketing**¹²



9%

of marketers are **confident** that their overall digital marketing operation is **working**¹³

The skills gap is about to **cost more**.

With or without the skills to properly execute it, digital is taking over marketing in a big way. 78% of marketing executives believe a digital transformation will be essential by 2015, and indeed, 69% of senior marketers are planning on expanding digital marketing spending for next year.^{9,10} In fact, digital marketing is the fastest growing sector of marketing and will be for the foreseeable future.

By 2017, CMOs are predicted to spend more money on IT than CIOs¹⁴ — yet only 9% of companies are currently able to confirm that the expense is worth it.

Assuming a **trillion-dollar global marketing spend in 2015**,¹⁵ this means that marketers will spend **\$910 billion** without knowing its impact this year. Without skills training, that figure will rise to **\$1.04 trillion in 2017**.

This is an enormous waste of money and effort. And entirely solvable with skills training.

14.7%

Compound annual
growth rate of digital
marketing expenditure
through 2017.¹⁶

The 6 essential skills for the new digital marketer



DATA GATHERING



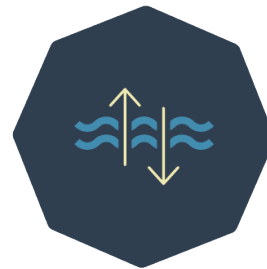
DATA ANALYTICS



CONTENT



CAMPAIGN
MANAGEMENT



CROSS CHANNEL



FUTURE PROOF

Data Gathering



Good analysis requires good data, so being able to obtain it is extremely valuable – especially if the data needs to be integrated from different silos. Here on the back end of data work, completeness and integrity are the goals.

Technical skills:

- Implementing systems to gather useful metrics
- Being able to collate, organize, and contextualize data from different sources

Soft skills:

- Identify questionable data
- Find innovative data-gathering points that don't overload clients
- Seek out offline sources of data such as interviews and observation

“

Marketing departments must be able to collect massive amounts of complicated, unstructured data and integrate it with the more traditional sources of data the company collects. It is from these combined data sources that the truly impactful insights are derived.

”

Teradata Data-Driven Marketing Survey 2013

Data Analytics



In our big data era, you must be able to tell stories by analyzing an enormous amount of data. The front end of data work is to be able to take information and use it to identify targets, predict trends and behavior, and understand the market.

Technical skills:

- Statistics and data modeling
- Market segmentation

Soft skills:

- Interpreting data into a narrative
- Determining unique value to different market segments

McKinsey analysis of more than 250 engagements over five years has revealed that companies that put data at the center of the marketing and sales decision improve their marketing return on investment (MROI) by 15 – 20 percent. That adds up to \$150 - \$200 billion of additional value based on global annual marketing spend of an estimated \$1 trillion.

Content



There has never been more content available to distract consumers and dilute your messaging. Create content that captivates your target audience by being relevant and original. Content must provide real value in order to cut through a noisy environment and guide customers along an end-to-end journey.

Technical skills:

- Content reach (including SEO)
- Building good buyer personas using data and testing

Soft skills:

- Creativity
- Aesthetic sensibility
- Recognizing and selling the right value proposition

“

The web is no passive medium. Users are in control more than ever before. We need to tailor our marketing to be user-centric, elective or permission based, and offer a real value proposition to the consumer.

”

Damian Ryan & Calvin Jones

“Understanding Digital Marketing: Marketing strategies for engaging the digital generation,” 2009.¹⁹

Campaign Management



A well-executed campaign begins with alignment between marketing and sales and adopts a variety of workflows depending on what your campaign requires. Implement a total campaign strategy: planning, management, execution. Test to determine what works, and adapt as necessary; don't stay married to anything if the data doesn't validate it.

Technical skills:

- Marketing automation and organization
- Campaign planning
- Testing for efficacy

Soft skills:

- Team communication
- Being able to automate without losing personalization
- Creating innovative end-to-end campaigns

“

In the past, marketing's primary role was to manage the brand and develop interest in the product. Today, customers do their homework upfront. By the time they enter the sales funnel, they are more educated than ever before. This fundamentally changes the way that sales and marketing do their jobs, and it makes the need for communication between the two organizations more important than ever.

”

Oracle Tech Brief

“Improve Sales and Marketing Alignment to Generate Better Business Results,” 2011.²⁰

Cross Channel



Customers interact with messaging in more different ways than ever before: on different platforms, in different circumstances (search vs. public advertisement), and along different points in the end-to-end customer journey. You must design content with the customer's perspective in mind and be able to fix it when necessary.

Technical skills:

- Front-end design and coding
- Knowledge of how to integrate messaging on different platforms

Soft skills:

- Awareness of the user's perspective
- Aesthetic sensibilities to keep messaging consistent across different platforms and market segments

“

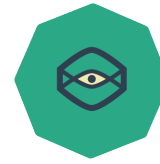
Marketers must create different formats of content with customized copy for highly fragmented marketing channels, from TV and print to various social media platforms in order to reach their target audience. Digital marketing will continue to morph, and promotion channels will be further fragmented.

”

Pam Didner

Global Integrated Marketing Specialist, Intel Corporation²¹

Future Proof



Marketing is ground zero for the changing ways in which customers interact with brands, content, and products. In the digital era, it isn't that the big beat the small, but that the fast beat the slow. The most important skill you can have is the ability to continually evolve your knowledge base, so that no matter what new skills you need, you know where to find them and that you're up to the task.

Technical skills:

- An ample foundation of skills on which to build
- Access to a good LMS

Soft skills:

- Open-mindedness
- Interest in growing

“

The field of marketing will raise its game when it moves beyond static marketing activities to adaptive capabilities that fit the new market reality. The disruptive shock to the system from the Internet era will spawn a new generation of insights into how markets work and how organizations can anticipate and respond to fast-moving market signals.

”

George S. Day

“Closing the Marketing Capabilities Gap,” 2011.²²

What you can do about it:

Developing an action plan to address the digital skills gap in your business



Step 1: Diagnose

Which skills are lacking?
To what degree? Where
would we be going if
nothing changed?

Step 2: Quantify

How much is each skill
deficiency costing us?
Which skills are most
necessary to update?

Step 3: Project aptitude

Which employees are
best suited to learn the
most important skills?

Step 4: Design training

Which is the best
method by which
these employees can
acquire these skills?

Step 5: Assess & repeat

Did training succeed in
providing these skills?

Understand the business needs and related
skill requirements

Assess the skills
gap today

Setting up your business for success with
best-in-class, repeatable training

Recap: Marketing's digital skills gap and the new type of marketer to solve it

Over 90% of marketers suffer from a digital skills gap that directly affects their ability to market in an environment of rapid and accelerating change. To move forward, companies need to develop their existing talent into digital marketers.

- Digital marketing requires competency in 6 core areas:



**Data
Gathering**



**Data
Analytics**



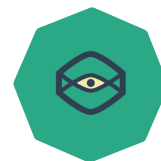
Content



**Campaign
Management**



**Cross
Channel**



**Future
Proof**

- Take charge of the skills gap with an action plan:



**Step 1:
Diagnose**

**Step 2:
Quantify**

**Step 3:
Project aptitude**

**Step 4:
Design training**

**Step 5:
Assess &
repeat**

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