QUERYCLICK

The Value of Attribution in UK Retail

How attribution is emerging as a keystone technology for marketers



2021

Executive Summary

In 2019, our survey report entitled "Attribution: digital marketing's broken promise" concluded that digital marketers were being pressured into sub-optimal investment strategies. Short-termism took precedence over best practice, what can be most easily measured was prioritised over what was likely most important. Marketers were being driven down a narrowing path of last-click measurement and saturated channels – particularly Google and Facebook – that became incapable of supporting the revenue growth targets that challenge retail marketers due to a lack of an accurate unifying view to help optimise on a day-to-day basis.

In this survey, we set out to discover what, if anything, had changed within the last two years and we decided to focus our lens on retailers in particular. Although there have been some events which have had a monumental impact on industries across the world - and especially in the retail sector - when it comes to the world of attribution, it seems that little has changed.

Responses to the early questions in this survey suggested that marketers are confident and happy about the data they receive and what they can do with it. But dig a little deeper, as we did in later questions, and the cracks appear. They're big ones.



For example, over three-quarters of our respondents spend at least 10% of their budgets on marketing attribution tools, however, **nearly two-thirds then add that the data they receive from such tools to support cross-channel decision-making is broken!** What a shocking waste and missed opportunity.

Taken in combination with the results showing that over 80% of respondents are concerned about bias in their Adtech reporting - specifically Google, Facebook and Amazon who between them dominate the digital AdTech market - it is not overexaggeration to describe the attribution marketplace today as fundamentally broken.

By working with some of the largest UK retailers over the last 12 years, we've become well versed in the challenges today's digital marketers are facing when it comes to accurate reporting - which is why we have recently brought our revolutionary solution, Corvidae, to market outside our existing customer base. Through conducting this survey, it has become abundantly clear that the problem of fair and accurate attribution runs far and wide throughout the retail industry- and impacts more than just the marketing function.

The good news is that there are solutions to these challenges.

As performance marketers ourselves, we designed Corvidae specifically to address the concerns touched on in this survey. As a result of taking a radically different approach to attribution, Corvidae appears to have all the most desirable characteristics for an attribution platform, as defined by marketers' responses to question nine. This includes the ability to identify revenue growth opportunities through greater data granularity - putting actionable, daily, ad insight into the hands of marketers tasked with improving performance each and every day.

Advertising optimisation can only come from accurate attribution of revenue to both online and offline marketing efforts, merging both deterministic and probabilistic data to deliver clear insights that inform decision making. It is not a simple process but it is an area in which we've invested seven years of development and can now deliver credible, powerful results.

Based on the results of this survey, tools with advanced AI capabilities that transform data quality and accuracy like Corvidae are now a critical part of a new form of digital toolkit that marketers desperately need in this time of increasingly siloed digital marketing and pressurised ad spend budgets.

Global ad spend is expected to top £380bn in 2021 (ref. Zenith, Advertising Expenditure Forecasts 2020), of which £160bn is siloed within the three key players in digital – Google, Amazon, and Facebook. £171bn will be spent in the existing silo of offline.

Attribution may prove to be *the* keystone technology for delivering marketing success from ever more competitive budgets.

The Survey

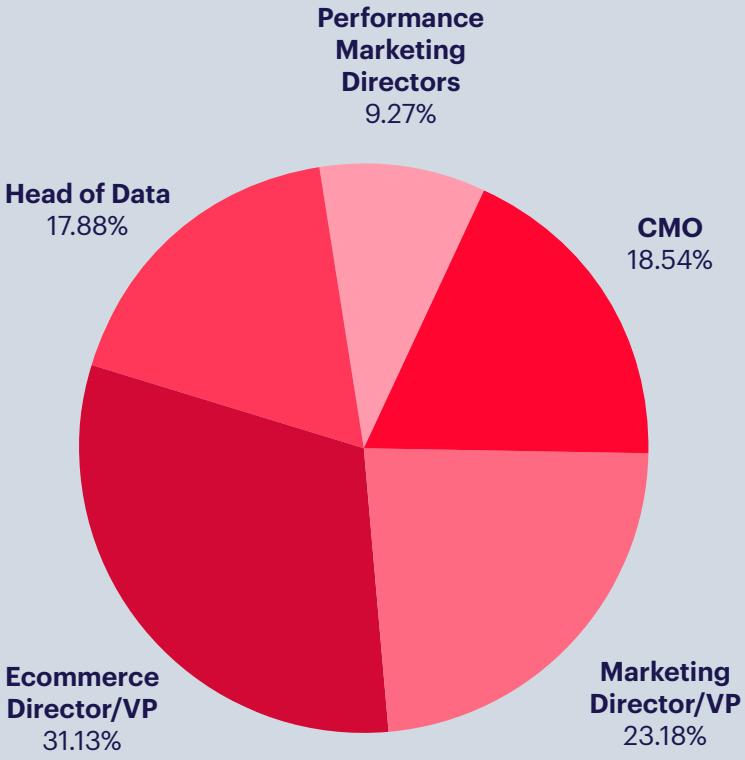


Respondent employers/organisations

Respondents were digital marketers in online retailers. All had a minimum spend of £500,000 per annum on digital marketing.

Respondents

Our 150 respondents were CMOs, Marketing Directors/ VPs, Ecommerce Directors/ VPs, Head of Data, or Performance Marketing Directors. These job functions were selected to ensure that responses came from experienced people who are involved in the decision-making process when it comes to digital marketing investments.





Methodology

The survey was carried out on behalf of QueryClick by independent survey consultants, Censuswide, in February and March 2021. Respondents were sourced by Censuswide according to the parameters shown above, with responses collected online.

Qualifying questions ensured that responses were only collected from respondents meeting the definition above. Both the survey and Censuswide are compliant with the Market Research Society code of conduct.



UNDERSTANDING OF ATTRIBUTION MODELS

#1

We asked...

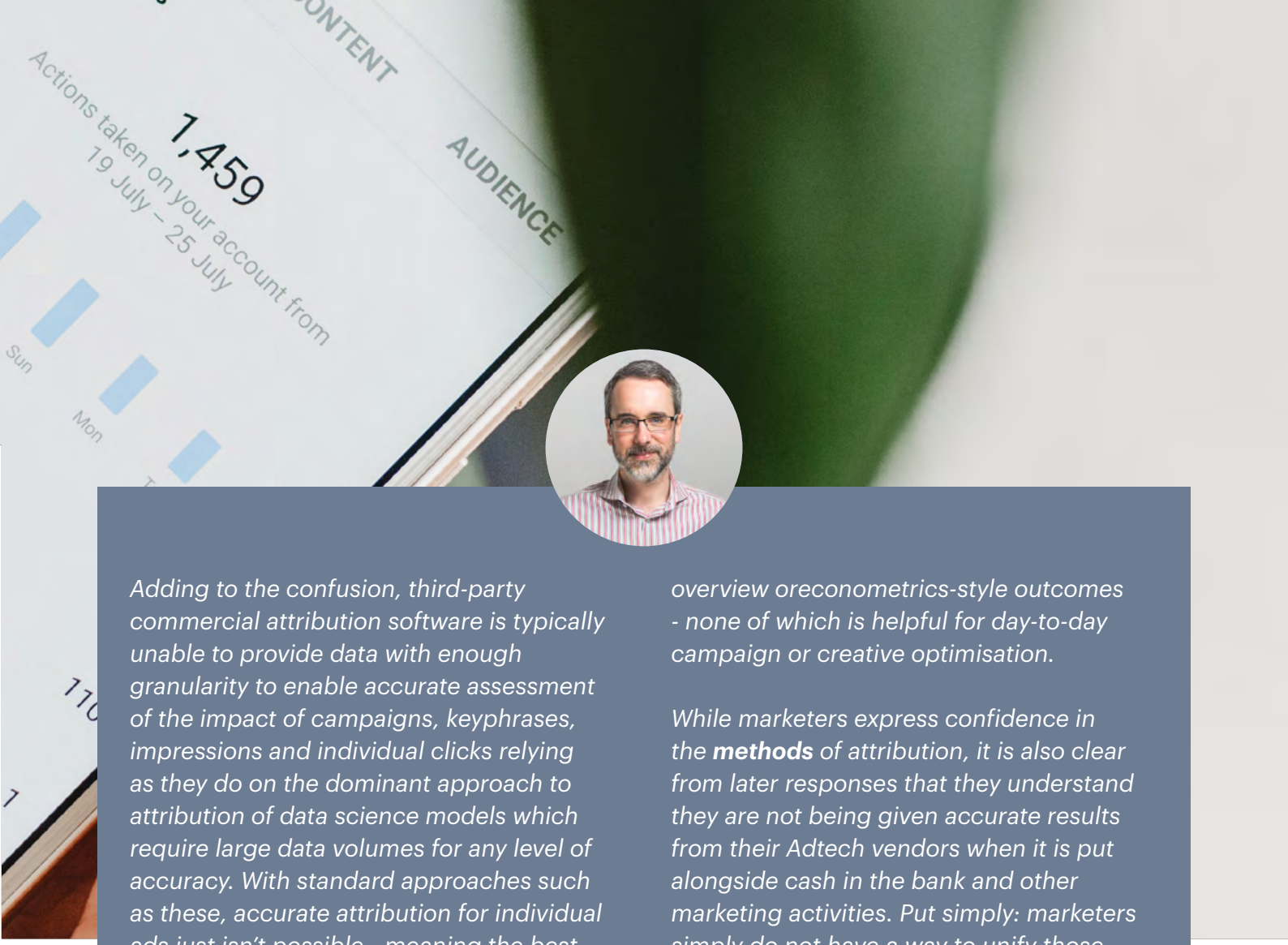
How confident are you that you understand the data and model requirements for good, accurate attribution across all of your marketing channels?

The vast majority of respondents (94%) are at least somewhat confident that they understand their attribution models and how they're working across channels. Confidence is highest among those with digital marketing budgets of £1 million to £1.99 million.

Interestingly, the initial confidence expressed by respondents to this first question seems to be contradicted in answers to the later questions on detail and accuracy of these model outputs.

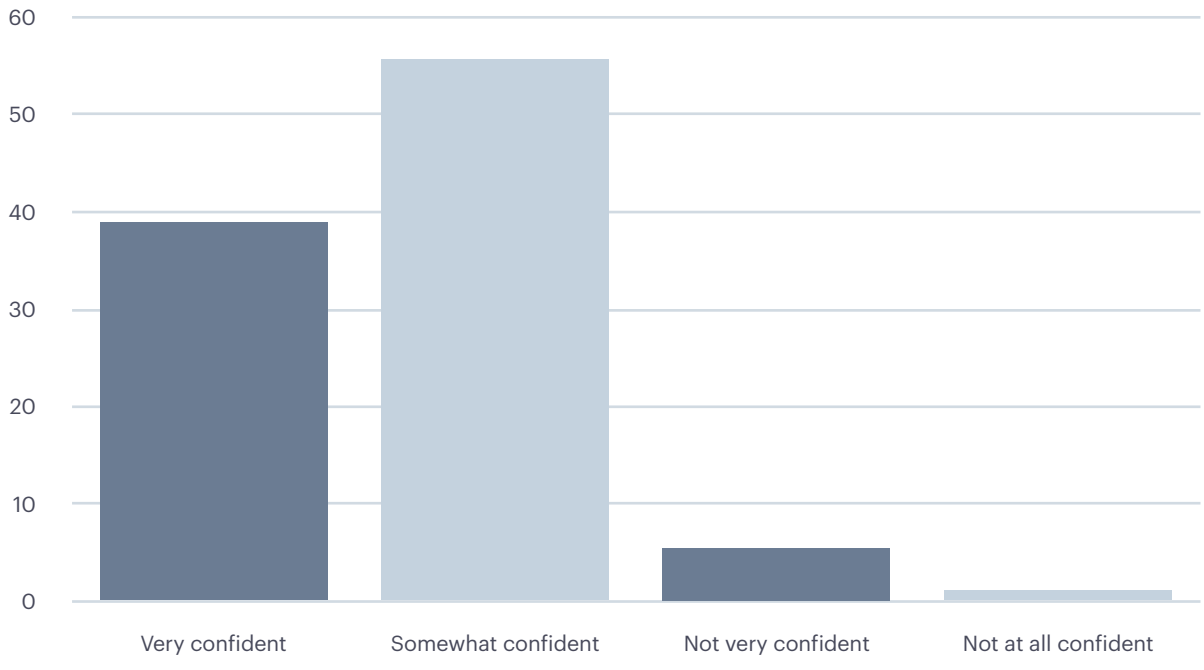
This demonstrates the ease with which big brands can create a false sense of security. Google, Facebook and Amazon own the digital AdTech space so what they report must be true? That is clearly not the case. These companies are marking their own homework and doing a very poor job of it when even the lightest scrutiny is applied to their reported results.

Crucially, deeper analysis shows that around 80% of the data from Google and Adobe clickstreams is inaccurate because it represents broken or incomplete sessions - largely created by the vendors' continued reliance on the cookie to do the majority of the stitching together of multiple clickstream hits, which is a laughably poor system to rely on in 2021 in our multi device, fragmented brand engagement world. Furthermore, none of this data takes account of incrementality – the contribution of message exposure in other siloed datasets and offline channels. As ever, the channels doing the reporting claim most of the credit for themselves.



Adding to the confusion, third-party commercial attribution software is typically unable to provide data with enough granularity to enable accurate assessment of the impact of campaigns, keyphrases, impressions and individual clicks relying as they do on the dominant approach to attribution of data science models which require large data volumes for any level of accuracy. With standard approaches such as these, accurate attribution for individual ads just isn't possible - meaning the best outcome you can hope for is a channel level overview oreconometrics-style outcomes - none of which is helpful for day-to-day campaign or creative optimisation.

*While marketers express confidence in the **methods** of attribution, it is also clear from later responses that they understand they are not being given accurate results from their Adtech vendors when it is put alongside cash in the bank and other marketing activities. Put simply: marketers simply do not have a way to unify those siloed results for day-to-day optimisation.*



#2

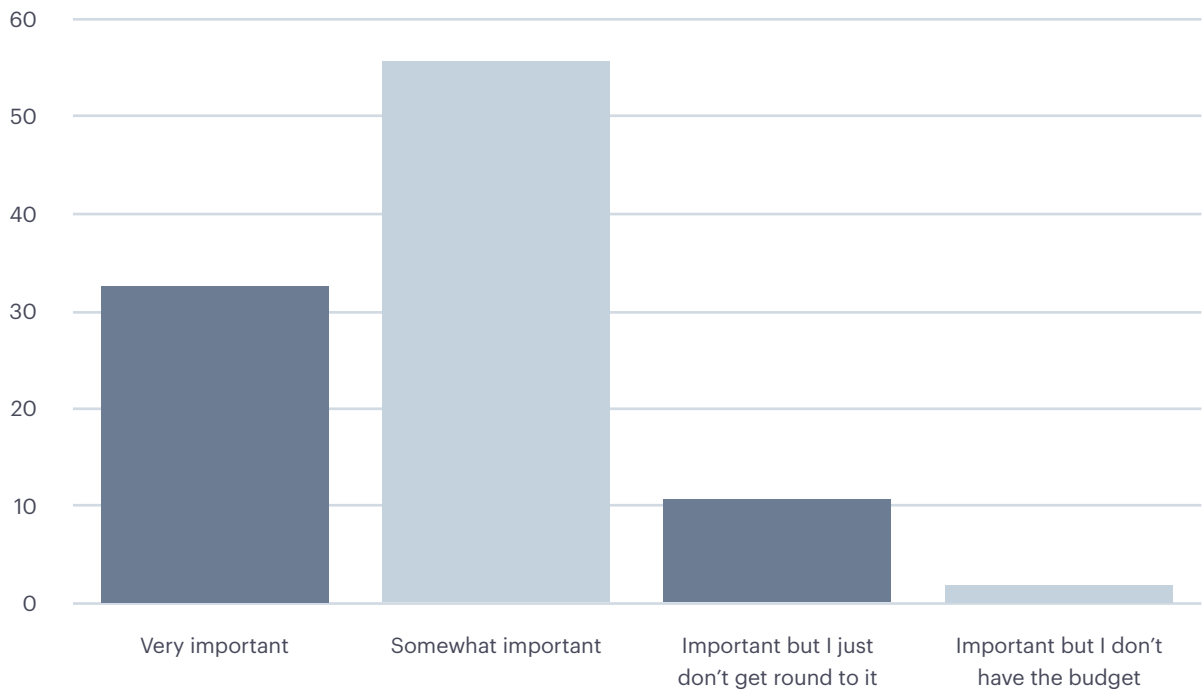
We asked...

How important is marketing attribution technology as part of your marketing stack?

There is little disagreement about the importance of marketing attribution. **98% of respondents consider attribution to be at least 'somewhat important'**, although over 10% admit they don't get around to doing it, while nearly one-third consider attribution to be 'very important'. Furthermore, 57% of those tasked with marketing performance results, believe that attribution is a 'very important' part of the marketing technology stack.



It's clear that marketing attribution is now a key consideration for data-driven marketing strategy. The survey results are broadly independent of marketing spend or geographic location.



#3

We asked...

How accurate do you believe your web analytics data provider(s) to be?

Nearly 80% of respondents believe they have accurate web analytics data in place. Once again, the power of Google and Adobe brands reinforces belief in the quality of their products. In practice, however, the proposition is undermined by the data's inability to be effectively attributed. This is due to its poor session stitching relying – still – upon cookies to do the heavy lifting and overly- basic probabilistic matching in Google Analytics 4. The result is a self-reinforcing failure to move forward from last-click data when reporting marketing performance.

The survey results show a divergence in views about data accuracy between those who describe themselves as Head of Data vs. those with the title of CMO. Only 7.5% of the former believe they are working with inaccurate data, while 15% of CMOs take that view. This may be partly explained by optimism bias on the part of data heads, whose jobs are only viable if they believe they are working with accurate data. Tali Sharot, Professor of cognitive neuroscience in the Department of Experimental Psychology at University College London, believes that 80% of us show optimism bias and there can be fewer more compelling reasons to want to believe that your data is accurate than if your main job responsibility is interpreting that data. We see potential optimism bias throughout the survey.

When you consider the views of Performance Marketing Directors in our retail sample set, the cracks are starting to appear: **43% of them believe their data is 'not very accurate'.**

A third of those spending less than £1 million on marketing are aware of data inaccuracy in digital marketing. There is much higher scrutiny of performance and more investment in non-brand activity in this cohort, suggesting the cracks show when web analytics data is actually analysed and when the investment is asked to work in competitive, non-brand campaigns.



50% of Performance Marketing Directors believe their data is at least 'not very accurate'



The responses to this question are a telling and damning indictment of today's approach to web analytics for retailers. Given the billions of pounds of revenue flowing through these systems every single day, it is frankly astonishing that nearly half of those responsible for performance believe that Google and Adobe's systems are not very accurate, ultimately preventing any fair and open scrutiny of media spends. Given that according to the IAB, around half of all digital media spend in the UK is also allocated to Google, the underlying frustration of marketers is clear to see in these results.



	CMO	Head of Data	Performance Marketing Director
Very accurate	28.57%	33.33%	28.57%
Somewhat accurate	39.29%	59.26%	28.57%
Not very accurate	14.29%	3.70%	14.29%
Not at all accurate	10.71%	0%	21.43%
Not sure	7.14%	0%	0%
N/A we don't use this	0%	3.70%	7.14%



	CMO	Head of Data	Performance Marketing Director
Very accurate	50%	62.96%	57.14%
Somewhat accurate	21.43%	22.22%	28.57%
Not very accurate	10.71%	7.41%	7.14%
Not at all accurate	10.71%	3.70%	7.14%
Not sure	7.14%	0%	0%
N/A we don't use this	0%	3.70%	0%

#4

We asked...

What percentage of your marketing/advertising budget is used for the following?

The most significant insights from the answers given here are that around 75% of respondents spent comparatively large amounts with Google and Facebook **and yet are very concerned about how to grow revenue going forward as a result of channel saturation.** The story of attribution is writ large over this result – as unlocking further growth requires a movement away from spending in silo, and requires better data drive attribution outcomes than simple channel level reports.

Traditional marketing spend languishes in the shadow of digital options for our respondents, but perhaps that's as much to do with the challenge of measuring non-digital efforts and managing those existing silos as it is about not believing in their value .

Attribution inaccuracy, data silos, and the technical, ethical, and legal problems associated with the use of third-party cookies all have an impact here. Fraud is a growing concern.

Spending on Instagram and YouTube channels shows that advertisers are keen to embrace digital video and solving the attribution challenge should cause a spending explosion in programmatic advertising, similar to that experienced by Facebook over the last five years.



75% of respondents concerned about channel saturation in Google and Facebook



Quite apart from the headline result that the vast majority – 75%! - of respondents are concerned about spend saturation and an inability to confidently increase spend, the survey also revealed that programmatic advertising has not delivered on its early promise.

A much-hyped channel with a fantastic proposition for marketers: an ad served in the right place, at the right time, to the right individual. Programmatic's poor showing is at least partly due to poor data quality undermining the confidence of marketers to invest in the activity, but also certainly affecting confidence is the sheer volume of AdFraud that is apparent when reviewing raw log or bid data and a failure of cheap impressions to return measurable results – due in large part to endemic fraudulent bot activity used to drive impression volumes and meet CPM targets for campaigns by unscrupulous operators.

Granular, accurate attributed data allows the removal of badly performing programmatic media spend without requiring an immediate click through for measurement, returning control and measurement to the programmatic marketer regardless of DSP. Controlled trials run by QueryClick also showed that behavioural targeting models driven by Corvidae's modelling outperformed those from Google returning 4x more conversions at ½ the CPA compared to DV360. So, attribution has a part to play as arbiter of performance and driver of performance in the programmatic space also, itself projected to grow as more mature martech helps support cost effective, non-Google solutions.

What percentage of your marketing/advertising budget is used for the following?

40% spend more than 20% of all budget on **Facebook.**

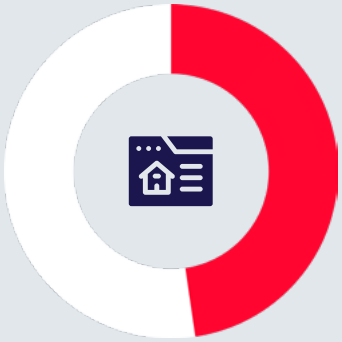
55%

spend between 10 and 20% of their budget on **Facebook**.

40%

spend more than 20% of all budget on **Google Ads**. This is the same percentage as Facebook, despite an extra decade of search technology working to Google's advantage. This shows how quickly Facebook has caught up, partly driven by the adoption of mobile devices for web browsing and intense use of its social media app. Facebook and Google ads are by far the dominant platforms for digital media spend.

Programmatic Advertising



48%

spend less than 10% of all budget on **programmatic**. There's a lot of room for this channel to expand if the issues described above are addressed. Better attribution, with good quality lookalike and predictive targeting models, can enable much more effective prospecting.



93%

spend less than 20% of all budget on **programmatic advertising.**

78%

spend more than 10% of their budgets on **Google360 or Adobe analytics tools**. This shows the high cost of marketing technology and the squeeze that the two companies' dominant positions have put on the market, this for a product that is acknowledged to be poor for performance marketing. The last point is reinforced by the answers given by Performance Marketing Directors to question 3 in this survey.

94%

spend less than 20% of their budget on **traditional radio**, more than half spend less than 10% but, as mentioned earlier, this could well be more about measurement issues than lack of effectiveness. There is also the major challenge of incrementality – how much would these more traditional campaigns affect Google and Facebook advertising outcomes, what influence do they have?

36%

spend more than 20% of all budget on **digital video**. This was higher than expected and likely driven by YouTube, which with Facebook and Google was recently reported to account for 93% of all digital media spend in the UK by IAB.

https://www.iabuk.com/news-article/digital-ad-spend-dips-5-h1-2020-despite-surge-time-spent-online



48%

spend between 10% and 30% on **traditional, linear TV**, even during the pandemic and lockdown. This is around 30% less than the spend with both Google (74.83%) and Facebook (79.47%)

95% Digital Audio

spend less than 20% of their budget on **digital audio.** Podcasting and other audio content are growing fast, not least because people can access it without the constraints of having to watch a screen. While it's possible to measure downloads and clicks with online audio content, the technique faces challenges in 'no cookie, no pixel' environments like Spotify. It will be important to match content to target audiences to drive growth in advertising expenditure for audio and it will require a new approach to attribution. One such approach is being pioneered by Corvidae's patented technology.

#5

We asked...

Of the marketing investments you use, if you were to increase budget how confident are you that you would get a return on that investment?

A proposition often attributed to Albert Einstein is that "Not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted". Despite that, survey respondents seem to prefer a "safety in numbers" approach because some 85% believing that they can achieve a positive return on advertising spend (ROAS) in digital channels – founded, we can assume based on previous answers, on confidence from counting the clicks.

On the other hand, **one-third are unconvinced of the ability of traditional channels to deliver a return,** rising to nearly 40% in the case of radio.

Perhaps just because the clicks aren't there to convince them?

In the digital domain,

- **82.5% believe they can demonstrate ROAS with programmatic advertising**
- **86% are positive about digital video**
- **87% share confidence in both Google and Facebook advertising.**



One-third are unconvinced of the ability of traditional channels to deliver a return



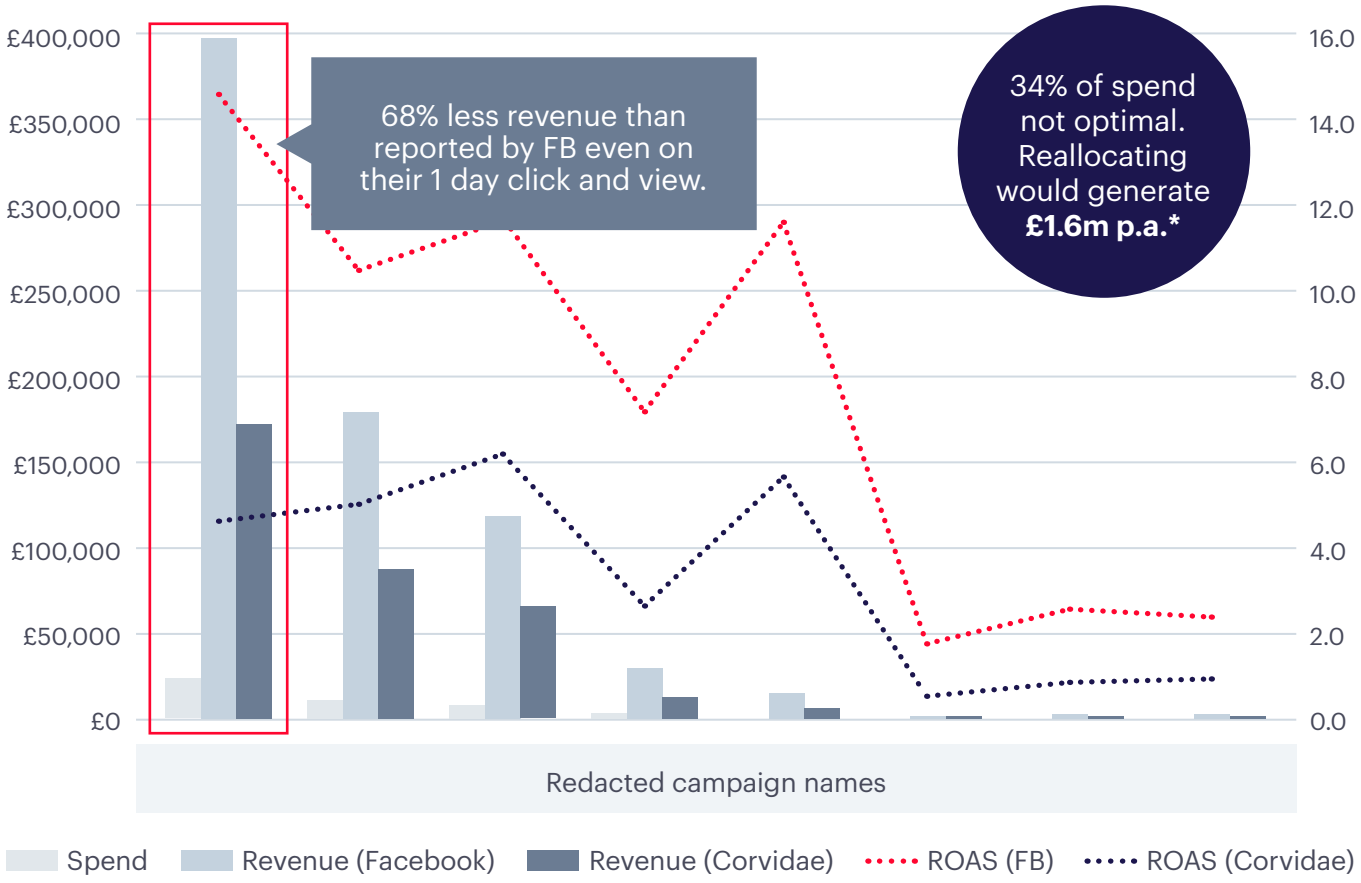
It's clear that advertisers are more comfortable spending on short-term campaigns that deliver immediately measurable results, rather than investing for the medium/longer-term where the ROI may be higher but more difficult to define and demonstrate.

We saw in earlier responses how comparatively low spends are in Programmatic, for example, and spends there are dominated by retargeting spend – spend allocated to cookies identifying people that have already visited the advertiser website. This is fishing in the bottom of the funnel for prospects that have already done the majority of their consideration around a purchase and have already been affected by their own advertising – otherwise, why would they have visited their website in the first place?

Attaining high ROAS from these campaigns – much like with brand spend in Paid Search – is activity that is cannibalistic. When viewed on a Last-Click basis, these activities look like a great use of marketing spend – and can cover up underperformance elsewhere – but they rarely stand up to a simple a/b test where spend is switched off and overall revenue impact is measured. It is true that these AdTech providers ***can*** *offer good incremental value – the challenge is finding those areas efficiently, and not simply offering incremental cannibalisation of customers you would have won anyway.*

This again is where attribution comes into play – accurate attribution, that doesn't rely on cookies and is capable of offering data down to individual ads. With Corvidae, we regularly find that Facebook campaign revenue can be as much as 68% less than reported, even on the most conservative attribution model offered by their platform. That is a huge hit on ROAS measurement used by marketers today, and a game changer in finding what really works.

Revenue & ROAS Comparison



* Using worst performing ROAS media spend (34% of total in Jan), and reinvesting in highest ROAS campaign, annualised.

	All	CMO	Marketing Director/VP	Ecommerce Director/VP	Head of Data	Performance Marketing Director
Very accurate	51.77%	28.57%	50.00%	67.44%	57.69%	40.00%
Somewhat accurate	36.17%	42.86%	38.24%	30.23%	38.46%	30.00%
Not very accurate	11.35%	28.57%	11.76%	0%	3.85%	30.00%
Not at all accurate	0.71%	0%	0%	2.33%	0%	0%
Not sure	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

#6

We asked...

Thinking about your spending on digital video, which of the following statements apply to you?

The statements are shown in the table below. The key findings are that media spend is still shifting from traditional to digital and for 53.15% of respondents, this is primarily intended to make attribution more effective, though as we have already seen, what is in fact being measured is ultimately raw click data mapped to broken underlying web analytics data relying on outdated use of cookies to stitch together multiple engagement points of the modern shopper. Essentially, in this scenario, attribution is not becoming more effective – you are simply getting more numbers to weigh and give it an appearance of measurement that is meaningful.

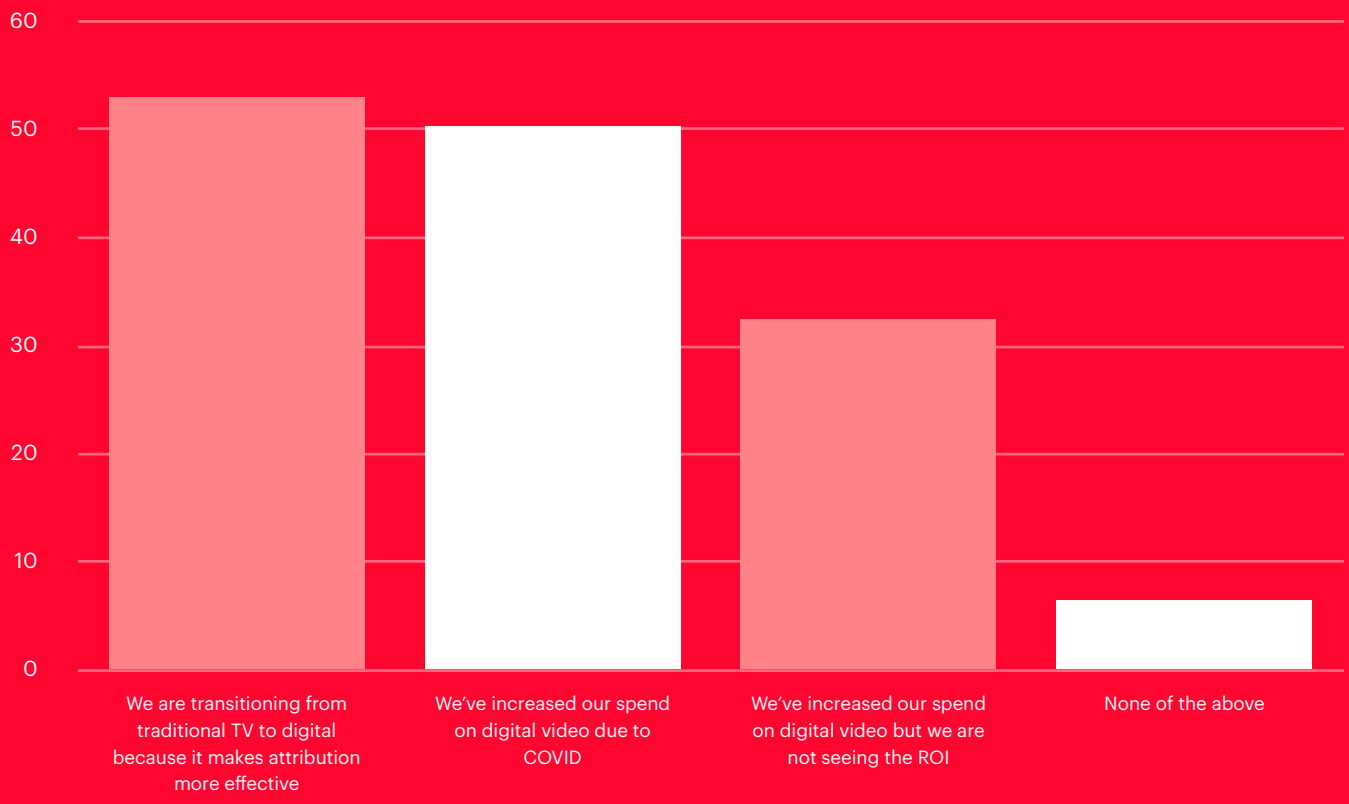
The shift to digital was also accelerated by the COVID pandemic. Print publications suffer when they are not available for sale in shops, but other traditional channels appear to have been relegated in importance too.

42.5% of Marketing Directors highlight the particular challenge of proving the ROI of digital video, being unable to attribute impressions.



Evaluating the ROI of video requires the ability to create granular conversion probability paths for each individual exposed to your marketing collateral, and line these paths up with impression data to see measured improvements when impressions overlap in time and geo-location.

Doing this for all marketing activity requires unbundling of walled garden ad data – both online and off - and replacement of pixel & cookie data for core web analytics data.


60
50
40
30
20
10
0
We are transitioning from traditional TV to digital because it makes attribution more effective
We've increased our spend on digital video due to COVID
We've increased our spend on digital video but we are not seeing the ROI
None of the above





CREDIBILITY OF ADTECH AND MARTECH DATA

#7

We asked...

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

A significant majority of respondents, **between 59% and 65%, agree that data to support cross-channel decision making is broken**, that Google and Facebook are so saturated that it's impossible to get more value, that AdTech and Martech don't enable effective decision making when considering anything more than last-click data, **and that CRMs and Customer Data Platforms (CDPs) do not offer meaningful single customer views.** Only 12% of respondents disagree with this last point, although 64% feel it is important for AdTech and Martech software to be able to plug into existing marketing ecosystems.

Over 60% think data to support cross-channel decision making is broken



Notably, it's the data specialists that are most sceptical, over 70% of them expressing doubts about data efficacy, and every Performance Marketing Director was dismissive of the value of data derived from such platforms or had no opinion either way about its value.

It is clear in the black and white results here that CRM and CDP platforms' attempts to bring a 'single source of truth' to the table for marketers has failed. What marketers are presented with is a single source of customer behaviour that matches their email and transactional behaviour, but which bears little-to-no comparison to what they do outside of these events – they are entirely unmeasured in the performance marketing space, apart from occasionally being joined into a 3rd party cookie data set (that requires 2.5x the cost of the add to improve the ads performance), and the influence of, for example organic search result visibility, or a Facebook ad Impression, is completely lacking from these 'golden views'.

Fundamentally, cross-channel measurement requires an acceptance that the core data set being used to join – web analytics – is broken, and without building a replacement data set with measurable accuracy, all aspects of a MarTech stack will underperform and ultimately operate in silo – despite claims to the opposite

3rd Party Customer Graphs Do Not Improve Ad Performance

	Cost Data for Digital Audience Solutions			
	Display Ad Costs		Video Ad Costs	
	Targeting	No Targeting	Targeting	No Targeting
Publisher	1.36	1.36	11	11
SSP Exchange*	0.13		1.09	
3rd Party Data Costs	1.33		1.33	
Ad Serving & Verification	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
SUM Sell Side Costs	3.02	1.56	13.62	11.2
DSP*	0.44		2	
Trading Desk / Execution*	0.45		2.04	
SUM Digital Ads Costs	3.92	1.56	17.67	11.2
Agency of Record*	0.27	0.11	1.24	0.78
Final Costs Advertiser	4.2	1.67	18.9	11.98
Final Ratio to No Targeting	2.51		1.58	

3rd party entity data **does not improve performance** unless you pay a prohibitive premium.

To gain improvement in performance with 3rd party data, you must pay 2.5x the cost of the display ad, or 1.6x the cost of the video ad.

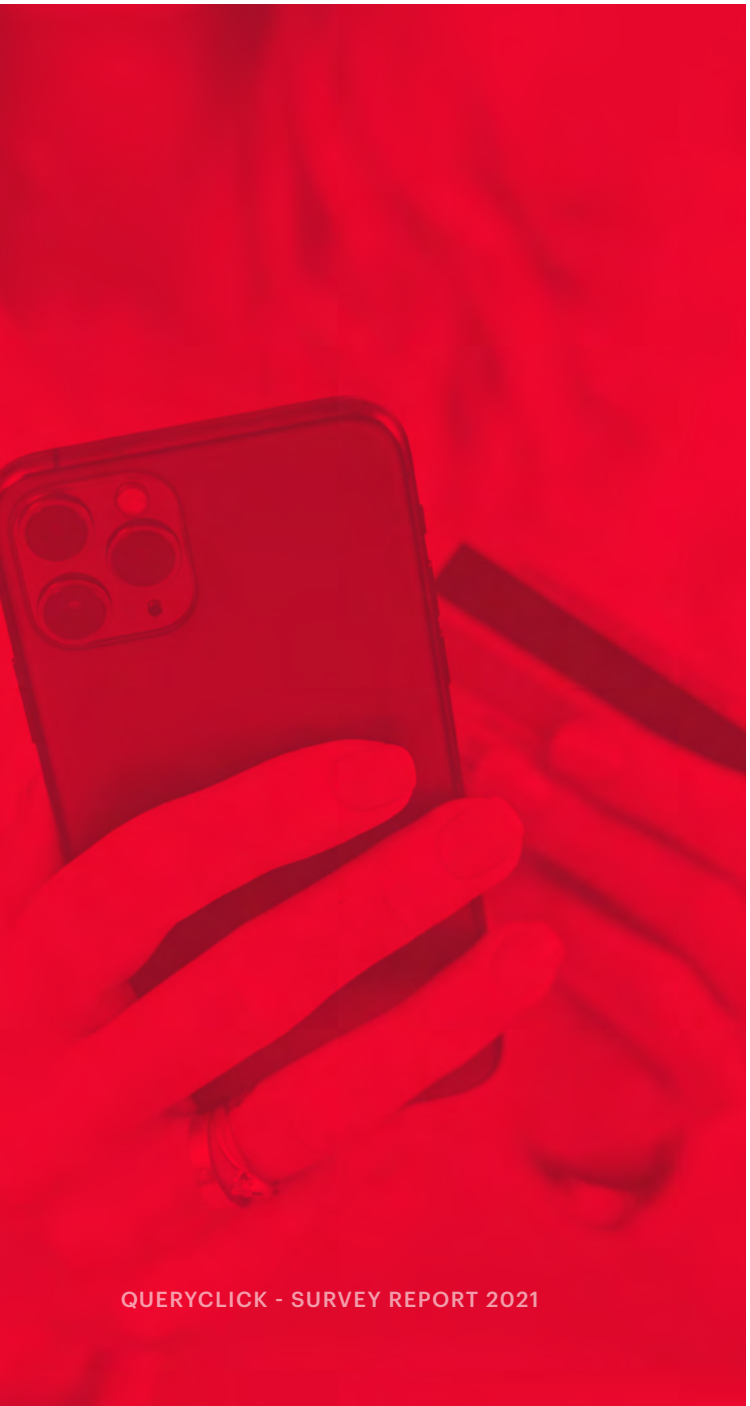
Source: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3203131

IF ADTECH AND MARTECH DATA WERE FIXED, WHAT VALUE WOULD IT BRING?

#8

We asked...

What, if anything, do you think would be the value for the business if AdTech/ MarTech providers enabled effective cross-channel decision-making from attribution?



The three most important benefits, each cited by over 40% of respondents, are the ability to capture new customers (particularly important to eCommerce managers), more confident reporting of ROAS, and the opportunity to spend more in upper-funnel activity – drawing in new prospects.

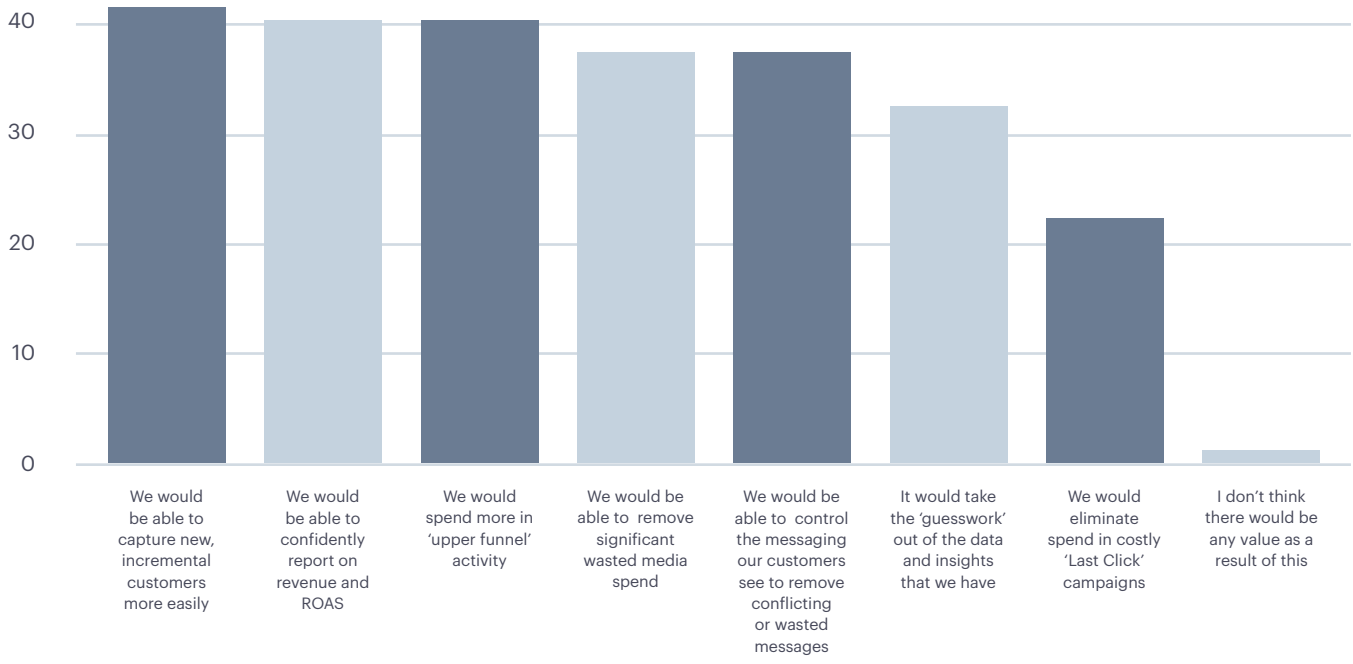
It is unsurprising that marketers want to capture new customers, what is surprising is that judging by the results of this study, so few are able to confidently, and predictably achieve that. A gap that highlights the failure of attribution solutions to solve this problem to date.

Better control of messaging and the ability to reduce wasted media expenditure were cited as the other major benefits if better insights could be extracted from AdTech and MarTech data.



Remarkably, nearly a quarter of respondents (23.96%) say that they would eliminate spend on campaigns driven by last click data. When you consider that last click data drives most expenditure today, this demonstrates just how frustrated many marketers are about being forced to use expensive, short-term, last-click campaigns.

Outside of that result, the desire for more upper funnel activity is clear and understandable. At QueryClick we found in a study of a retail customer operating multinationally, that re-allocating wasted paid search spend on upper funnel activity powered by effective programmatic and display advertising measured by attribution returned new customers and 87% lower cost per acquisitions. That's a huge impact driven by the fact that the majority of marketers can't effectively measure activity in that top of funnel space, and so spends there are substantially less saturated than those promoted by click or basic data driven and multitouch attribution models that fail to accommodate the impact of an ad impression.



#9

We asked...

What do you consider to be the most important characteristics of an effective marketing attribution platform?

No single characteristic was mentioned by much more than one-third of respondents. 34.44% said they needed something quick to deploy and for which a clear ROI could be demonstrated but fewer than one quarter agreed on any other characteristic.

This suggests a lack of clear insight regarding what is needed from an attribution platform, or what's even possible, and perhaps a lot of confusion about what attribution means.



The sheer range of characteristics mentioned by respondents shows the breadth of challenge for effective attribution.

Attribution is a keystone technology that activates powerful performance opportunities for new customer acquisition, and enables the effective automation of the orchestration layer of MarTech stacks – for example, CRMs - and business' ERP systems.

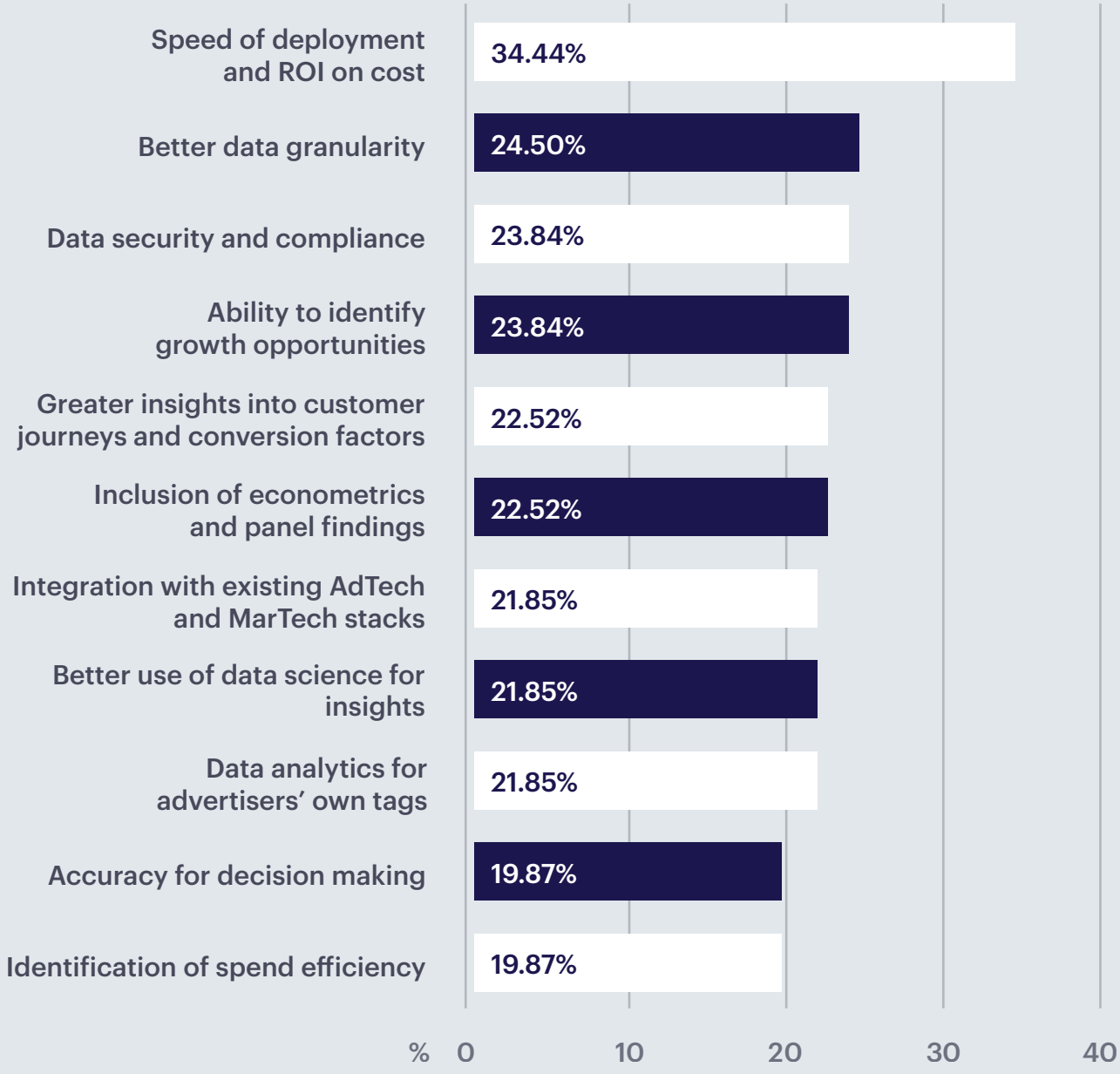
Speed is also essential, given the pressure on marketers to make the most of media spends that require increased growth each year with no new 'greenfield' marketing channel to help avoid the saturation challenge now Facebook has been largely adopted.

Solving for attribution also requires technological robustness - cloud deployment and an ability to flexibly ingest data from a myriad of data sources, as well as scale ad impression volumes suddenly leap into the hundreds of millions per day as, say, native campaigns are switched on.

These are all challenges solved for by the Corvidae platform, thanks to the mature SAAS architectures available to developers today that would have seemed impossible a mere five years ago.

Today we are very much looking at the beginning of a new era for MarTech and AdTech stacks, and it is also an empowering moment for advertisers as they are finally able to wrest control of their own data back from agencies to allow in-house teams to shine, and fair, open measurement of performance for all parties involved in allocating media budgets.

What do you consider to be the most important characteristics of an effective marketing attribution platform?





MORE THAN 20%

of all respondants mentioned these eight desirable attribution platform characteristics...

Better data granularity

Data security and compliance

Ability to identify growth opportunities

Greater insights into customer journeys and conversion factors

Inclusion of econometrics and panel findings

Integration with existing AdTech and MarTech stacks

Better use of data science for insights

Data analysis for advertisers' own tags

IS A STANDALONE ATTRIBUTION PLATFORM A VIABLE OPTION?

#10

We asked...

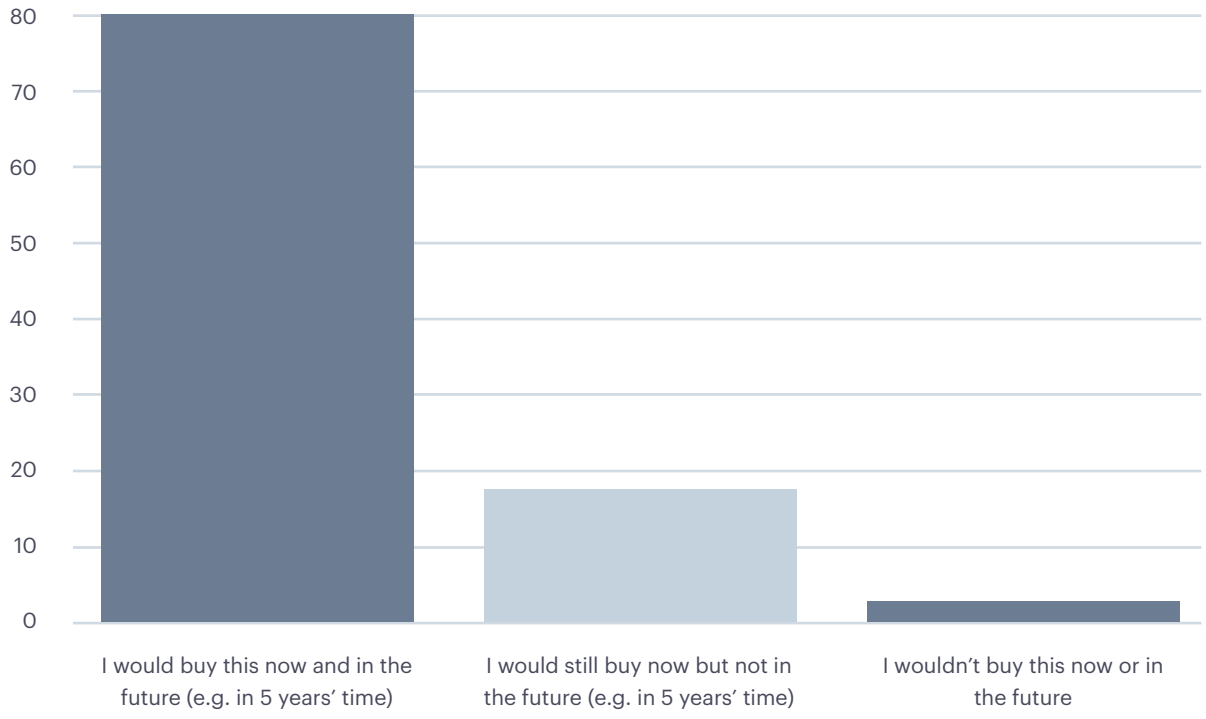
Would you buy a standalone attribution solution if it was not natively integrated into your existing CDP/CRM system ?

Here, there was resounding support for a good standalone attribution platform with 97.35% of respondents prepared to buy one now, and 80% happy to still do so in five years.

While there was some slight divergence of opinion across job functions, it's clear that with the right functionality, **whether or not an attribution tool integrates into existing MarTech stacks is a secondary consideration for all marketers.**



Digital marketers desperately want the insights that attribution should bring but these could equally well come from standalone tools.



#11

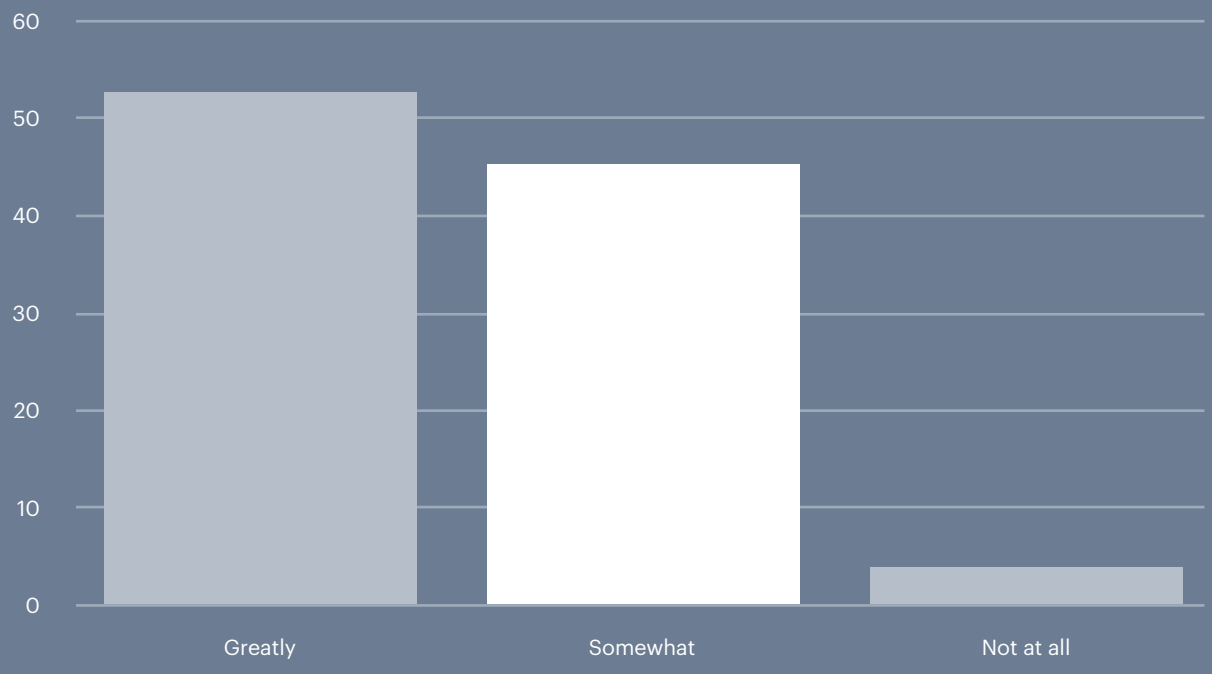
We asked...

How much, if at all, does your approach to attribution inform your purchase decision-making for CRM/CDPs?

Nearly all respondents (99.34%) tell us they consider attribution when assessing CRM/CDPs. However, we see from our previous question that 97.35% are happy to buy attribution independently, even if it does not natively integrate with their existing platforms.



The clear message here is that attribution is a key part of the mix for the modern MarTech stack – marketers understand that without credible, accurate attribution the value they will get from their orchestration layers will fail to materialise.



#12

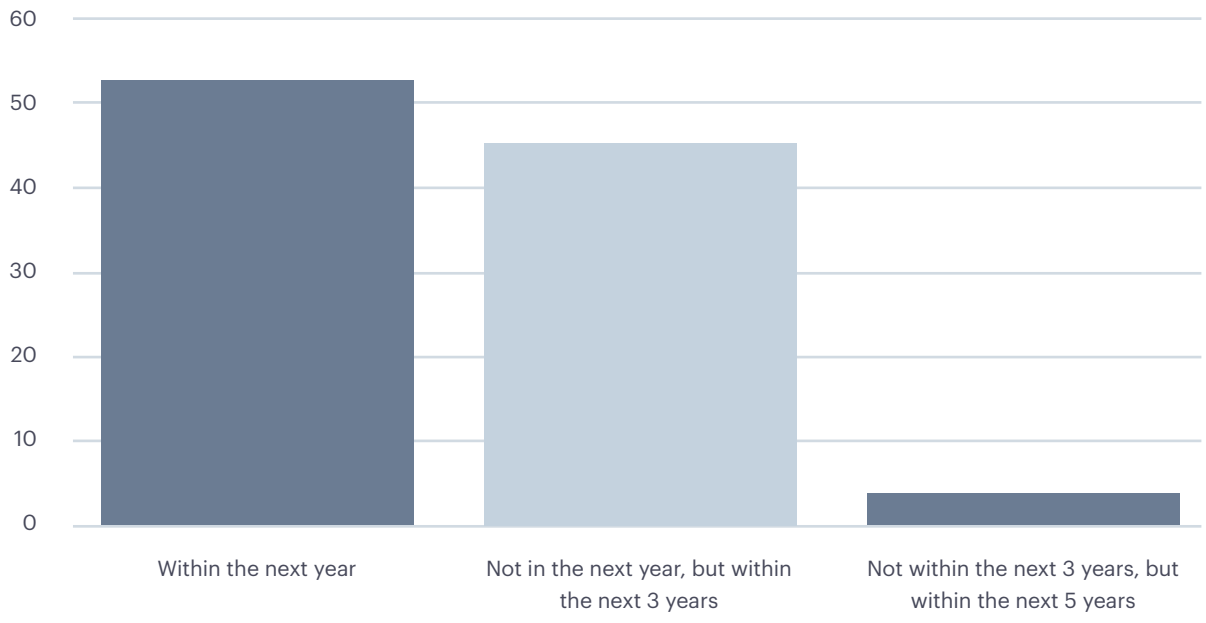
We asked...

When do you think you will have a CRM/CDP system that does offer you a genuine single customer view or unified attribution value that your marketing function or agency can use for day-to-day campaign optimisation?

There is a strong consensus (96.5%) that CRM/CPD systems will be able to provide single customer views and unified attribution within three years and just over half of the respondents think it may happen within a year. However, CMOs are less confident about the shorter term and less than one-third think that this functionality will be available in the next year.



Everyone thinks integrated attribution tools will be available within five years but when you consider how long sophisticated CRM/CDP systems have already been available, and the fact that today we are still dependant on Google and Adobe's broken cookie systems to join together cross-device sessions after nearly two decades of failure - perhaps that is rather optimistic?



#13

We asked...

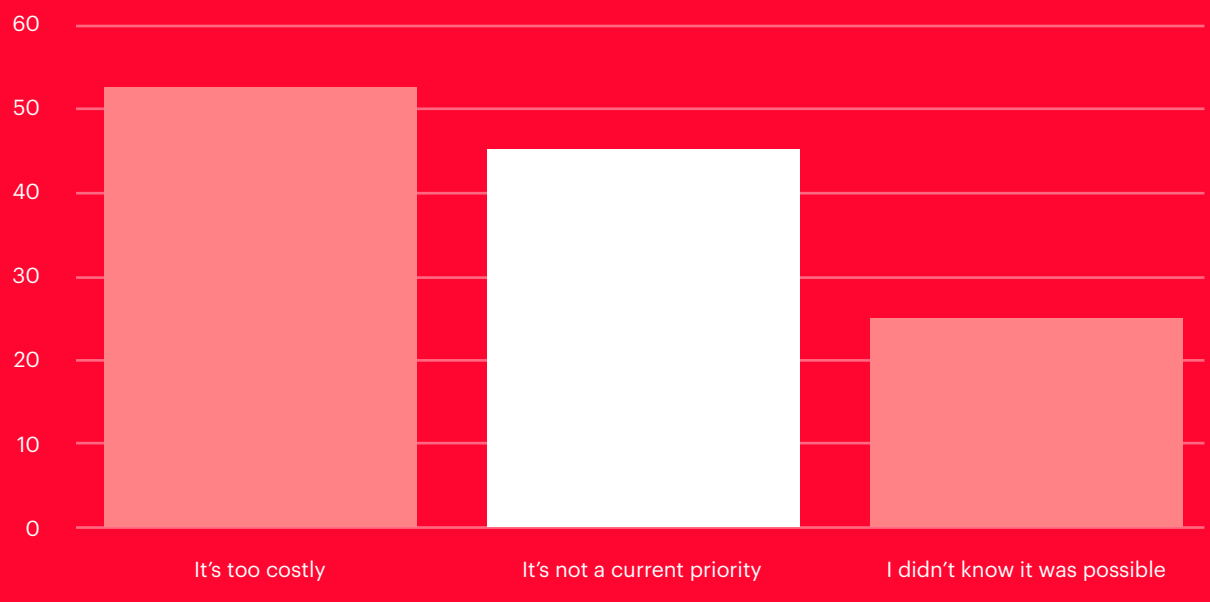
Why doesn't your current CRM/CDP system offer you a genuine single customer view or unified attribution value that your marketing function or agency can use for day-to-day campaign optimisation?

Three significant barriers were mentioned by respondents, the most significant of which is cost, mentioned by 52.33% of respondents. Just under half said it's not a current priority but, interestingly, over a quarter said they didn't know it was possible. The last point underlines the lack of knowledge of attribution which is still prevalent in the marketing community and the fact that 44.44% of Performance Marketing Directors gave that answer is of particular concern.

This demonstrable lack of knowledge explains, at least in part, the over-reliance on last-click data for attribution, which is truly the same as no attribution at all, and the wide spread of opinions regarding desirable attribution software characteristics that the survey identified earlier.



Marketers need better education to help them understand the subtleties of effective attribution, not head-on sales pitches and false promises.



CONCERNS ABOUT BIAS IN ADTECH REPORTING

#14

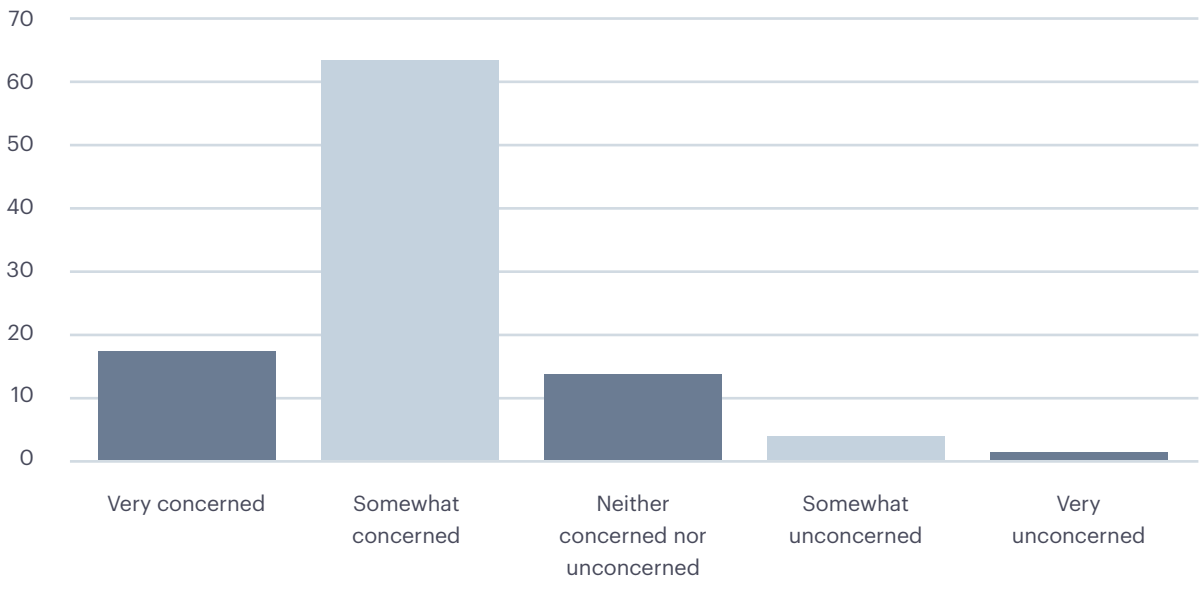
We asked...

How concerned or unconcerned are you about bias in AdTech channel reporting (Google, Facebook, Amazon, etc.)?

Once again, there is a strong consensus within the marketing community that reporting is biased and **over 80% of respondents said that they are concerned about the issue, and one-quarter of CMOs say that they are 'very concerned'.**



The data speaks for itself here. Digital marketers' concerns are fully justified when siloed channels continue to mark their own homework and only deliver data that supports their own sales propositions – cannibalising the revenue reported by their competitors' systems, all at the expense of us marketers who just want a clear answer to what our hard-earned media spend actually delivered.

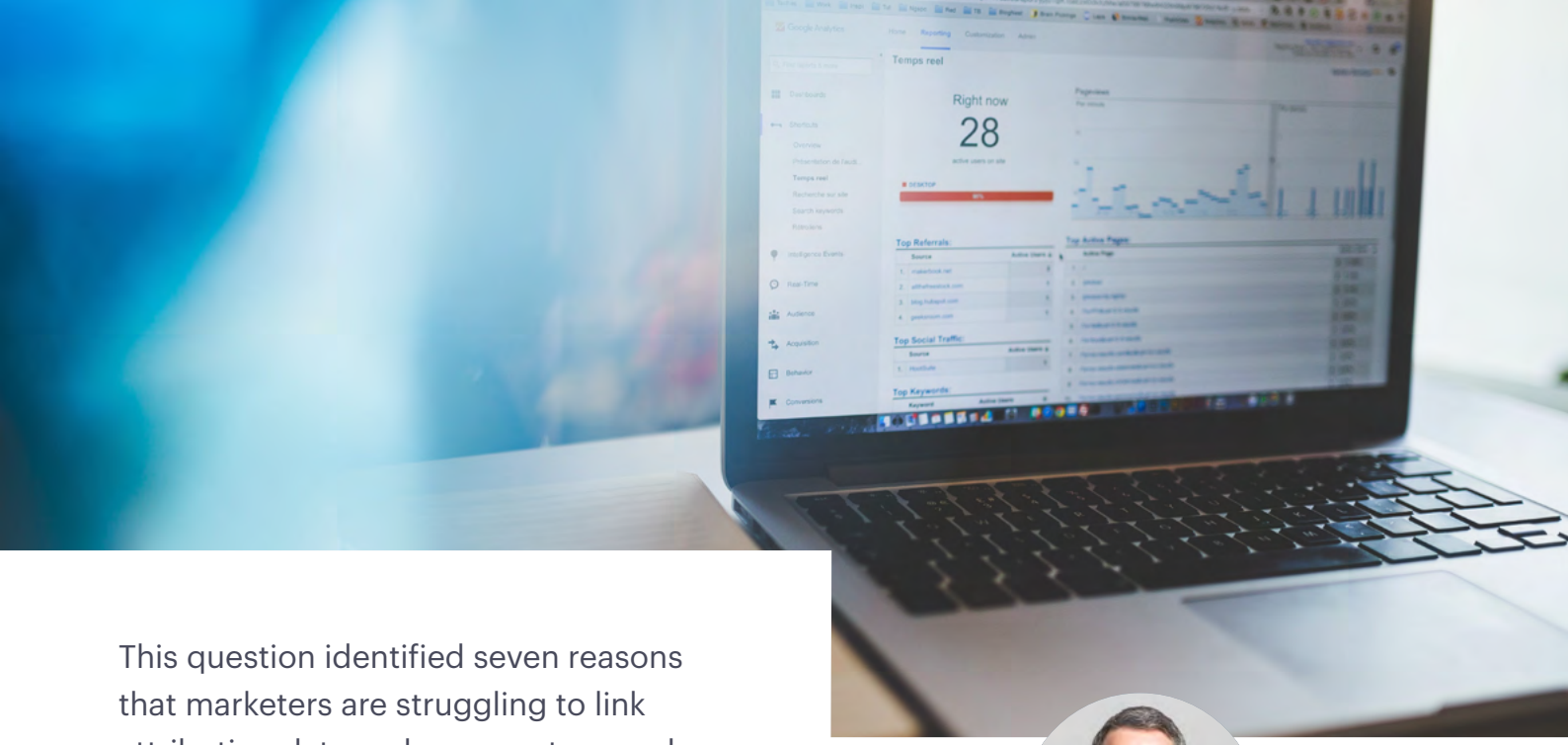


#15

We asked...

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?





This question identified seven reasons that marketers are struggling to link attribution data and revenue to reveal any relationship that can help to improve the effectiveness of advertising investments. The majority - **between 50% and 66% - of marketers are frustrated by complex attribution tools that don't deliver optimisation benefits** and they're increasingly wary of the promises of attribution vendors. In fact, 86% of Performance Marketers are sceptical of these promises. Most marketers, and 93% of Performance Marketers, believe that attribution vendors use complexity to hide systemic failings of their products and say they would not buy 'black box' attribution solutions. This position is supported by 74% of Heads of Data and 79% of Performance Marketers.

Most respondents do not trust AdTech data and do not believe they get value from their analytics platforms. But perhaps the most worrying finding of all is that 64.9% of marketers operate their CRMs in silo from their marketing optimisation activity. They don't connect the dots.



If ever there was proof that marketing attribution is broken, the answers to these final questions in our survey are it.

The future of attribution is an acceptance that the underlying data is broken, adoption of modern, ML data rebuilding systems to replace the cookie in session unification, and radically more powerful and advanced AI to deliver granular, accurate attribution data that is open box, measurably accurate, and interoperable with modern MarTech stacks.

I know it's possible to achieve these advances, as we've achieved them with Corvidae – granted after 7 years of hard work and millions of pounds of investment! – but with much less than the cost of a bar bill for Google's UK engineers, we've created a solution that works for marketers. So, why shouldn't we all be optimistic for the future?



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