

AI agents will require marketers to target the technology itself, Digitas SVP says

Article

AI agents are coming—“It’s not years. It’s months,” said Adam Buhler, senior vice president of creative technology at Digitas.

Agentics, or AI agents, refers to AI that goes beyond researching a topic, by performing a task for a user without any additional prompting. These agents will be able to do market research like watching 10 videos from a creator and then writing a report about it without multiple prompts.

As AI becomes capable of making purchases for consumers, marketers will need to understand how to appeal not just to people, but to AI itself. “Anybody who is not paying attention to agentics is going to be washed over,” said Buhler.

But AI agents will also change how people shop. If consumers can use AI chatbots not only to scan flight schedules and prices but also to book flights, marketers will need to find a way to win over those AI agents.

If AI agents do become common the way Buhler predicts, brands will be marketing to agents. This is something VML chief innovation officer Brian Yamada referred to as [M2M or machine-to-machine marketing](#). Marketers will have to experiment and understand how AI makes decisions in order to create products and descriptions that the AI selects for.

M2M marketing will include emphasizing value, making the product’s price and quality attractive to the AI agent. “These robots, if you watch them participate in an ecommerce transaction, they cannot be upsold,” Buhler said.

AI agents are reminiscent of how search algorithms and **programmatic advertising** have changed decision-making. Both of these shifts have forced marketers (both B2C and B2B) to find ways to game technology to stay attractive, even when some element of consumer choice is taken away.

AI agents will require a shift in thinking for marketers, said Stephanie Gilbert, senior vice president of marketing and communications at Digitas. “If you're a brand, where is your role? Are you now marketing to the agents?”

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