

# Why Marketers See Gaps in Their Attribution

Assigning credit for purchases remains tricky

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**Ross Benes**

**A**tttribution is a puzzle that many marketers haven't cracked.

In an August 2018 survey of 468 senior marketing leaders worldwide conducted by [Kantar](#), 54% of respondents said that multi-touch attribution is one of the biggest gaps in their marketing research. No other marketing research tool—including conversions, brand effectiveness and media measurement—was perceived to have as many gaps.

**Research Tools Used vs. Biggest Perceived Gaps for Senior Marketing Professionals Worldwide, Aug 2018**  
% of respondents

	Tools used	Perceived gaps
Multitouch attribution	34%	54%
Conversion ROI	48%	52%
Marketing mix modeling	41%	46%
Brand effectiveness research	51%	41%
Media measurement studies	64%	39%
Sales lift studies	41%	34%
Digital behavioral studies	55%	28%
Consumer segmentation	64%	23%
Brand tracking	63%	23%
Offline behavioral studies	44%	23%
Creative or copy testing	54%	12%

*Note: gaps include availability and/or solution quality*  
Source: Kantar, "Getting Media Right 2018: Extraordinary Marketing Through Integrated, Holistic Advertising," Oct 9, 2018

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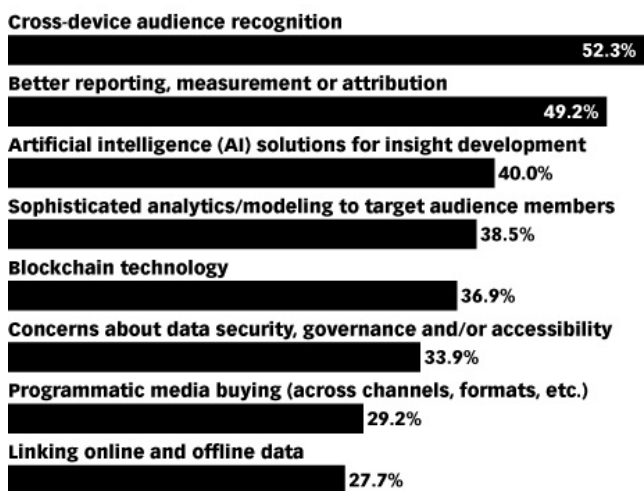
“The genesis of multitouch attribution was the need to attribute conversions to marketing exposures beyond the last touch,” said Dinesh Gopinath, head of product for Kantar’s analytics practice. “Almost all multitouch attribution vendors ignore the incremental value of a touchpoint or exposure, leading to significant overestimation of ROI [return on investment] for digital channels.”

The Kantar poll underscores how marketers' struggles with how to best credit a purchase. Although marketers have had issues with their attribution models for several years, the problem persists.

In a survey of 99 US digital media professionals conducted by Winterberry Group and Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB), respondents indicated that the demand for better reporting, measurement and attribution will be one of the most popular developments in digital advertising this year.

**General Marketing Topics or Developments that Will Command the Most Attention in 2018 According to US Senior Marketing Professionals**

*% of respondents*



Source: Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) and Winterberry Group, "The Outlook for Data 2018: A Snapshot into the Evolving Role of Audience Insight," Feb 12, 2018

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The challenges to improving marketers’ attribution models are not primarily technological, according to Tracey Ruffin, director of marketing insights at marketing agency Latcha+Associates. Several products exist, which effectively tie together online and offline behavior to accurately assign attribution. The problem with improving

attribution usually comes back to how marketing firms are structured, she said.

“Marketing departments are siloed,” said Peter Chun, vice president of platform partnerships and strategy at social media marketing firm SocialCode. “Marketers are not fully tasked to incorporate a cross-channel tracking solution across platforms, preferring instead to use a measurement solution optimized for only their channel. They are goaled on a short term, last-click ROI number, without any sort of controlled testing learn the incremental impact of each piece of their media mix.”