

Why Marketers Are Skeptical About Vendors Fulfilling Promises

Some data firms can't live up to their lofty pitches

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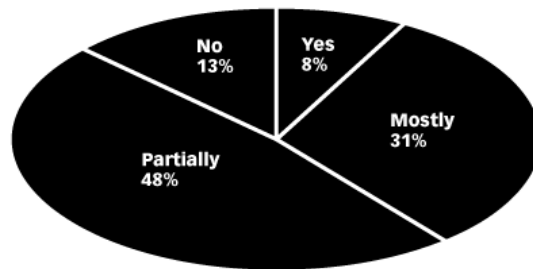
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Marketers know that data is becoming **more important to their livelihoods**. But getting tech vendors to make good on their promises is often a tall task.

In a Q2 2018 survey of 165 senior marketing, supply chain and ecommerce execs worldwide **conducted by IBM and CMO Council**, 48% of respondents said their investments in data are paying partial returns, but they have growing doubts that their vendors will deliver on all of their pledges. About four in 10 reported that they're seeing solid returns on their data initiatives.

Senior Executives Worldwide Who Have Seen Great ROI on Technologies Used to Manage/Analyze Data, Q2 2018

% of respondents



Note: includes ecommerce, marketing and supply chain executives; in the past 12-18 months

Source: IBM and CMO Council, "Doing More with Data," July 9, 2018

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An additional 13% said that investing in tools to aggregate, manage and analyze their data has been an expensive experiment that isn't paying off. While these results indicate that most respondents weren't terribly satisfied with the returns on their data investments, nearly 90% admitted that their spend on data is yielding some positives.

The biggest frustration appears to be the difference between the anticipated effectiveness and the actual effectiveness that the respondents' vendors had.

To secure a sale, vendors may feel that they have to pitch clients on their ability to do everything under the sun. But once the client brings the vendor on and realizes a lot of the promises were hype, frustration builds. This helps explain why "salesy" tactics like touting **vanity metrics spread doubt** about digital marketing's effectiveness.

Concerns About Digital Marketing According to US CFOs/CMOs, March 2018

% of respondents

Seen as a cost center, not a profit center

38%

Measured in vanity metrics (e.g., metrics that make them look good)

36%

The team doesn't measure success in terms of concrete outcomes (e.g., sales)

22%

Don't trust them to show the full picture of successes vs. failures

16%

Source: Viant, "Closing the CMO-CFO Digital Divide" conducted by Censuswide, May 21, 2018

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In a March 2018 survey of 50 US CFOs conducted by [Viant](#), 36% of respondents said one of their biggest concerns about the digital marketing at their organization is that they measure in vanity metrics. The CFOs' frustrations stemmed from being presented with material that didn't help them meet their ultimate goals.