

# Retail Marketers Discuss Data a Lot

Privacy, security, regulation and compliance are hot topics

## ARTICLE

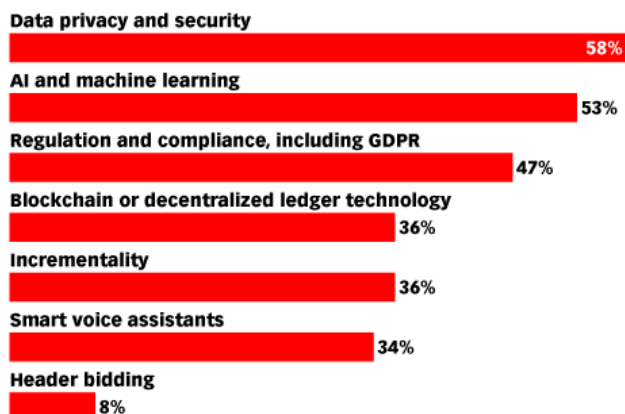
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**M**arketing as a practice can span big-picture customer experience efforts, as well as email list minutiae, but certain topics get more thought than others. What is currently top of mind among retail marketing executives?

Privacy and security, according to a June 2018 [Nanigans](#) survey of 100 CMOs in the US. Issues surrounding data security was cited by 58% of respondents, followed by artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (53%) and regulation and compliance (47%).

### Which Marketing Topics Are US Retail Marketing Leaders Actively Discussing?

% of respondents, June 2018



Note: n=100

Source: Nanigans, "Retail CMO Pulse Check" in partnership with Advertiser Perceptions, Sep 28, 2018

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By revenue level, more CMOs of \$100 million to \$200 million companies were "actively discussing" all of these subjects than those in charge of \$200 million-plus companies. The biggest gap, however, was blockchain technology. Roughly half of CMOs at \$100 million to \$200 million companies were prioritizing it while one-quarter of higher-revenue CMOs were.

AI is a broad topic that could cover everything from consumer-facing initiatives—like [Lowe's](#) experimenting with customer service robots—to [operational tools for retail planning and design](#), to invisible tech—like PayPal's use of fraud detection algorithms.

Data privacy and regulation make sense since they go hand in hand, especially with the introduction of the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May. It has been [a topic of discussion](#)—and [source of concern](#)—among marketers throughout 2018.

Consumers generally give high marks to retailers from a cybersecurity perspective. A [Capgemini](#) survey from February 2018 found 60% of buyers worldwide rated their primary retailer as "outstanding" on website and app safety. Where retailers fell short was the [safety and transparency of stored personal and financial data](#).

This has undoubtedly become a subject of scrutiny since it became mandatory for companies doing business in the EU to ask customers for explicit permission to use their data. Marketing executives worldwide were asked by the **CMO Council** and **SAP** in Q3 2018 about how they felt GDPR had affected customer relationships. The top response by far was a heightened awareness of security and data issues (65%).

Allaying any customer apprehension is just one aspect of an increasingly consumer-centric approach to retail marketing. When asked by Nanigans about the most important factors in driving growth, the CMOs polled said their top priority was keeping up with changing consumer behavior (30%).