



# CMO Outlook report: *Executive Summary*

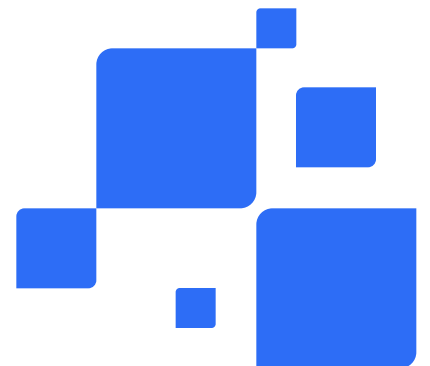
## About the CMO Outlook report

NIQ's annual CMO Outlook survey offers crucial insights for senior marketers, spotlighting the dynamic challenges they face and emphasizing the importance of continuously gauging CMO perspectives globally to help shape future strategies.

The 2024 report:

- Revisits themes from 2023 while also focusing on the tangible impact of [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)](#) on marketing strategies
- Highlights the findings of the survey and explores AI's potential in the years to come
- Offers retail and manufacturer CMOs critical analysis to guide their 2025 planning

**Read the report to discover how senior marketing leaders are approaching strategic planning in 2025—and where AI fits in.**



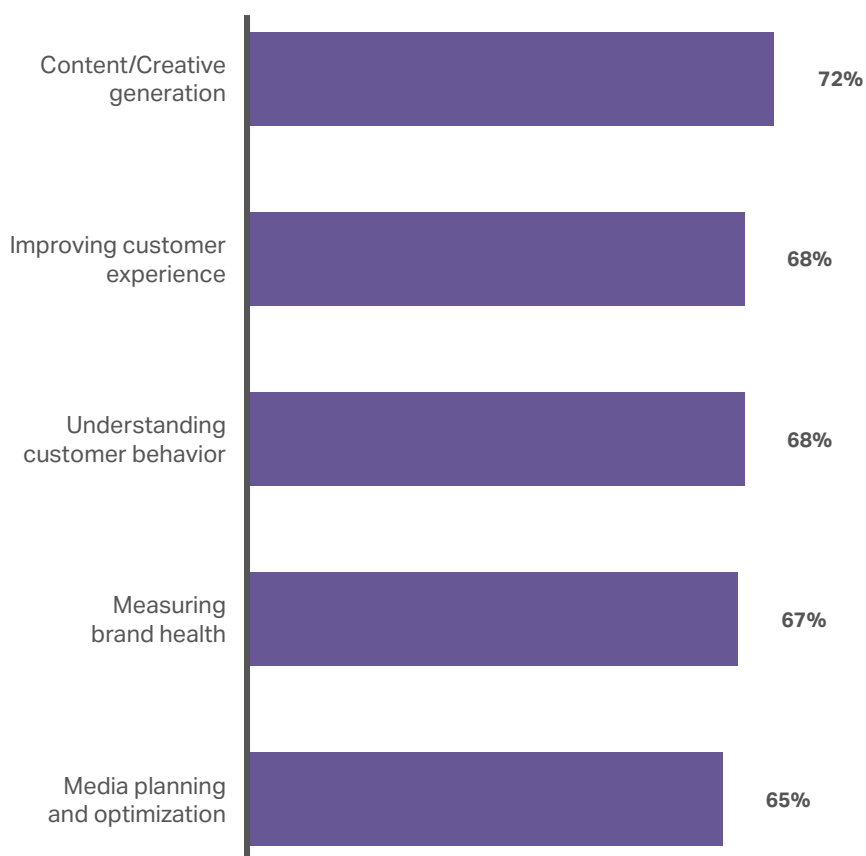


## Marketing and AI: What's next?

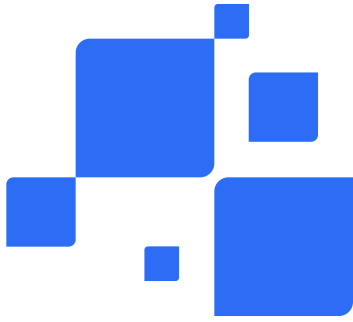
One of the most significant trends highlighted in the CMO Outlook 2024 survey is the growing importance of AI—particularly [Generative AI](#) (GenAI).

- **AI-driven collaboration can particularly benefit businesses in the CPG, retail, and T&D sectors by improving their ability to listen to consumers and provide enhanced products and services.**
- Senior marketers are increasingly deploying AI tools across a range of areas, including product development, with **30%** of CMOs now using GenAI for this purpose.
- Marketers who have already embraced data-driven approaches and GenAI report greater confidence in their teams and optimism about future performance.

### *Top 5 uses for Gen AI (according to survey respondents):*



Given that marketers use data for a wide range of decisions—including brand positioning, customer experience, product development, and pricing—ensuring data quality is paramount.



### A new era for GenAI: Focusing on results

- Overall, the landscape is shifting from GenAI experimentation to demonstrating its clear commercial impact.
- As businesses prepare for deeper AI integration, there's a growing emphasis on upskilling teams, investing in AI-driven technologies, and addressing ethical concerns.
- For marketers, the challenge will be to balance AI's immense potential with the need for responsible, consumer-centric adoption.

### Bad data in, bad data—and decisions—out

- It's crucial to remember that **AI can't distinguish between good and bad data. As AI becomes increasingly integral to marketing strategies, it will be essential to invest in sophisticated tools that can deliver high-quality data—an investment that will ultimately inform and yield better long-term decision-making.**
- Looking ahead to 2025, data-driven insights will be a key differentiator for businesses seeking a competitive edge. Getting a clear, [Full View™](#) of what's happening, where it's happening—in-store, online, and worldwide—makes this possible.

### The bottom line

AI is far more than a tool for efficiency. It offers the potential to enhance data maturity and measurement standards, but its full impact will only be realized when it's fully integrated into a company's overall marketing strategy.



## NIQ Releases 2025 CMO Outlook Report

*Report shows GenAI, sophisticated marketing measurement tools, and tighter collaboration between IT, data science, and marketing are driving growth and change in 2025.*

**Chicago – Dec. 3, 2024:** NIQ, the world's leading consumer intelligence company, recently launched its annual **CMO Outlook report**, which highlights the evolving priorities and concerns of senior marketing leaders around the world. This year's edition explores how marketers are navigating both headwinds and tailwinds within their strategic planning for 2025, as well as the new era for Artificial Intelligence (AI) in marketing.

Consumers continuing to face rising costs in food and utilities, coupled with the looming threat of an economic downturn, have shaped the cautious spending patterns seen within CPG and retail. In turn, AI is likely to have a major impact on long-term marketing strategies, such as promotional and brand activity, as consumers continue to search for value and savings. Yet, even with these economic challenges, there are still opportunities for marketing growth.

The report shows marketing leaders remain optimistic about the future, with 78% expecting to be in a stronger position three years from now. Within the current environment, more than half (56%) still view marketing as key to achieving immediate sales targets (down from 64% in 2023), reflecting a shift toward long-term brand building. While 60% of marketing leaders find it easy to justify marketing investments (down from 65% in 2023), there is growing confidence among CEOs and CFOs in the long-term value of brand investments (44% in 2024 vs. 41% in 2023). Marketers have also turned to AI as a critical enabler in addressing key challenges, which suggests it is set to redefine how they navigate the increasingly complex landscape ahead.

Commenting on the findings, **Marta Cyhan-Bowles, NIQ's Chief Communications Officer and Global Head of Marketing COE**, said: "The future of marketing is going to be AI-led. While other aspects of CMO strategy remained stable in 2024, Generative AI (GenAI) is driving significant growth and change and is becoming a core element of the marketing mix for accelerating growth. AI can enhance the efficacy of everything we touch—from customer interaction to ideation, data collection, analysis, synthesizing insights across projects, and unlocking new opportunities."

### Top 2025 trends driving marketing decisions:

- **Marketing functions are increasingly leveraging AI:** Senior marketers are increasingly making GenAI central to their strategy, with 72% using it for content and creative generation, 67% for brand health measurement, 65% for media planning and optimization, and 30% for product development. GenAI is going to make deep inroads in all marketing functions, with marketers also using it to enhance customer experiences.
- **AI is accelerating confidence in data usage:** Data-driven insights are becoming a competitive edge for marketers, and AI usage is driving this confidence. A majority (81%) of marketers rely on data to monitor performance, with more than half (60%) of data-driven organizations being extremely confident in their data analytics capabilities.

Despite this positive trend, 31% of senior marketers continue to face challenges in connecting data from different sources, highlighting the need for sophisticated AI-driven tools. AI continues to play an integral role in shaping actionable insights offering potential solutions in making marketing measurement more precise and cost effective.

- **Improvement in the health of marketing function:** The CMO Outlook Index, which tracks key dimensions of a marketing-centered organization, has improved marginally in 2024. The overall “health” of marketing is also on the rise—particularly in Europe, with a four-point increase in sentiments driven by improved alignment with the C-suite. AI is at the forefront of this change—and is being used for driving marketing innovation and business strategies.
- **AI is closing the gap between customers and businesses by enhancing understanding of consumer preferences:** AI is also driving efficiencies in long-term consumer-focused product development. [NIQ's BASES Ad Explorer](#) helps marketers improve brand equity and offers deeper insights into consumer preferences. By leveraging AI, marketers can prioritize creative insights, test multiple ad iterations, and meet deadlines without sacrificing quality.
- **Marketers to prioritize cross-departmental collaboration:** Marketers are using the language of CFOs to secure investments and engage with CTOs to maximize AI's potential. The new year will see tighter collaboration between marketing, data analysts, and business leaders for breaking down data silos and integrating diverse data sources to deliver more actionable insights.

## Why these trends matter in 2025

The CMO Outlook report highlights the growing influence of AI across marketing functions to assist CMOs with 2025 planning. The report reveals the growing priorities of senior marketers and how they can optimize AI and data tools to navigate the complex landscape ahead. Topics include:

- 2025 marketing priorities and opportunities
- AI's potential and impact on marketing
- Building trust in AI for future marketing strategies

Download a copy of the CMO Outlook: How marketing leaders should be thinking about AI and data-driven decisioning heading into 2025 report [here](#).

### About the report:

NIQ's [CMO Outlook: How marketing leaders should be thinking about AI and data-driven decisioning heading into 2025](#) report is based on a survey of nearly 600 senior marketing leaders from companies with either annual revenue of over 50 million U.S. dollars or more than 250 employees. The survey covers 18 countries representing Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America, Middle East/Africa, and North America. Marketing leaders are defined as CMOs or Brand Heads, Directors or VPs of Marketing, Brand, Marketing Operations or Customer Experience.

**About NIQ:**

NielsenIQ (NIQ) is the world's leading consumer intelligence company, delivering the most complete understanding of consumer buying behavior and revealing new pathways to growth. NIQ combined with GfK in 2023, bringing together the two industry leaders with unparalleled global reach. Today NIQ has operations in more than 95 countries covering 97% of GDP. With a holistic retail read and the most comprehensive consumer insights—delivered with advanced analytics through state-of-the-art platforms—NIQ delivers the Full View™.

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