



## 5 WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR BRAND'S EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

"Some people feel the rain, others just get wet." This lyric by Bob Dylan never meant much to me until I got into the business of emotional intelligence and became enamored with the incredible impact it could have on marketing.

In those few words, Dylan bottles the razor-thin line between a person enjoying and hating the very same experience. The difference that tips the scale one way vs. another lies in a person's point of view and emotional state at the time, both of which influence the outcome of any given scenario, be it getting caught in the rain or purchasing a product.

What can a brand do to affect a positive emotional consumer response to a specific experience—to identify who the consumer is and how that person will respond to the proverbial "rain" before the sun recedes and the clouds even form? This is an area of marketing my firm calls "wet marketing," which blends neuroscience with artificial intelligence (AI) to turn emotion into data and help brands better compete.

**Why is this so important? Because in today's environment, personalized marketing is no longer enough. This is the case for many reasons, in particular because we have entered a new age of data transformation that is:**

- **Requiring new insights to create brand value and drive desired outcomes**
- **Demanding improved emotional experiences related to both brand utility and brand promise**
- **Mandating brands to elevate trust by transforming marketing from an interruption to a service**

**These paradigm shifts have not only led to an economy predicated on engagement and experience, they have paved the way for an era of marketing driven not just by naked creativity, but, perhaps even more importantly, strategic use of technology and data. These changes also portend impending changes within organizations around who will be ultimately responsible for a brand's emotional intelligence and its broad application to the organization.**

What will separate the winners from the losers in the coming years will be those who make a commitment to sharpen their emotional intelligence. They'll do so in ways that:

- 1. Successfully marry data plus creativity, in a manner that doesn't sacrifice human touch:** Many marketers have overshot on the use of technology these past few years. In order to create the emotionally engaging experiences of the future, they will need to **be empowered by new types of insights that generate emotionally optimized creative. Those that understand the power of man being enhanced by machines, not replaced by them, will not only succeed, but lead.**
- 2. Move emotion from the end to the beginning of the innovation/creation process:** What's not new is using technology to augment creative execution, and testing *after* the creative has been produced. What's next is the impending shift in transforming data into intelligence, which will be used to build emotionally engaging experiences that build trust at the strategy stage. **It is a scientifically proven fact that when brand affect, or emotional intensity, is increased, trust with targets rises commensurately, as does loyalty and spend. Smart marketers will use data-led creative strategy briefs to deliver optimized emotional intelligence at scale across the enterprise. This can be brought to life in many ways such as emotionally optimized language**

**that can be folded into everything from brand positioning, to the customer journey, to internal culture campaigns designed to optimize employee engagement.**

**3. Share the responsibility for emotional intelligence and customer advocacy across different functional roles:** Brands will need to build ecosystems that create vibrant and robust experiences that customers will want to opt in to, and even share their data to be a part of. This approach will require C-suite leadership to work in lockstep to embrace changes in ways that optimize emotional engagement and deliver improved brand performance. **Through strong executive engagement and oversight, senior leadership will need to work across the organization to turn data from information into emotional intelligence. This will help marketers shift their focus from just being stewards of the brand, to becoming advocates for the customer.**

**4. Leverage emotional intelligence as a driver of strategy first, by understanding the target customer in a much deeper way, before applying insights to areas such as creativity, marketing, and innovation:** Traditional research and segmentation alone are not sufficient in delivering the insights required to know customers on an emotional level. This is acutely important because in order to get consumers to act, we must first get them to feel. Leveraging **neuroscience, AI and next-generation data**, to illuminate more robust insights on target segments will continue to emerge as a new strategic imperative, particularly as marketing continues to aspire to move from an interruption to a service.

**5. Identify emotional intelligence as a monetizable asset with economic benefit that can contribute to improved brand performance:** Brands' need to create emotional engagement is nothing new. However, now they must be able to leverage emotion as an economic driver of business performance. Much as we witnessed several years back with the McKinsey study on the [economics of creativity](#), which proved that creativity was, in fact, a critical currency of business and driver of performance, we will see a similar paradigm emerge around a brand's ability to leverage emotional intelligence as the secret sauce of brand engagement. Just as creativity is no longer viewed as a tool used only in marketing, the same will happen with the notion of emotion.

It will be fascinating to watch brands explore how the combination of emotion AI plus neuroscience can dramatically improve a brand's emotional intelligence in ways that do everything from reimagine customer segmentation, to increase brand affect, elevate trust, and incite both increased action and spend. Many exciting disruptions remain to be discovered, but one thing is for certain: The new age of emotion and data-enabled creativity has only just begun.