

TOMORROW, TODAY 3: DO LESS, PERFORM BETTER – THE GREAT MARKETING DECLUTTER VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Oli Barrett

Happy marketeers, it turns out, are marketeers with a flair for decluttering. These svengalis of streamlining, also produce better results. And today we're going to find out how we can learn from them.

Welcome back to Tomorrow, Today.

Michele McGrath, Mark Evans. Great to see you both. Michele, help us set the scene a bit. Tell us about a particular word, declutter.

Michele McGrath

So, the pandemic has brought profound change to our lives and so much change has been exhausting and particularly prevalent in marketing organisations. Meanwhile, we are having the digital revolution, which has really transformed marketing, but added to complexity. New tools, new technology, more data, more channels, et cetera.

And marketing declutter is really thinking about how marketing organisations can simplify, how can they reduce that clutter and really focus on the key priorities. Discard what's not important anymore and then rewire what they have left to be able to be much more impactful in the marketplace.

Oli Barrett

Got it. Right, so I'm immediately intrigued by this. Now, Mark, you've got millions of customers, 10,000 colleagues across lots of brands, across Direct Line Group. Decluttering. Is this resonating?

Mark Evans

Yeah, absolutely. I think the last couple of years have been very overwhelming. Everyone has been burnt out. And so, for marketing to declutter, my translation of that is the ability to say no, to ruthlessly prioritise, to stop things that aren't working. Marketing perhaps has the tendency to be glass half full, optimistic, which is great, but only up to the point that it's leading to overwhelm.

Oli Barrett

Personal stories matter Michele, but you've gone further than this. You've done some research, not just in the UK and Ireland, around the world, what's it told you?

Michele McGrath

So, we surveyed over 1000 senior marketing executives globally, as you say, and nearly 70% of marketing executives are saying that their teams are exhausted and burnt out. And actually what we



found in the research, which is focused very much on how marketing organisations are reacting to the changing customer needs, is that there are three segments that we're seeing.

The first is the Survivors. They are burnt out. They believe that actually, they're waiting for the old normality to come back again. Then you've got the Strivers, they're persevering. They are trying to keep up with what's going on with customer needs, but they're struggling and they've kind of got the will, but not necessarily the way in their organisations.

And then you've got the Thrivers. This is a very special group of people who realise that the pandemic has totally changed the world. There's a new reality and they are adjusting to that new reality, taking the opportunity to relook at their business, what their role is, what marketing is doing and also putting the customer absolutely front and centre of everything that they do to address those new motivations. And it's paying off.

Oli Barrett

Fantastic. So, that really helps us think through that. Survivors, Strivers, Thrivers. Mark, of course I'm drawn to Thrivers. But, I don't want to move on from Survivors just yet, you hopefully will have some practical tips to avoid that burnout that Michele has hinted at. What have you done?

Mark Evans

I think the one signature activity we've done is actually to look after people's mental health. So, it's very much about having the tools and the technology to allow people to do their job. But inevitably people are under huge pressure, not least from having to home school and so on. Every team has a mental health first aider. We continually survey about mental well-being. And I think probably that's the thing I'm most proud of is that we've really taken this opportunity to genuinely take care of our folks.

Oli Barrett

And Michele, let's remind ourselves that you're running a CMO community as well. So this thought of thriving in particular, not just in terms

of how we're coping, but how we're executing on our jobs. I mean, how is that playing out across that community? What are you seeing and hearing?

Michele McGrath

We're hearing some quite different things and then some similar things. So, in terms of differences, we're hearing some CMOs, one CMO said to me, actually our entire marketing department is traumatised by the pandemic. Whereas actually another CMO said, well why waste a good crisis? So I think, you know, whether Thriver Survivor might be there. In terms of some of the similarities, I think the speed of change and of transactions, has really meant the marketers have had to change the ways that they're operating, prioritise faster decision making and really decluttering some of their processes and also relooking at what needs to be automated, outsourced, again to simplify what they're doing.

Oli Barrett

Right. So, Mark, if Michele's theory holds true, then you have of course been listening, but also making changes. So, give us the reality check. What have you been able to do differently, thanks to that attitude?

Mark Evans

Well, just prior to the pandemic, we moved towards agility, Agile with a capital A, using the Agile Manifesto and all the agile principles. So doing it all the way through the head office. And I think that's been the bit that set us up for success, because by its very nature, agile means only do the work that's really required, use minimum viable products, strip away the non-value added work, and give end-to-end empowerment to squads. Which means that, by definition, we're decluttering some of the traditional non added value work. That's what's enabled us to launch propositions in months, that might have taken years and really get ahead of the curve as customer needs change.



Oli Barrett

Yeah. So, I'm very drawn into this because you're ensuring houses, motor cars. Any example that comes to mind that you've been able to just really hit the ground running on?

Mark Evans

Yeah well, one of the silver linings of the pandemic is obviously it's heightened in our consciences of the climate and the environment, and so that's starting to become a pertinent need within insurance. So, we launched an electric vehicle motor insurance product just a couple of months ago, going really well, really created in a couple of months, on the basis of this is an emerging customer need. Another great example, cycling has had a boom during the pandemic. Again, one of our squads took that lead and within a couple of months had launched a minimum viable product. So, I think it's that churn of experimentation and launching which really makes the difference.

Oli Barrett

Michele, Mark is a brilliant example, isn't he? If I could talk about him like that. Because he spans marketing and digital as well. Just give me a sense of how you at Accenture are helping organisations, really around the world, to sort of embrace both.

Michele McGrath

So, in terms of marketing, I mean, we talk about the art and science of marketing and actually it's really fundamentally changed. And I think technology, digital data, has really empowered the marketer to be more creative and innovative. Whether it's through the data that is now available, which there's masses of data around. One issue that many organisations have that we help them with is actually bringing it all together and making sure it's not siloed.

Helping them go to the Cloud, for example, and actually so that the whole organisation can have a 360 degree view of the customer and actually be able to use that in terms of, Mark talked about scaling, personalization, et cetera. So, I think that's why marketing and technology have to go together and the CMO's best friend has to really be the CIO.

Oli Barrett

Doesn't this present you with a bit of a conundrum, Mark Evans? Because surely in the world of data, we could think, well more is more, unleash the fire hose. And yet, you've got to cut through that and declutter. How can you do it?

Mark Evans

Well, this notion of data driven marketing is really the talk of the town right now. How do I deliver the right message to the right customer at the right time? Everybody's saying they're doing it, but in reality, not many are, and if they are, they're not doing it very well. So, there are a lot of organisations who have not yet built the marketing technology, the martech stack that they need, or got their databases in the right shape. We've got 26 million customer records, but we're definitely not fully utilising them. So, I think this is the challenge of many CMOs. It's art and it's science, but the data is coming to the fore and you've got to get your house in order.

Oli Barrett

Love it. So, thank you both for getting us sort of, on this decluttering wavelength. I'd like you to leave us with something intensely practical for the convert that says, right, we need to look afresh at this, Mark, give me something practical to end with.

Mark Evans

I would stick to that point about the capture of marketing and be very clear that you're talking a commercial language, all the time. Every time you don't, it damages your reputation. And very specifically, if you're really proud of your advertising, show it to your Mum.

Oli Barrett

There's a thought. Now, Michele how about you? Just give us something that we can really get hold of, tomorrow.



Michele McGrath

So, I think focus on what really matters. What are the key priorities that are so important to your customers and to your business? And ruthlessly focus on those and actually remove other things. So, for example if you've got ten innovation priorities, do you really need ten? Should you just have three? Also, ranges in store. If you've got a very large range that adds complexity as well, how can you declutter, both for your organisation, but often for your customers as well.

Oli Barrett

That is terrific advice. Thank you so much Mark Evans, Michele McGrath. Great to see you.

Mark Evans

Thanks Ollie.

Michele McGrath

Thank you. Oli.