GROW

MARKETING DASHBOARDS TO HELP YOUR CREATIVE TEAM

Insights for Agencies, Marketing Executives, and Creative Teams

"It's not Mad Men anymore...
it's CSI: Madison Avenue."

- Ryan Skinner, Velocity Partners Ltd.[1]

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Modern Marketing:
A Two-Way Conversation

Traditional marketing and advertising is dead.

Media is now a conversation, not a one-way sales pitch. Your audience's favorite platforms live in their pockets, and they interact with brands and thought leaders directly and more often than at any other time period in history.

Intimidating? You betcha.

But there's never been a better time to succeed in marketing. Media is changing, and as top leaders adapt, not only are they reaping enormous profits, they're shaping the future of the industry.

Advertising Dollars Increase, Move To Digital

The move toward digital gives marketing and advertising agencies a chance to capitalize on an entirely new consumer experience—one primarily driven by mobile. This new frontier of marketing is still in its infancy, and it comes with an unprecedented level of customer insight through data.

Mark Read, global CEO of Wunderman, believes that agencies have a responsibility to apply that data in their work:

"We're raising the [creative] bar. ... We're going to need to be much more accountable to our clients for results, by which I mean sales... [We] need to use technology and data to track our work to sales. It also gives us the opportunity to build new capabilities and expand our offer."[8]
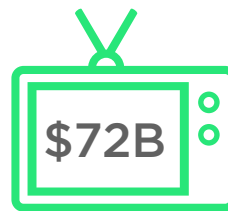
In other words, data is a critical component of the competitive agency of the future.
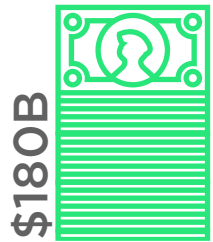
$180B

The U.S. is the largest market for advertising with $180 billion[2] spent on advertising in 2015, and a projected $200 billion in 2016.[3]

5%
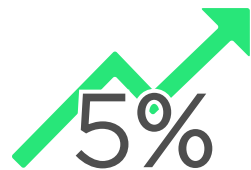
Global spending on media will rise 5% annually during the next 5 years to $2.1 trillion in 2019, up from $1.6 trillion in 2014.[4]

$72B

Total TV ad spend in 2017 is projected at $72.01 billion—35.8% of total U.S. media ad spend. Total digital ad spend in 2017 will be $77.37 billion—38.4% of total U.S. media ad spend.[5]

75%
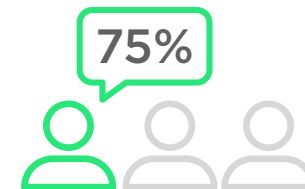
More than a third of CMOs say that digital marketing will account for 75% or more of their spending within the next five years.[6]
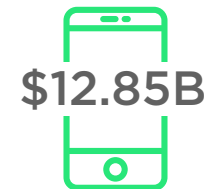
$12.85B

Mobile search ads spend was projected at $12.85 billion in 2015—over 50% of the search market.[7]

Creative Intuition + Data = $

Don't get us wrong: Data does not replace your need for top-notch creative savvy. (After all, it wasn't an algorithm or A/B test that produced Oreo's "You can still dunk in the dark" tweet during Superbowl XLVII.)

But understanding your data and applying focused key metrics can supercharge your campaigns and your creative team to give you a major edge on the competition. Ignoring data simply isn't an option anymore.

The Cost of Disregarding Data

"Advertising people who ignore research are as dangerous as generals who ignore decodes of enemy signals."[9]

- David Ogilvy,
founder of Ogilvy & Mather

Take Netflix, for example…

In their mission to become a top-tier content provider in the entertainment industry, Netflix has created a robust content acquisition and distribution machine that's built on customer data.

As of April 2016, Netflix boasts over 81 million subscribers.[10] **Because of data, their service is able to deliver a unique version of Netflix to each subscriber with suggestions tailored precisely to them.** That's some serious marketing and customer experience wizardry.

How do they do it?

Netflix gathers more than just user demographics, viewing history, and ratings. They know where, when, and how you watch (including when you pause, rewind, and fast forward), and analyze the mix of shows and movies you stream.

… which is how you end up scrolling through very specific sub-genres like "Understated Independent Dramas Based on Books."

Anyone up for *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*?

Top Agencies and Content Providers Lead With Technology

Making data magic with your marketing strategy is easier said than done, but technology can give you a boost. Aberdeen Group reports that **best-in-class marketers are 74% more likely to have "a strongly integrated system of marketing technology solutions."[11]** These solutions may include CRMs, marketing automation platforms, etc.

Large agencies like Ogilvy & Mather, Omnicom, and McCann Erickson require sizable teams of analysts and complex infrastructures to collect, store, and process huge volumes of data.

But these big, expensive systems are overkill for smaller-sized agencies.

Where is your marketing data?

Most smaller agencies manage their data in dozens of different places: Excel, Salesforce, MailChimp, Marketo, Google Adwords, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn ... We're preaching to the choir, aren't we?
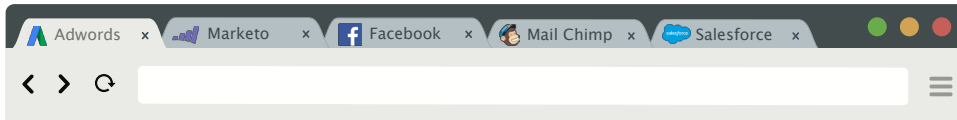
Marketing data is notorious for being segmented and siloed. **The problem is that disjointed data sources don't provide quick insight to the team, and the arduous process of manually generating reports makes it hard to demonstrate clear campaign impact and profit to clients and executives.**

A more effective approach is to put all of that data in one place, where it's easy to access and understand.

Welcome to the future of advertising.
Where creativity meets data.

Marketing data is overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be.

With the right technology in place, navigating your data can become intuitive. What's more, it can provide unique data insights for every stage of your strategy—from idea formation to campaign evaluation.

Along this journey, three key groups have a stake in marketing data, but each group needs different data and uses it to accomplish different goals:

"How are our campaigns performing? What should we do next?"

Creative Team

"Is our team meeting our goals? Are we making our clients happy and bringing in more business?"

Executive Team

"Is this agency helping me grow my company? Are they worth the investment?"

Client

The answers to these questions and many, many more are contained in your data. But instead of working through your data to answer them, you need to make your data work for you.

Make your data work for you

Data should measure the impact of your work for clients, provide strategic insight to leadership, and inform, guide, and inspire your creative team. Your business depends on it.

"Whenever there's a rift between strategy and creativity—between logic and magic —there's a brand gap. **It can cause a brilliant strategy to fail where it counts most, or can doom a bold creative initiative before it's even launched.**"

- Marty Neumeier,
director of transformation for Liquid Agency[12]

66% predicted increase in marketing data spend in the next 3 years[13]

11.1% of marketing budgets will go to data and analytics by 2019.[14]

91% of marketers agree that data-driven marketing is crucial to success.[15]

63% of marketers spent more on data-driven marketing and advertising in the last year.[16]

Data Dashboards Empower Your Creative Team

"You are competing with every piece of content ever made for every person's attention. You need to be entertaining. Don't outsmart. Out entertain."

- Dolf van den Brink,
president and CEO of Heineken USA[17]

There will always be an aspect of copy and design that is unquantifiable. Telling a great story that inspires surprise, delight, and wonder is what makes creative stand apart. Some say that getting caught up in the numbers is a sure way to snuff that creative fire.

We politely disagree, to an extent. **Well-understood data can kindle inspiration and informed intuition.**

Scouring endless spreadsheets, on the other hand? Now that's stifling.
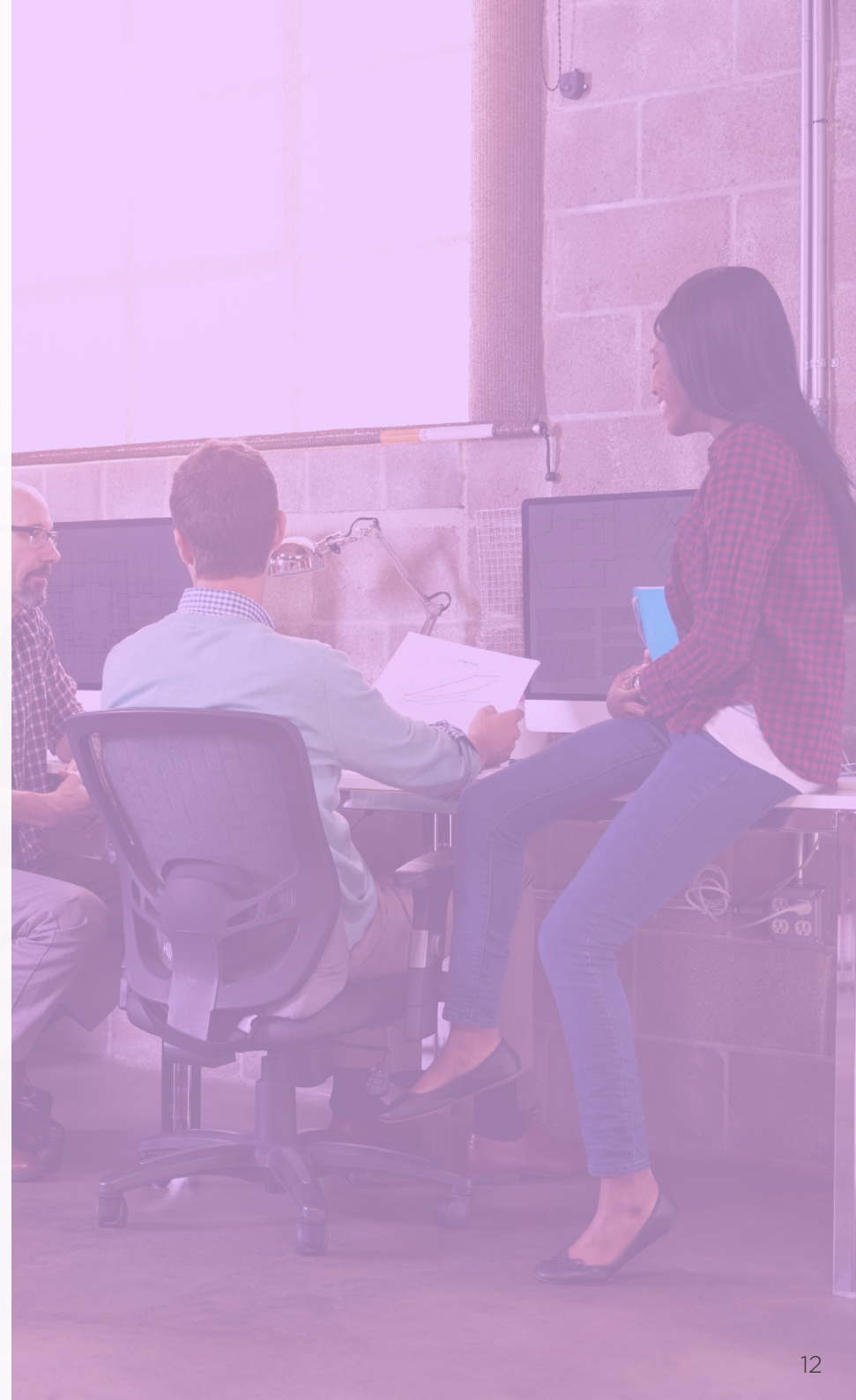
How does data inform creative?

"Data can often be the catalyst for truly inspiring creative work."

- Niall McKinney, founder and CEO of The Knowledge Engineers[18]

Every digital marketer knows how necessary the process of trial and error is—creating campaigns and analyzing Facebook insights, studying viewer behavior on YouTube, monitoring trends and weekly traffic insights.

But using data isn't just measuring impact after the fact. The key to making data work alongside creative is to make data a part of the creative process.

Creativity can't flourish in a vacuum, and believe it or not, good data is fertile ground for growing new ideas.

"The crucial step comes in the human ability to take the insight and craft a great story behind it. But when great creative minds take that data, gain an insight, and go to work, they can build compelling stories."

- Niall McKinney[19]

Smarter Entertainment

Take another example from Netflix: Several years ago, if you asked what actor Kevin Spacey, director David Fincher, and a British political thriller series from the '90s had in common, you'd probably get blank stares.

But Netflix knew different: These were things their users liked. So they used that data proactively to predict a type of original content users would enjoy:

"[*House of Cards*] was not paint by numbers. Netflix merely used data to set some broad creative guidelines ... **Used this way, data (or, rather, the insights gleaned from data) can drive almost any form of creativity.** By setting the contours for success, it can release creative teams to do what they do best—in full confidence that what they do will likely be well received. ... **In this way, data enables creative freedom, rather than defeats it.**"

- Shane Atchison, CEO at Possible, and Jason Burby, president of the Americas at Possible[20]

Netflix also cut ten versions of the House of Cards trailer to present on subscribers' home pages, each one targeted to specific interests. Given that, it shouldn't be a surprise that House of Cards was an instant success that pioneered a new brand of data-driven media.

Involve data from the start

As the media environment changes, **the last thing you want to do is separate your creative department from data insights.** Anush Prabhu, partner at creative agency Deutsch, advocates involving data-driven insights early on in the creative process:

"**Bringing data-driven audience insights into view far earlier in the process is the solution**... It is critical in today's world that these two elements come together, now more than ever. Doing so will change the way that brands go to market and, ultimately, result in improved bottom lines."[21]

Data should be a crucial component of marketing every step of the way.
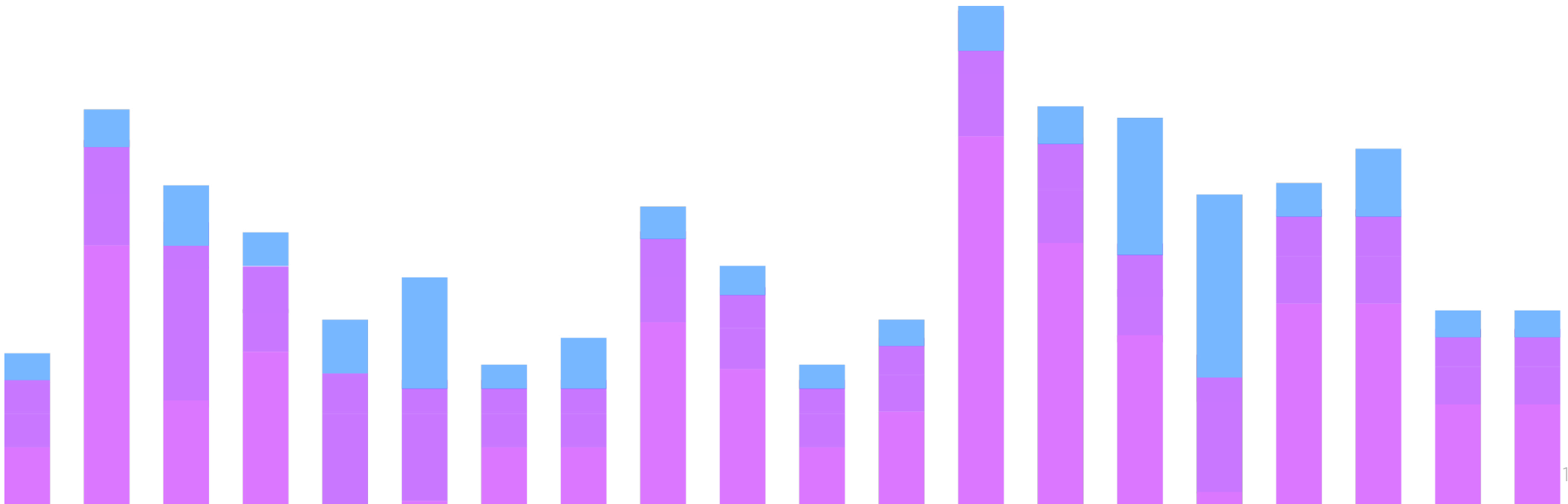
Use Grow to make data part of your creative culture

Compatibility is key when choosing a data and analytics solution—it needs to mesh with your company culture and creative team, or your data will go to waste.

Grow makes it easy for agencies to adopt a data-driven culture and implement visual data, even for those who are new to analytics solutions.

"Data is the orchestra, creative is the music. You need both."

-Tham Khai Meng, Co-Chairman and Worldwide Chief Creative Officer, Ogilvy & Mather[22]

Visual data gives teams quick connections and insights

Teams make quicker observations with visual data that would be much harder to make with rows of numbers. Humans are visual creatures, and creatives often even more so. **Why waste time decoding tables and spreadsheets when Grow can turn them into digestible graphs for you?**

It's easy to see the upward trending relationship between sales and your marketing funnel with Grow. You can connect all your data sources and all your stats stay continuously updated. You don't need to be spending time referring to, opening, and displaying five different data sources to make key insights.

Grow dashboards unify your creative team

Visual dashboards encourage teams to think strategically and make direct connections between their creative work and results.

Open your Grow dashboard during a content planning session with your creatives. **The team will be able to see direct relationships between sales and marketing, and between your most successful ideas and campaigns.** Rather than running through endless numbers, you'll be able to jump a step ahead and focus on strategy.

Visual data strengthens your agency's ability to solve problems as a team and develop a strong strategy.

Marketing Executives Use Data to Lead

Increased demand for content, quick timelines, and a competitive, ever-changing media market puts a lot of pressure on advertising and marketing leaders to deliver.

"For a brand like Pepsi, it was once sufficient for us to produce four pieces of content a year—mainly TV—and we could spend about six to eight months developing that one piece of content and spend $1 million on each piece of film. **Now, that four pieces has turned into 4,000; eight months has changed to eight days and eight hours; and budgets have not gone up.**"

- Brad Jakeman, president of the Global Beverage Group at PepsiCo[23]

Marketing leaders oversee 8+ marketing initiatives ...

... while managing a team that's responsible for 17 marketing activities. That's no mean feat.[24] Other common challenges facing agency executives today include:

- Using financial and operational resources efficiently
- Staying current in rapidly-changing markets
- Managing an agile marketing strategy
- Hiring and training new team members

- Closing the loop with sales teams
- Evaluating the success of campaigns
- Proving success to clients

Marketing leaders are turning to data solutions to resolve these issues. **Instant data empowers executives to make quick decisions, invest in new business opportunities, and encourage company-wide collaboration and involvement in strategy.**

**64%** of marketing leaders "strongly agree" that data-driven marketing initiatives are essential to success.[25]

49% of brand executives feel "significant pressure" to increase data's role in their current strategy.[26]

Marketing data and analytics users are **57%** more effective at increasing their productivity with integrated marketing technologies.[27]

5 ways to use dashboards to lead

Executives in the marketing industry can use data dashboards in a variety of ways as they make business decisions, manage teams, and interact with clients. Besides making data accessible, dashboards help agency leaders with:

1. Decision making

2. Managing risk

3. Executing the vision and strategy of the company

4. Making high performance part of company culture

5. Providing campaign performance metrics to clients (and prospective clients)
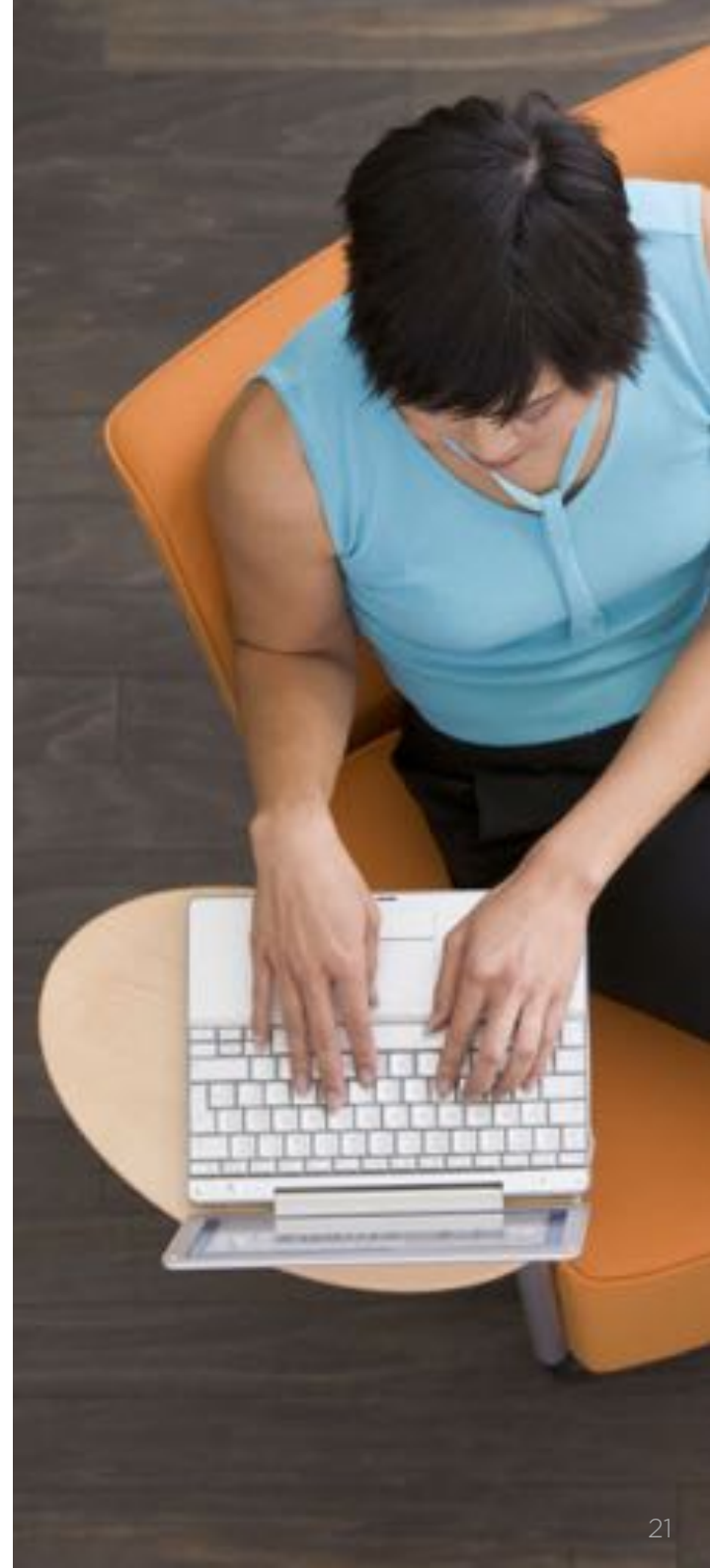
1. Decision making

KPIs visualized on a custom dashboard create an environment for you to make quicker, more effective decisions. You can easily make connections and insights that were once lost in endless spreadsheet rows. **These dashboards stay updated in real-time so that your decisions are based on the most up-to-date information available.**

When setting up your dashboard, be clear about what you to accomplish: Where do you see your company in a year? What outcomes do you want to achieve? What metrics do you need to focus on to get there?

Top-performing organizations use analytics

5x **more than lower performers.**

- MIT Sloan Management Review[28]

Grow dashboards are built for growth and speed. Identifying key performance indicators, as well as your agency's growth and strategy goals, will help you make more focused and profitable decisions.
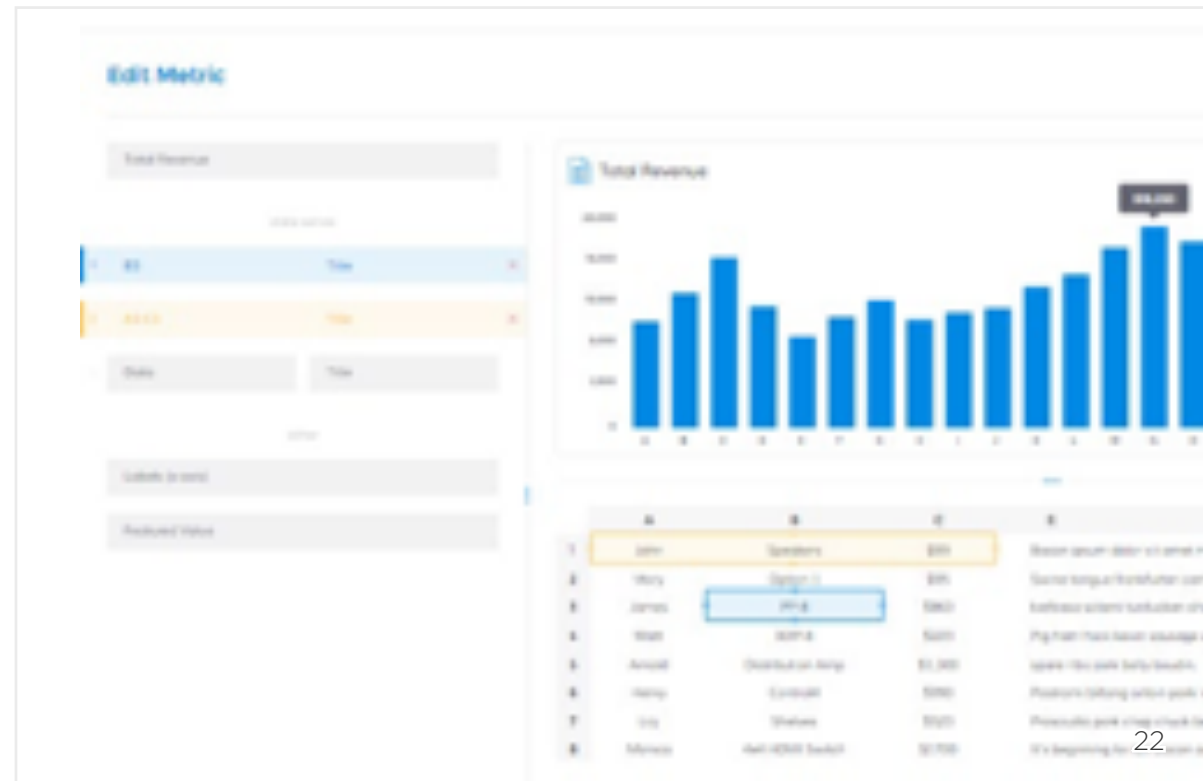
2. Managing risk

Risk management is much easier when your reports are already in place and key metrics are defined. **Your dashboard gives you a direct line to the pulse of your company at all times.** When issues arise, your dashboard will be the first to tell you.

Preparing data for meetings shouldn't cause flashbacks to cramming for college midterms, and when you're asked for key information, you shouldn't have to dig for it, or worse, discover that it slipped through the cracks.

**When your data is accessible with a Grow dashboard, you can walk into meetings confidently.** What's more, you can give your board and investors access to your numbers as well, so everyone can get on the same page effortlessly.

3. Executing the vision and strategy of the company

Employees are more likely to participate, contribute, and stick around if they believe in the company vision and understand the strategy to get there. **How are you communicating company goals to your employees? Are they involved in the process? Do they feel personally invested in the team's success?**

Dashboards show the story of your company's progress and how far you still need to go to reach goals. When goals are met, everyone knows, and the team celebrates together. When goals are not met, you and your team are held accountable.

An "open dashboard" environment also gives individuals in your company a chance to lead and take initiative. If managers and teams are not engaged with company goals, it may be time to restructure or make a few new hires.
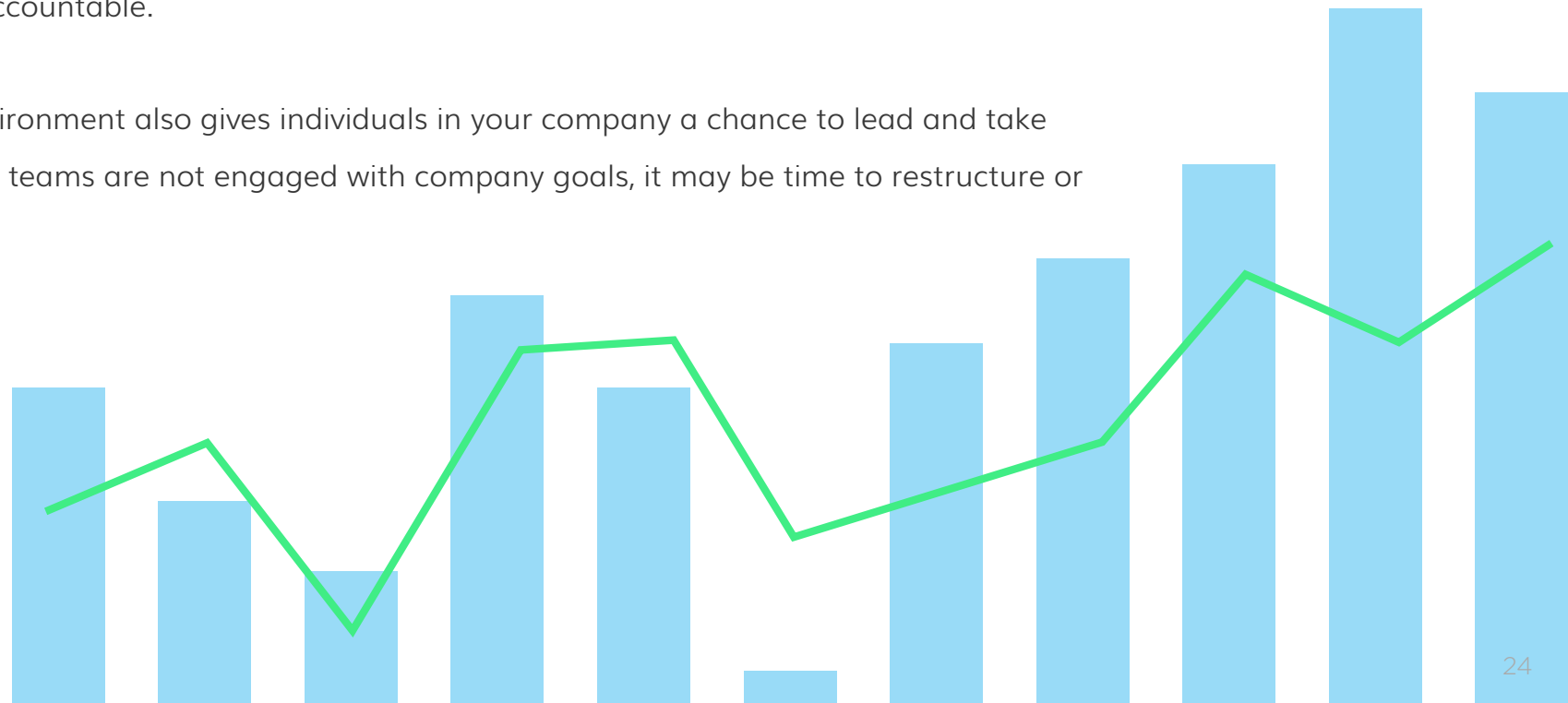
4. Making high performance part of company culture

There's a difference between hoping your work is making a difference and knowing where the company stands minute-by-minute. Excel does not have the capability to provide real-time updates, but dashboards do.

When team members take ownership of specific openly-displayed metrics, it can be a powerful source of motivation. **Team members know the impact their work has on the company rather than wondering whether they're meeting expectations.**

Company dashboards improve **analytical thinking** among teams, **better performance** and **company-wide collaboration**, according to The Aberdeen Group.[29]

5. Providing campaign performance metrics to clients (and prospective clients)

When you set up marketing dashboards for clients, you provide them with clear, up-to-the-minute insight into your work and progress. **This transparency fosters trust and confidence in the relationship, and makes it easy for you to deliver reports with visual data.**

Client dashboards contain tangible proof of success to show to other prospective clients. While that was never a use case we had in mind for Grow dashboards, many of our customers have testified to its impact—and you can have that power too.

26
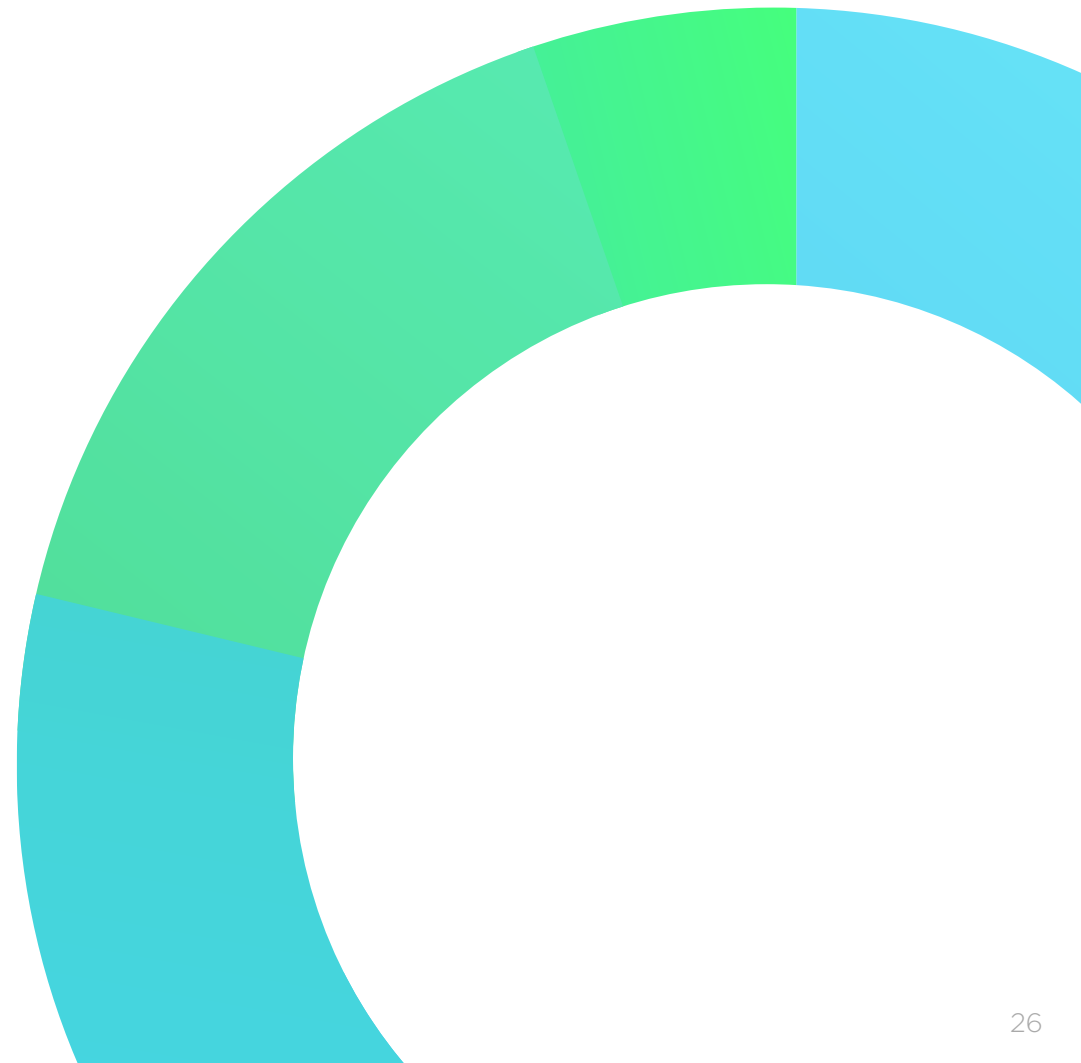
Dashboards for Marketing and Advertising Clients

In a 2014 study[30] by RPA, an anonymous survey of ad agency and brand marketing leaders revealed that there's a major disconnect in the agency-client relationship. 98% of both agencies and clients agree that a trust-based relationship leads to better advertising.[31] So what's causing the conflict?

The study revealed the four biggest issues that have weakened trust between agencies and clients:
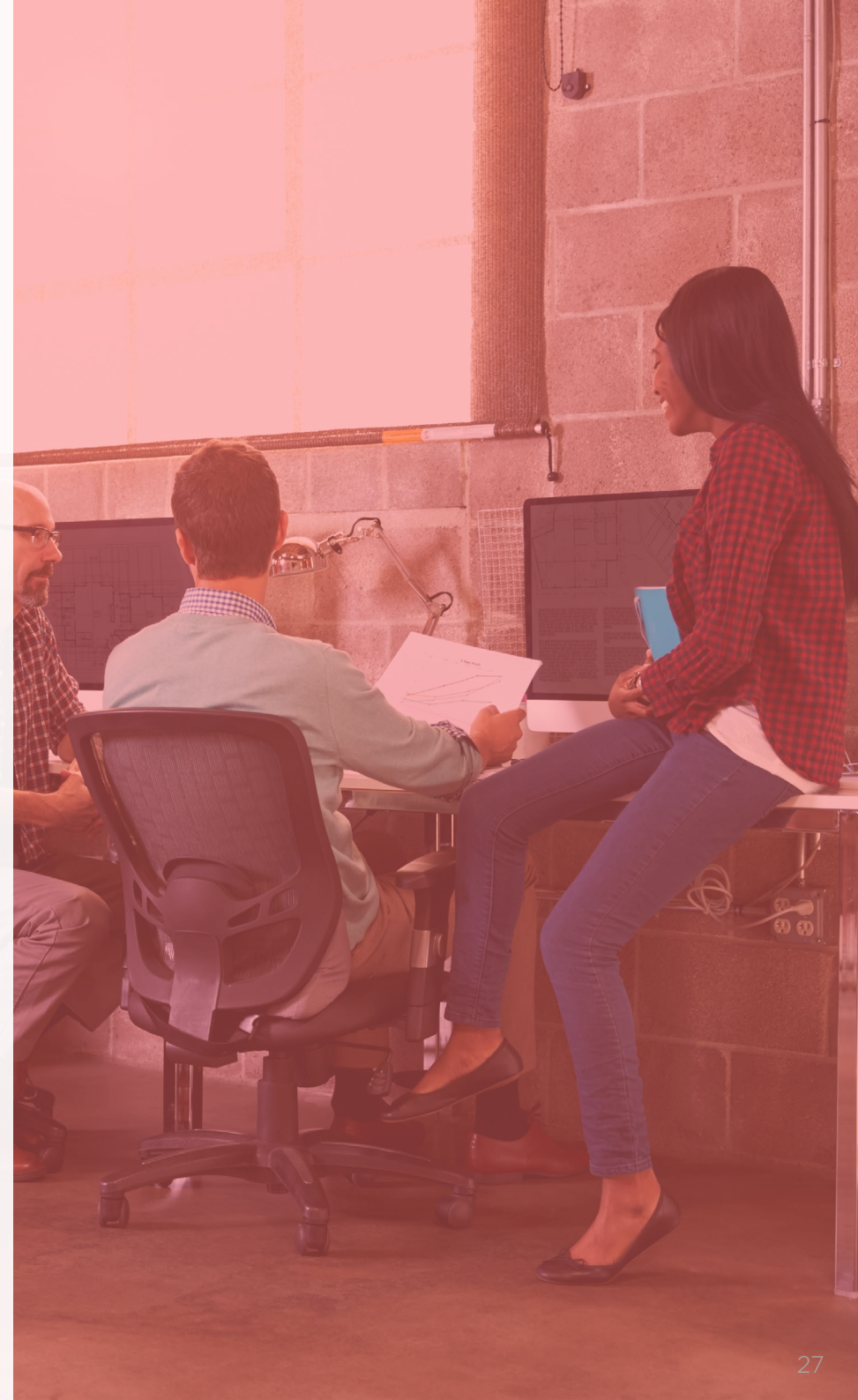
Poor communication   Willingness to take risks

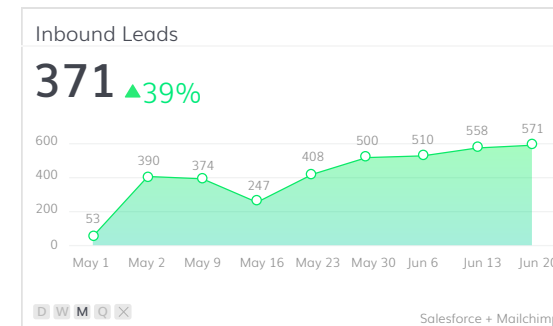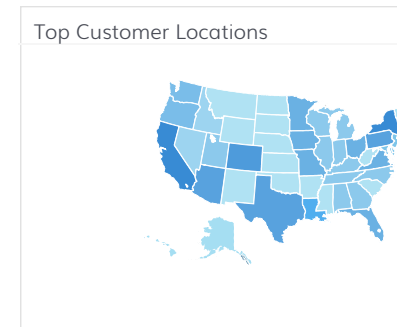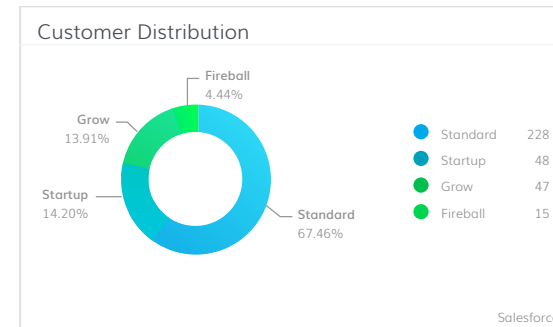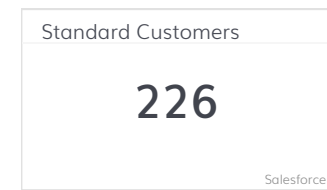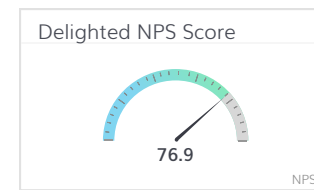Defining creativity   Understanding the client's business[32]

Both clients and agencies struggle when there is a lack of trust. Grow dashboards can help resolve each of these problems, and help agencies regain (and further strengthen) clients' trust.

Improve communication

By providing a marketing dashboard to your client, you are able to deliver a level of transparency that can't be beat. **Rather than expecting clients to trust your work, you can give them tangible, up-to-the-minute proof that helps them rest easy at night.** And because Grow dashboards are so visual, it will be easy to discuss the data that matters most.

Unfortunately, when it comes to shooting down a client's terrible campaign idea ... well, you're on your own.

Delighted NPS Score

76.9

NPS

Standard Customers

226

Salesforce

Growth Rate

22.87%

Growth

Quick

Customer Distribution

Fireball 4.44%
Grow 13.91%
Startup 14.20%
Standard 67.46%

Standard	228
Startup	48
Grow	47
Fireball	15

Salesforce

Top Customer Locations

Inbound Leads

371 ▲39%

600
400
200
0

53   390   374   247   408   500   510   558   571

May 1 May 2 May 9 May 16 May 23 May 30 Jun 6 Jun 13 Jun 20

D W M Q X

Salesforce + Mailchimp

Site Visitors Overview

— Unique Visitors — Site Visitors

4K
2K
0

May 24 May 26 May 28 May 30 Jun 1 Jun 3 Jun 5 Jun 7 Jun 9 Jun 11 Jun 13

D W M Q X

Align definitions of creativity

A common complaint among the surveyed clients was that, "You're all smart, but you get too wrapped up in a cool idea and lose sight of the strategy."[33] If that ruffles your feathers a bit, we understand. But it doesn't have to—**data offers a great compromise that allows agencies to be expansively creative and keep clients satisfied.**

As we've explained, data can be a huge source of creative inspiration. And **when you have data to back up your creative decisions, you'll have a much easier time finding exciting, creative solutions that also alleviate clients' strategy concerns.**

Mitigate risks

About 75% of agencies said that their clients were too afraid to take risks. The client perspective? They're willing to take risks, but they need a strategic reason to do so.[34] We understand that "proven" solutions are the antithesis of creative risk, but you can still use data to support your point of view.

Grow dashboards also allow you to show evidence from previous campaigns on other clients' dashboards. When you're able to demonstrate past success with a dashboard to new clients or prospects, the message is clear: **You know how to take risks the smart way, and get real results.**

75%

of agencies said that their clients were too afraid to take risks

Understand the client's business

What clients really want is for agencies to understand their business. While 90% of agencies surveyed claimed to truly understand their clients' businesses, only 65% of clients agreed.[35]

Dashboards are the solution: You can merge data sources to get a clearer picture of how different pieces of the puzzle work together. With sales data shown alongside marketing numbers, you get better insight into how their business functions and how your marketing and advertising efforts are impacting their bottom line. **You get the best information to help you succeed, and clients can be confident that you're aligned with their objectives.**

Building your client dashboard

Clients don't want to see endless marketing metrics, and they don't have time to review every piece of data that matters to your team. **Big data is overwhelming; focused data is quick and impactful.**

Managing, discussing, and reporting the performance of creative campaigns with clients is simple with an analytics solution like Grow. **Our customized dashboards make it easy to demonstrate the impact of your work on your client's bottom line.**

You don't have to comb through multiple data sources, you don't have to parse a spreadsheet into layman's terms: You simply plug your client's data sources into Grow, and watch the data come to life.
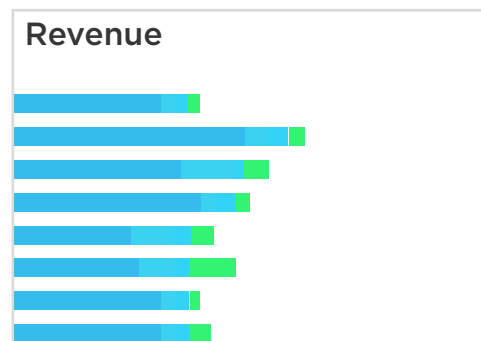
Choose the right metrics

Marketing dashboards can vary greatly, depending on the specific services your client needs. When reporting to clients, opt for high-impact metrics that tell a compelling story, and tie back to your client's goals and areas of concern.
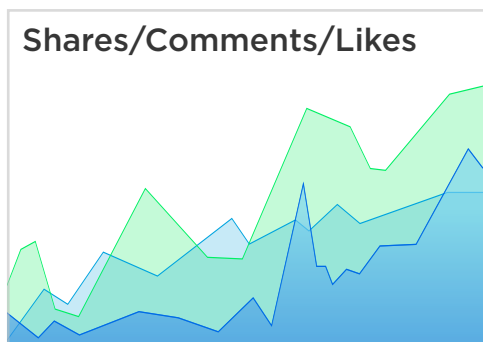
Website Traffic
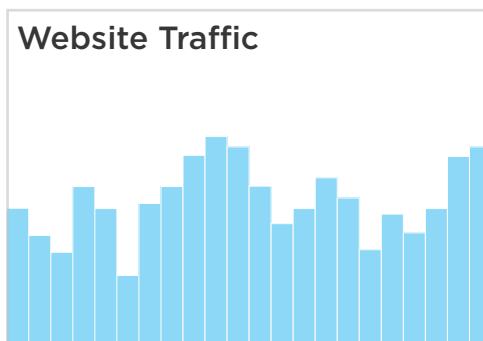
✅ Email Marketing, PR, Social Media Ads, Ungated Content

Revenue

✅ Email Marketing, PR, Social Media Ads, Display Ads, Rich Media

Cost Per Click

$15.24

✅ Email Marketing, PR, Social Media Ads, Display Ads, Rich Media

Shares/Comments/Likes
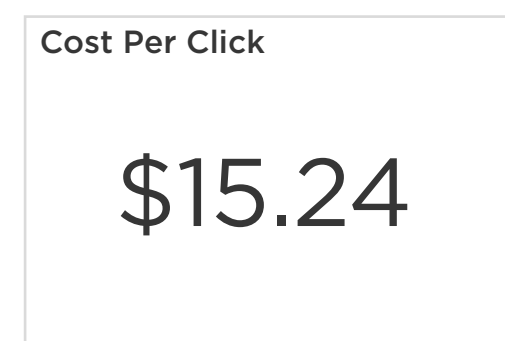
✅ Ungated Content, Rich Media, Social Media

Brand Awareness
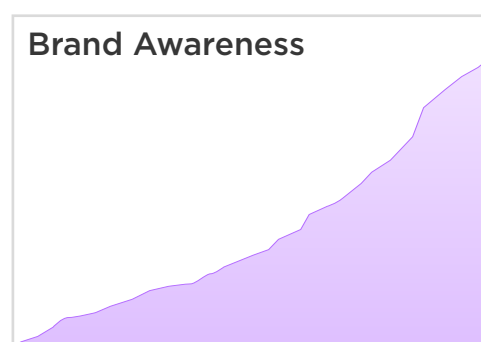
✅ Display Ads, PR, Social Media Ads

Conversion Rate
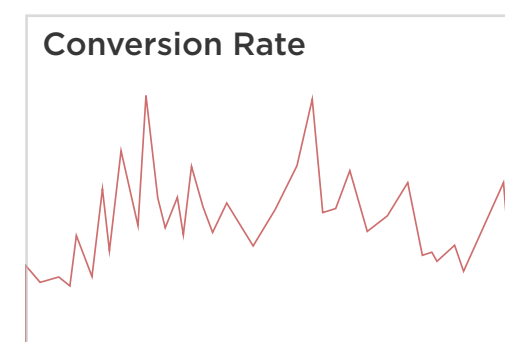
✅ Email Marketing, Display Ads, Gated Content, Rich Media

Special dashboard features for marketing and ad agencies

Grow has special features that make it an ideal solution for marketing and advertising agencies to use with their clients.

White Label

Our white label service allows your clients to access Grow via a customized portal and have a fully branded experience inside the app. They'll be blown away by the experience and have greater confidence in your team because of the level of transparency dashboards provide.

Dashboard Duplication

Marketing and advertising agencies are in the unique position of often providing data for the same metrics to multiple clients. To make this process seamless for agencies, we allow you to create fully-customizable marketing dashboard templates that you can duplicate for each creative campaign, marketing initiative, or client. There's no need to start over from scratch each time. Just plug in the correct data sources for the new dashboard, and the metrics you want will already be set up.

Conclusion

We've worked hard to create an analytics solution that is ideal for marketing and advertising agencies. We believe that with increased (and simpler) access to data, agencies will experience not only improved relationships with clients, but also internal improvements as agency leaders guide their firms with data, and the team rallies around data and incorporates data insights into the creative process. Grow dashboards will empower your agency to be truly data-driven.

To see what Grow can do for your agency, request a quick, live demo here.

GROW

Call us at **1-800-515-7049** or visit us at grow.com

Footnotes

[1] "How many marketing managers are up to the data-driven task?," The Velocity B2B Content Marketing Blog, August 2012. https://velocitypartners.com/blog/how-many-marketing-managers-are-up-to-the-data-driven-task/

[2] All currencies are in U.S. dollars (USD).

[3] Global Media Report 2015, McKinsey & Company. http://www.mckinsey.com/industries/media-and-entertainment/our-insights/the-state-of-global-media-spending

[4] Ibid.

[5] "Digital Ad Spending to Surpass TV Next Year," eMarketer, March 2016. http://www.emarketer.com/Article/Digital-Ad-Spending-Surpass-TV-Next-Year/1013671

[6] "CMOs Are Preparing for Digital to Grow to 75% of Marketing Budgets," AdWeek, July 2014. http://www.adweek.com/news/technology/cmos-expect-75-marketing-budgets-be-digital-within-5-years-158481

[7] "Mobile Search Will Surpass Desktop in 2015," eMarketer, December 2014. http://www.emarketer.com/Article/Mobile-Search-Will-Surpass-Desktop-2015/1011657

[8] "The Ad Agency of the Future Is Coming. Are You Ready?," AdvertisingAge, May 2016. http://adage.com/article/print-edition/agency-future/303798/

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