Acquia
EXPERIENCE DIGITAL FREEDOM

DELIVER A MODERN DIGITAL CX: A GUIDE FOR MARKETING INNOVATORS

Customer Experience Trends Report, Singapore Edition

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

No one fully understands the long-term effect COVID-19 will have on Singapore's society or economy. But the impact it's having on brands is becoming clearer by the day.

Customer behaviours have shifted during the crisis and may not revert to pre-pandemic norms. A YouGov report found that because of the coronavirus, 58% of consumers in Singapore say their shopping habits have changed, and 53% say they will make more use of online shopping and delivery.

In addition, a separate report from Qualtrics XM Institute found there's a 20 percentage point difference between consumers in Singapore who expect to buy more online after the pandemic versus those who expect to buy less.

With customer loyalty to brands low – and the cost of acquiring new customers high – marketers need to focus on creating and sustaining engagement with each and every customer. As noted in the global edition of this report, it's not enough to simply recreate previously existing processes as digital ones. They must actually reimagine some customer experiences (CX) altogether.

Marketers in Singapore must transform their CX in a fundamental, business-impacting way. They can't afford to interact with customers the same way they did before the world changed.

What do these marketing innovators need to successfully retain customers and win new ones in today's dynamic marketplace?

Customer data

To better understand what makes an individual customer open an email, respond to an offer or otherwise engage with a brand, marketers need access to higher quality data. Going forward, most will need to rely on *first-party* data (the information that customers choose to provide) to help generate new content, new campaigns and an updated CX as browser companies phase out third-party cookies. Brands in Singapore get this. Gathering first-party data is already a priority for a large majority of them.

Content

To create, test and deliver personalised digital experiences across channels in an efficient manner, marketers will need low-code or no-code tools. At its core, this innovative CX features rich content with compelling storytelling and brand consistency. Marketers in Singapore continue to adopt marketing and CX tools, and nearly all say their investments are paying off. Still, many report being limited by their martech in critical areas.

Privacy mindset

To reduce the trust gap, marketers must continue tracking consumers' comfort levels about sharing personal information. They must also maintain respect for customer data privacy. With only 58% of consumers in Singapore trusting that all brands will handle their personal data properly, marketers must work hard to convince audiences to share their information in exchange for an improved CX.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

To gain a perspective on these topics through a global lens, we worked with Vanson Bourne to collect the views of 8,000 consumers and 800 marketers across Australia, Brazil, France, Germany, Japan, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States from July to August 2021.

The survey explores shifts in marketing and consumer expectations about CX and privacy. As we examine these research findings and implications, we'll discuss how brands are adapting to the changing landscape and key lessons learned. This report focuses on data from Singapore, as well as comparisons to global and other regional results.

8,000
CONSUMERS

800
MARKETERS

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TRENDS REPORT, SINGAPORE EDITION

Section 1:

# ADAPT STRATEGIES TO WIN IN A CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT

97%

OF MARKETERS IN SINGAPORE REPORT THEIR ORGANISATION CHANGED ITS DIGITAL CX STRATEGY OVER THE PAST 18 MONTHS, PARTICULARLY IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19.

The pandemic isn't the only major disruption that brands must contend with. Today, customer journeys involve an ever-increasing number of channels and devices. Companies in Singapore are taking significant steps to stand out at a time when distinguishing themselves is harder than ever.

Nearly two out of three marketers (65%) say their organisation has prioritised making sure their branding remains consistent for customers in 2021, which is higher than the global average of 53%. These efforts are critical: 87% of consumers in Singapore say they expect brands to have a consistent message and appearance across all their digital platforms.

The latest findings also indicate that nearly 90% of brand teams feel pressure to deliver marketing content differently to attract attention when representing their offerings.
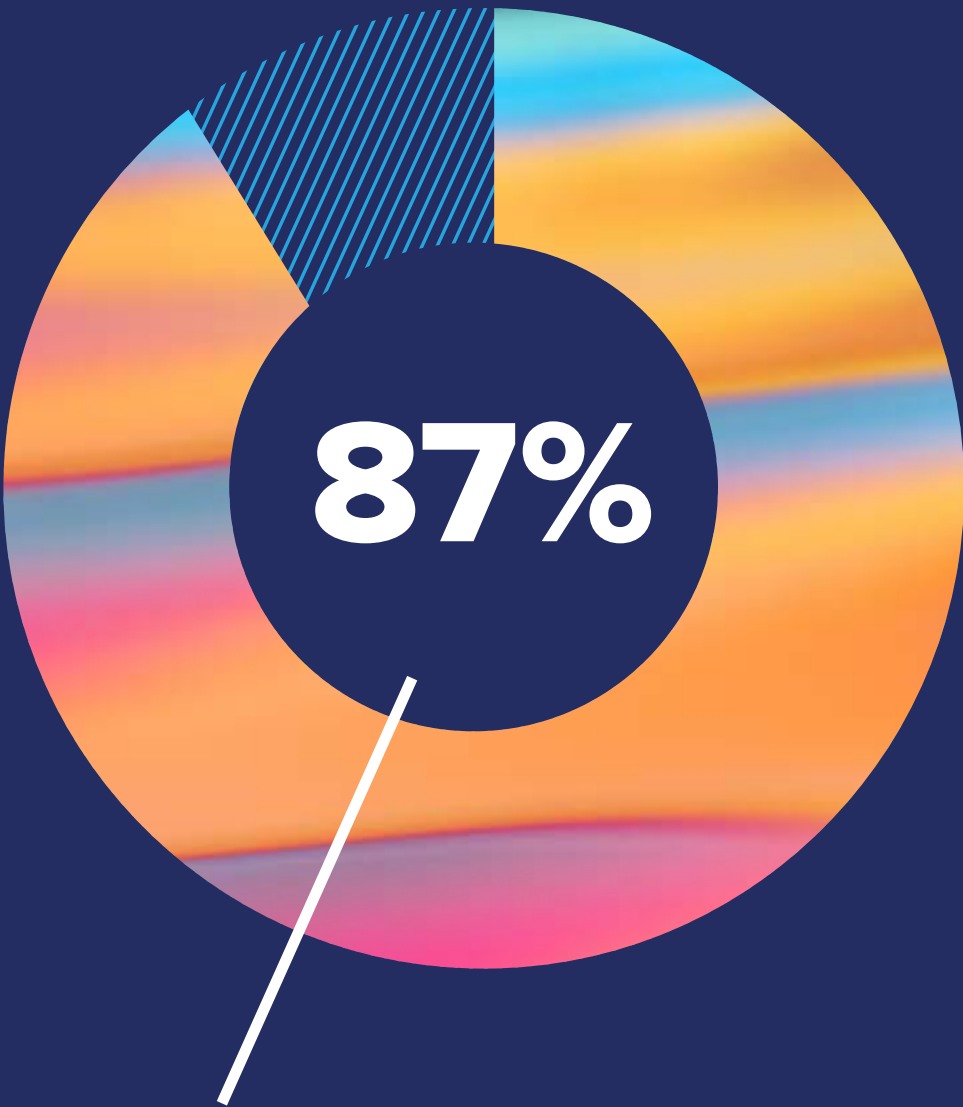
87%

OF CONSUMERS IN SINGAPORE SAY THEY EXPECT BRANDS TO HAVE A CONSISTENT MESSAGE AND APPEARANCE ACROSS ALL THEIR DIGITAL PLATFORMS.

The top tactics brands in Singapore have used to adapt to new customer behaviours over the past 12 months are:

Diversified the types of digital channels to reach customers

59%

Tried to unify the digital experience across channels

56%

Relied more on personalisation

53%

Created more content for customer engagement

48%

Section 2:

# EMERGING SOLUTIONS PUT CUSTOMER DATA AT MARKETERS' FINGERTIPS

Brands in Singapore continue to lay the right technology foundation for their digital CX, and they're being rewarded for their pursuits. Nearly all marketers (97%) say their organisation's return on investment for marketing tech tools has improved in 2021, a big jump from 89% who reported an ROI boost in Acquia's 2020 CX survey.

These organisations have implemented several types of transformational tools ahead of the global average.

Two out of three marketers (67%) say that in the last 18 months, roughly since the start of the pandemic, their organisation has adopted a **digital experience platform (DXP)**, compared to 55% globally.

These relatively new tools, which have both content management and customer data management capabilities, help brands offer customers a consistent, personalised experience across multiple channels.

In addition, 57% say their company implemented a **customer data platform (CDP)**, compared to 50% globally. This technology, which can be used as a stand-alone product or within the context of a DXP, centralises customer data from various systems and makes datasets accessible to anyone on a marketing team or elsewhere in the organisation.

57%
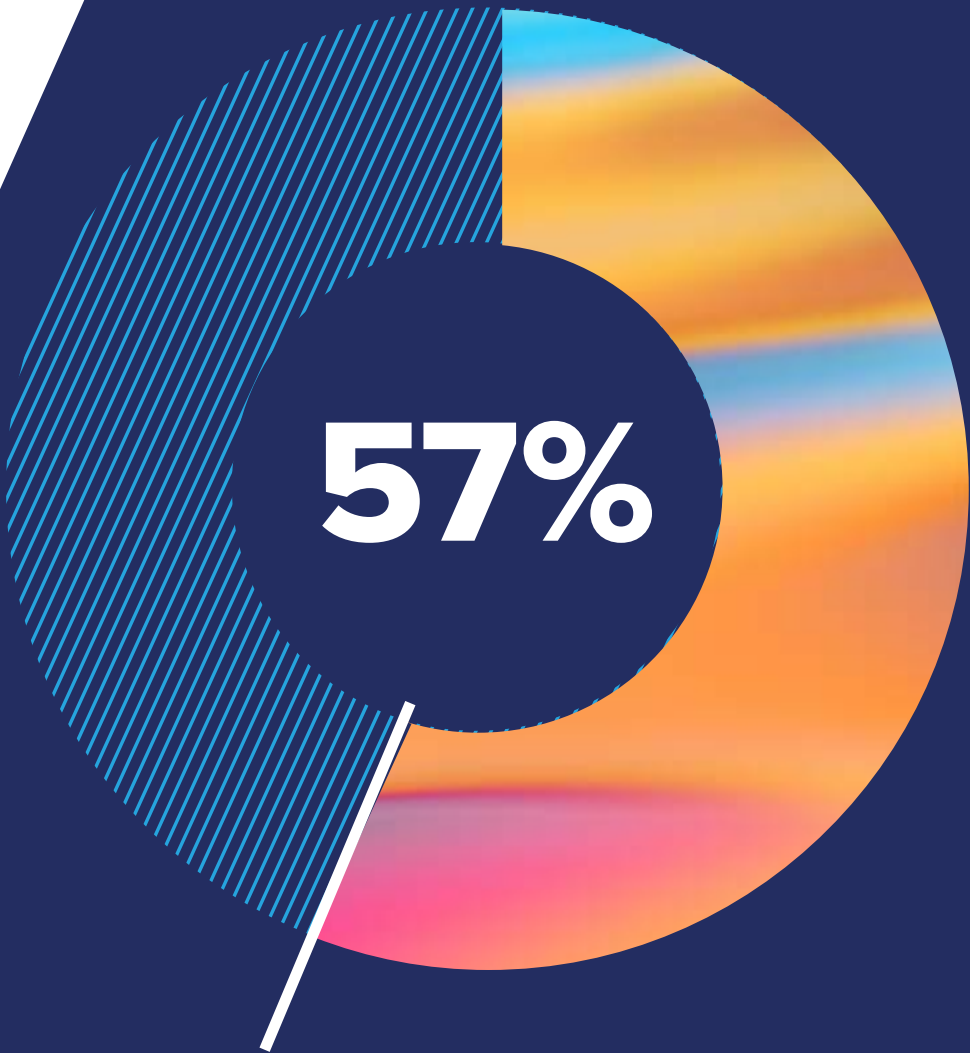
OF MARKETERS IN SINGAPORE CITED A CUSTOMER DATA PLATFORM (CDP) AS A TECHNOLOGY THEIR ORGANISATION ADOPTED IN THE LAST 18 MONTHS.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TRENDS REPORT, SINGAPORE EDITION

Marketers could learn which types of promotions or content are effective with customers, for instance, and better understand trends in customer acquisition, buying behaviour and loyalty.

More than half of marketers in Singapore (55%) report that their CDP solution uses machine learning, and 44% say they plan to use one with this kind of enhanced intelligence. Those responses are in line with the global ones.

Marketing decision-makers in Singapore also adopted **digital asset management (DAM)** software and **content management systems (CMS)** in higher numbers than their global peers. Creatives use these foundational technologies to produce and deliver digital content assets to customers in ways that ensure brand consistency across multiple properties.

DAM:

49% of brands in Singapore **VS** **45%** globally

CMS:

57% of brands in Singapore **VS** **45%** globally
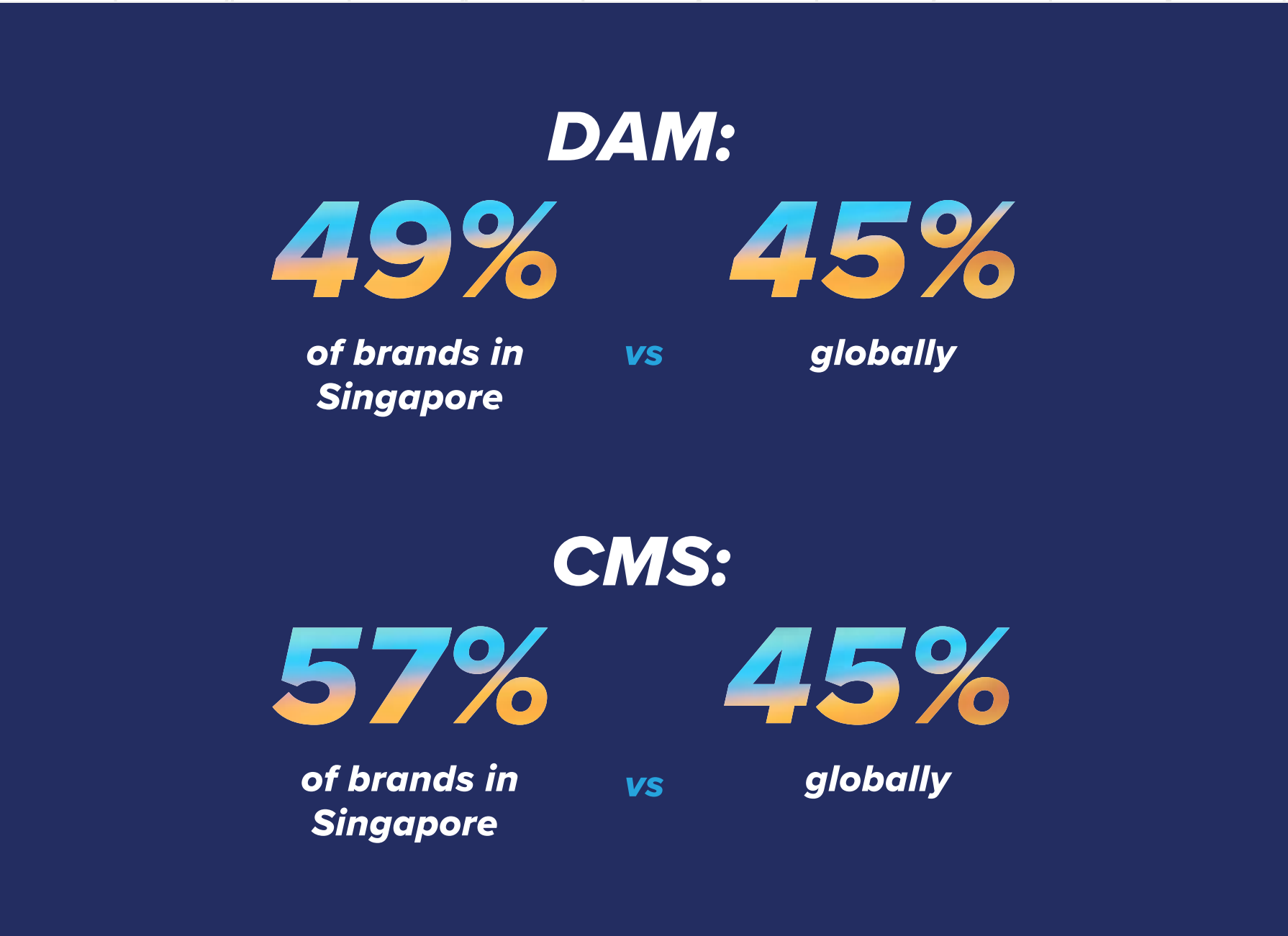
Respondents in Singapore aren't finished bulking up their marketing arsenal, however. A large majority anticipate modest – but real – increases in their CX tools budget in 2022

/ 41% expect an increase of up to 5%, 36% anticipate a 5% to 10% increase and only 8% think their budgets will remain flat or decrease.

/ Marketers in Singapore plan to boost spending an average 5.76% next year, compared to the global average of 6.02%.

MARKETERS IN SINGAPORE PLAN TO BOOST SPENDING:

Singapore average

5.76%

Global average

6.02%

Section 3:

MANY ORGANISATIONS STILL LACK THE RIGHT TOOLS TO DELIVER AN IDEAL CX

The improved ROI that marketers in Singapore are achieving makes for a fantastic narrative, but unfortunately, it's not the whole story. Many respondents feel hamstrung by their marketing technology in ways that could hinder their ability to attract and retain customers. The results suggest brand teams could be using better tools like open solutions, which enable easy integration into the martech stack.

/ 69% of marketers in Singapore surveyed say their marketing tools **hold them back from being innovative,** compared to 67% of their global peers.

/ 71% of marketers in Singapore admit their **martech keeps them from creating and delivering innovative or creative digital experiences for their customers,** compared to 73% of global marketers.
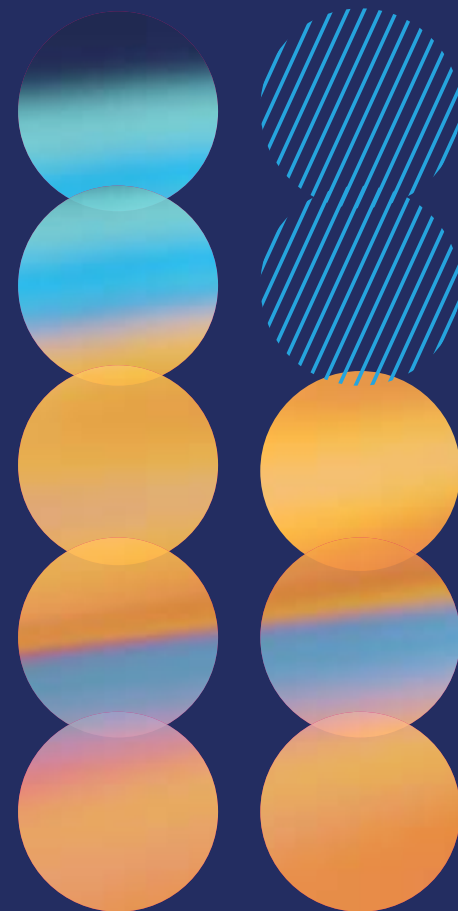
MORE THAN 8 IN 10 (84%) OF MARKETERS IN SINGAPORE SAY THEY REQUIRE HELP FROM TECHNOLOGISTS TO CREATE DIGITAL CX

74% of marketers in Singapore say they **struggle to create content that can be rapidly released across all their digital platforms,** compared to 83% of global marketers. This inability is painful for two reasons: 94% of respondents in Singapore recognise the importance of creating consistent marketing content across all platforms. Also, it's increasingly necessary to have the agility to quickly deploy fresh content or change live campaigns to address fast-moving marketplace developments.

84% of marketers in Singapore say they **require help from technologists to create digital CX,** compared to 72% of global marketers. Needing to engage software developers or IT for building experiences like a microsite, rather than using low-code or no-code tools that do not require programming skills, can slow the process. It can also take technical staff away from work they consider more challenging or professionally rewarding.

Section 4:

EMPLOY PERSONALISATION TO BUILD AND SCALE ENGAGING DIGITAL CX

Many marketers are using their solutions to inject personalisation into digital experiences – and for good reason. Tailoring interactions and content across touchpoints upgrades the CX, builds meaningful connections with individuals and plants the seeds for increased loyalty.
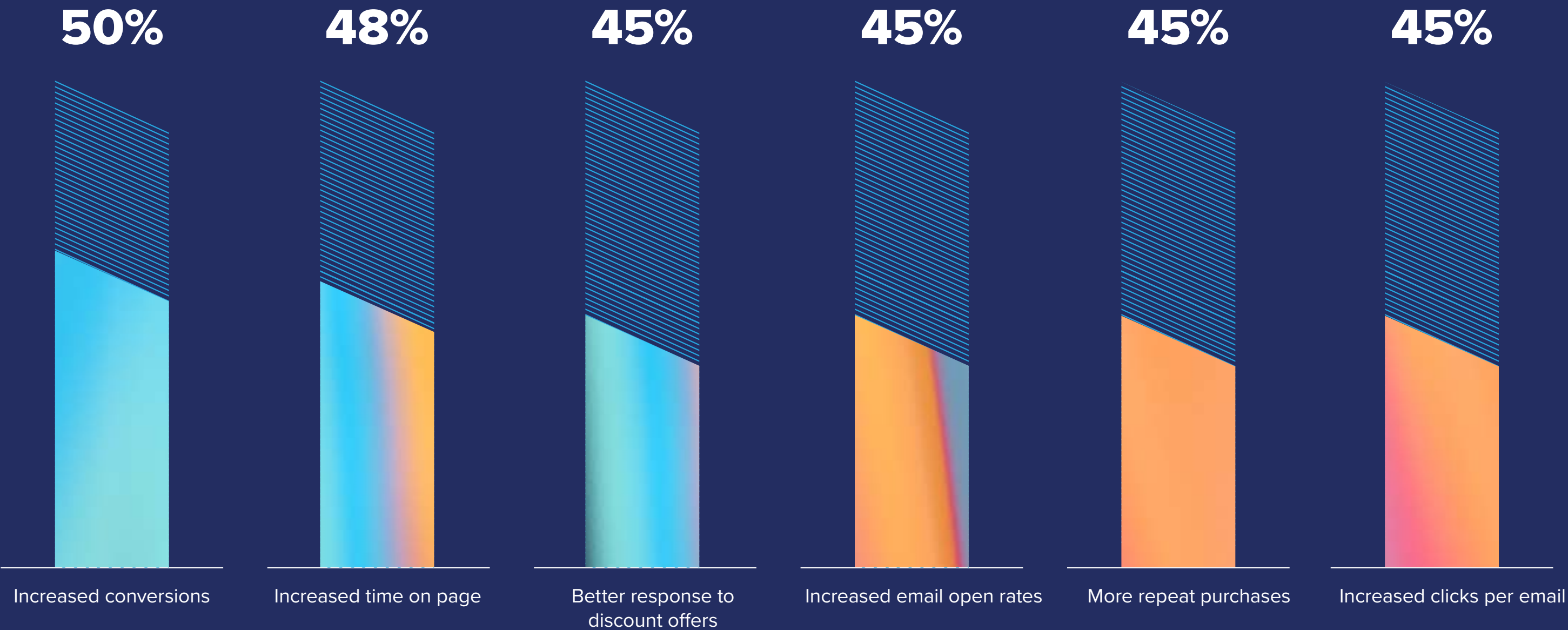
While 35% of global brands have relied more on personalisation in the past 12 months to adapt to new customer behaviours, the strategy has been even more popular among marketers in Singapore. As mentioned earlier, 53% of them have used more personalisation. Many are seeing big benefits.
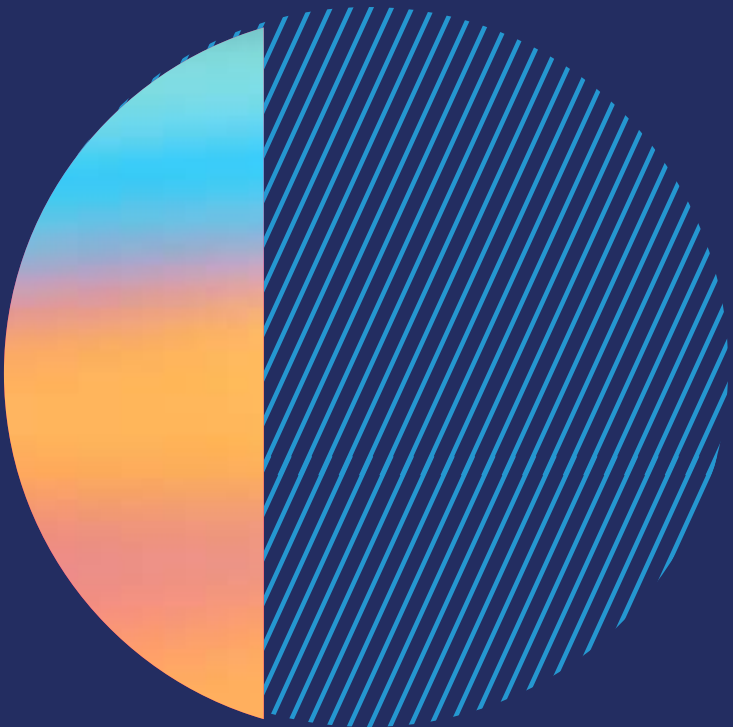
35% OF GLOBAL BRANDS HAVE RELIED MORE ON PERSONALISATION IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

54% OF MARKETERS IN SINGAPORE SAY IMPLEMENTING MORE PERSONALISATION HAS BOOSTED ENGAGEMENT WITH THEIR BRAND IN 2021.

The question asked in the survey was: **What improvements have you seen with customer engagement as a result of implementing more personalisation?**

50%	48%	45%	45%	45%	45%
Increased conversions	Increased time on page	Better response to discount offers	Increased email open rates	More repeat purchases	Increased clicks per email

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TRENDS REPORT, SINGAPORE EDITION

Section 5:

HOW MARKETERS AND CONSUMERS VIEW PRIVACY AS THE COOKIELESS FUTURE EMERGES

Of course, marketers need customer data to fuel personalisation plays. Organisations have long relied on third-party cookies to understand target audiences, but these identifiers will effectively die away when Google's Chrome browser stops supporting them in late 2023.

The truth is, strategies based on third-party data don't provide the value they once did, and marketers in Singapore are moving on: 85% say their organisation is fully prepared for the cookieless future.

With multiple industry solutions vying to replace the capabilities of the tracking cookie, that future is still full of questions.

What *is* clearer to marketers is that using first-party data is the best way to create better digital experiences. This data is provided by customers as they interact across a company's website and other brand channels.

85%
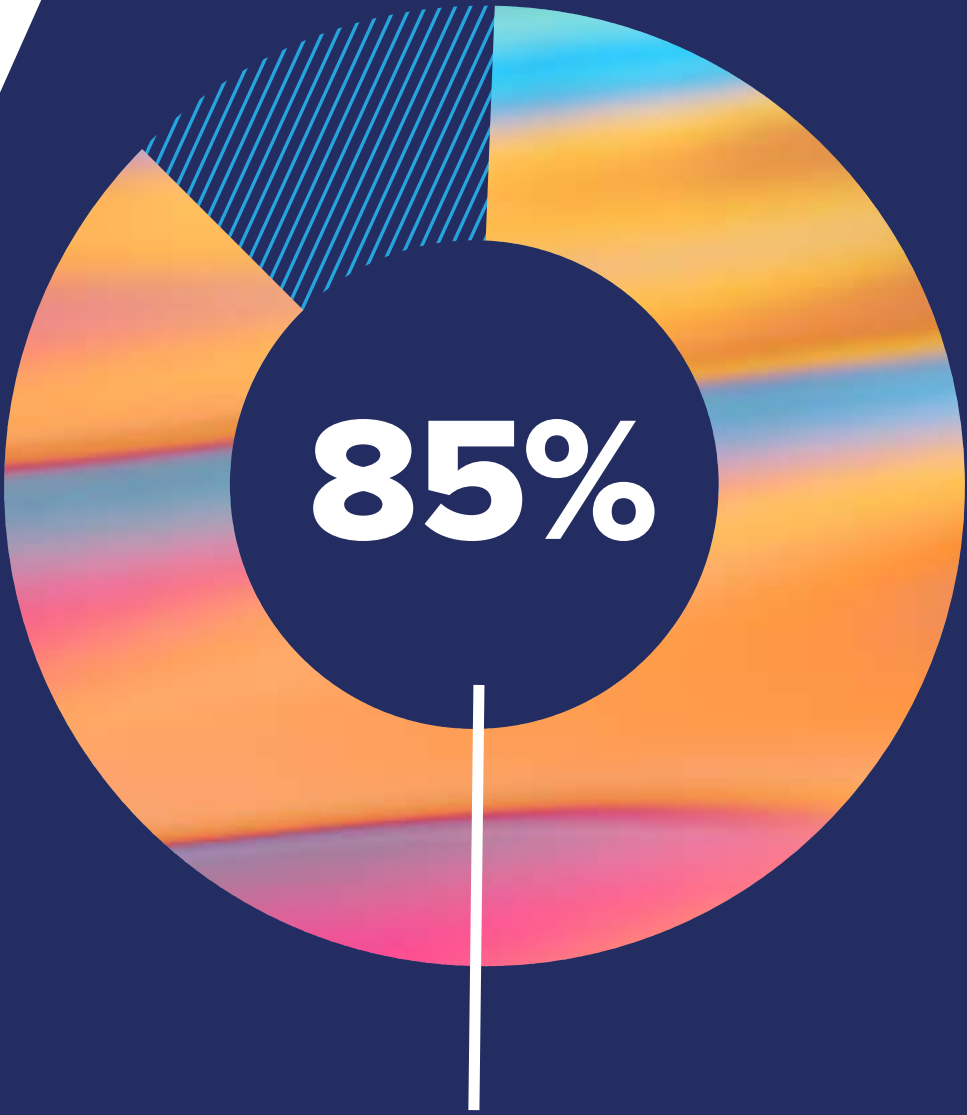
SAY THEIR ORGANISATION IS FULLY PREPARED FOR THE COOKIELESS FUTURE.

94%

OF MARKETERS IN SINGAPORE REPORT THAT GATHERING FIRST-PARTY DATA IS MORE IMPORTANT TO THEIR ORGANISATION THAN IT WAS TWO YEARS AGO.

In addition, 98% of brands in Singapore surveyed say consent-led personalisation strategies garner more trust from consumers. To build and keep that trust, however, organisations need to offer consumers a clear value for sharing their data as well as control over their information. Brand teams also need to be transparent about how they're using data and about obtaining consent. A large number of consumers in Singapore (85%) say they receive marketing communication from brands they do not recall opting in for.

Brands in Singapore know they must safeguard the information they collect. Every single respondent says their organisation has established and follows policies designed to protect the privacy of their customers' data.

That could be one reason 80% of marketers in Singapore say customers trust their company's use of their personal data more in 2021 compared to 2020. Globally, 83% of marketers say the same.

80%

OF MARKETERS IN SINGAPORE SAY CUSTOMERS TRUST THEIR COMPANY'S USE OF THEIR PERSONAL DATA MORE IN 2021 COMPARED TO 2020.

83% *OF MARKETERS SAY THE SAME GLOBALLY*

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TRENDS REPORT, SINGAPORE EDITION

MARKETERS IN SINGAPORE HAVE GROWN MORE CONFIDENT THAT CUSTOMERS TRUST THEIR COMPANY'S USE OF PERSONAL DATA.

The question asked in the survey was: **Do you think your customers trust your organisation's use of their personal data more or less in 2021 compared to 2020?**

Combination of "We are trusted significantly more" and "We are trusted slightly more":

2021   **80%**

2020   **69%**

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TRENDS REPORT, SINGAPORE EDITION

THREE OUT OF FOUR (76%) REPORT BEING FRUSTRATED WHEN BRANDS SUDDENLY APPEAR TO MARKET TO THEM BECAUSE THEY SEARCHED ONLINE ABOUT THE BRAND OR A SIMILAR ONE.

Are marketers right about those customer perceptions? Unfortunately, a trust gap persists.

Only 58% of consumers in Singapore trust that all brands will handle their personal data properly, and only 13% say they feel very comfortable giving brands their personal data in exchange for an improved experience.

Surveyed consumers, meanwhile, aren't bemoaning the deprecation of the third-party cookie. Three out of four (76%) report being frustrated when brands suddenly appear to market to them because they searched online about the brand or a similar one. Likewise, 84% believe their data will be more private when web browsers phase out tracking cookies.
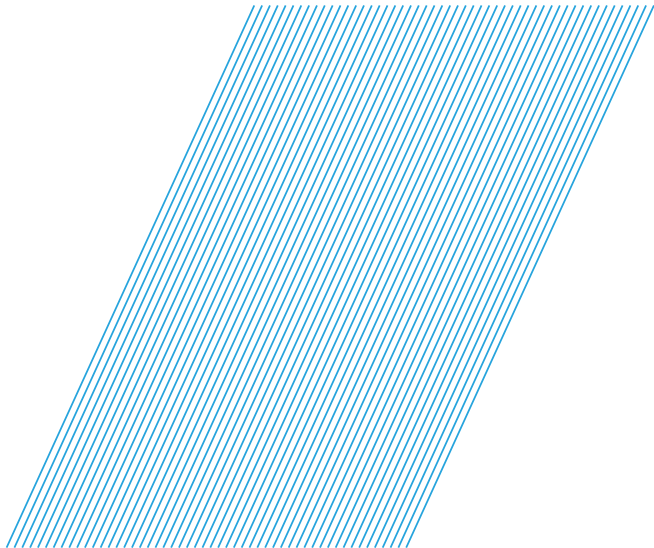
SUMMARY AND TAKEAWAYS

Building a compelling, personalised customer experience has become table stakes for digital marketers across the globe, and many brands in Singapore have improved their capabilities over the past year, despite the challenges of living and working during a pandemic.

Yet, organisations are in different stages of their digital transformation journey. Many marketers in Singapore still believe their technology is slowing their delivery of new digital experiences to customers. A large number also struggle to obtain enough data to power their personalisation efforts.

There's also still a wide gap between the trust marketers believe consumers have in brands' use of personal data and the trust consumers actually feel.

Marketers in Singapore who recognise that a strong CX grows the bottom line need to take stock of their digital marketing tools and ask these important questions:

/ Are your technologies designed for yesterday, or can you use them to meet the CX challenges of the day?

/ Do your current tools enable you to offer a consistent brand experience and deliver personalised content to every customer touchpoint?

/ Do you have low-code or no-code tools that empower you to build digital experiences without the help of technologists?

/ Can you access and unify all first-party customer data regardless of the system housing it?

/ Is your organisation being transparent with customers about how it will use data they choose to share?

Marketing innovators know the direction they need to go to deliver an engaging CX. To get there, they must have a strategy for fully leveraging first-party customer data while respecting privacy, rapidly compose digital experiences that appeal to each individual customer and then deploy those experiences across channels.

NOW, LET'S GET STARTED.

Brands need a partner committed to supporting them as they strive to do what's best for their customers. They also need a partner with a vision for CX and how open technology can support it. Learn why Acquia is that partner.

LEARN MORE ▸

![Acquia logo]

ABOUT ACQUIA

Acquia empowers the world's most ambitious brands to create digital customer experiences that matter. With open source Drupal at its core, the Acquia Digital Experience Platform (DXP) enables marketers, developers and IT operations teams at thousands of global organisations to rapidly compose and deploy digital products and services that engage customers, enhance conversions and help businesses stand out.