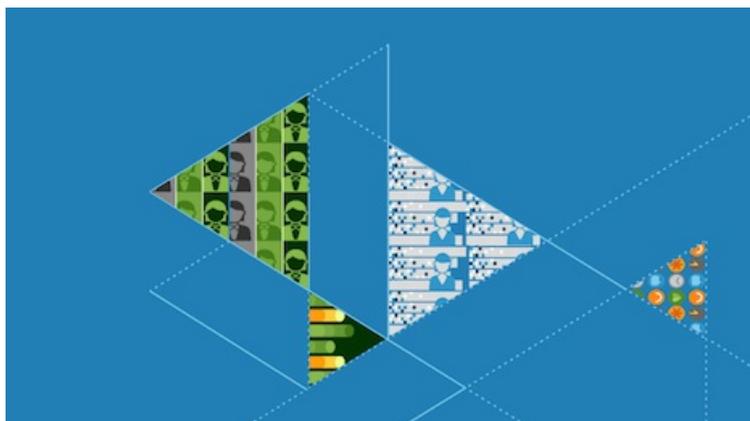


RETAIL

## Majority of marketers believe AI will revolutionize their job: Forrester

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*Forrester's report found that many marketers believe AI saturation is just around the corner. Image credit: Forrester*

By DANNY PARISI

Retailers and brands are beginning to place more stock in the ability of artificial intelligence to make marketing teams more efficient and lighten their workload.

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Artificial Intelligence is on the rise behind-the-scenes at businesses across sectors, and a new Forrester report shows that the majority of companies believe that AI will shift their priorities from more high-level, strategic views and away from mundane workflows. This research was conducted by Forrester and commissioned by Emarsys, a marketing cloud company.

"For retailers to harness the value of AI marketing and combat competitive threats, such as Amazon's growth into adjacent markets, requires a clear understanding of how AI can change the marketer's role, as well them challenging the misconception that adopting such technology requires technical skills," said Sean Brady, president of Americas at **Emarsys**, Vienna, Austria.

### Artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence and machine learning have been on the minds of many marketing and business professionals in the last few years.

Many believe that it represents a significant shift in how businesses will handle their marketing strategies, and new research from Forrester confirms this widespread opinion.

For the "Building Trust and Confidence: AI Marketing Readiness in Retail and Ecommerce" report, Forrester surveyed individuals from a wide variety of businesses, with revenues ranging from \$50 million to \$5 billion.



*Most marketers think AI will be implemented within a year. Image credit: Forrester*

The report found that the overwhelming majority have high hopes for artificial intelligence, the ways it will help them and the certainty that it will sweep the entire industry soon.

Seventy-nine percent of respondents said that AI would help marketing teams by allowing them to shift to a more strategic view of their marketing while the AI handles the workflow aspect. Eighty-six percent said it would make their teams more efficient and the same percentage said it would make their teams more effective.

However, this confidence is tempered by uncertainty about the usage of AI. Seventy percent of respondents said that they felt their teams were unsure of how best to use artificial intelligence in their day-to-day business.

Despite this, the majority are committed to working with AI and learning how best to implement it.

**Machine learning**

With advances in artificial intelligence technology, 45 percent of retailers are planning on using AI to improve the shopping experience in the next three years, according to a Boston Retail Partners report.

Boston Retail Partners' "2017 Customer Experience/Unified Commerce Survey" looks into shopping behavior and trends for the upcoming year. What the report found was that AI will serve as a key bridge between the physical reality of shopping in a store and the endless possibilities of shopping online ([see story](#)).



*Uses of AI. Image credit: Forrester*

Forrester has also done previous research into this area. Forrester's report, "Top Emerging Technologies for B2C Marketers" found that artificial intelligence, the Internet of things and identity resolution technologies are three of the best ways to future-proof consumer marketing tactics in the immediate future ([see story](#)).

As artificial intelligence's capabilities grow more powerful, brands and marketers will continue to turn to it to automate the more repetitive parts of their job and open new horizons with which to innovate in the marketing space.

"We believe that an easy-to-use AI marketing user experience that is based on tangible business and marketing outcomes and delivers true personalization at scale, is fundamental to successful mainstream adoption," Forrester's Mr. Brady said.

"Also, business decision makers who realize the low-risk, high-return nature of AI marketing, as well as how to prepare their organizations for it, will be leaps and bounds ahead of the competition," he said.