

An isometric illustration of a cityscape with various buildings. Two construction workers wearing hard hats and overalls are standing on a rooftop, looking at a large green blueprint. One building has a small plant on its roof labeled 'MAGAZINE'. Another building has a ladder leaning against it. The text 'BRANDS OF THE FUTURE' is written in a stylized font at the bottom of the illustration. The main title 'Welcome to Blink#12 – Building the brands of the future' is overlaid in large white text.

Welcome to Blink#12 – Building the brands of the future

IAN MCGRATH, MANAGING DIRECTOR, MEDIACOM IRELAND 12 FEB 2018

In this edition of BLINK, we address these issues and more as we explore how definitions of ‘brand’ are evolving in the digital age, and share advice for those looking to stay relevant in this ever-changing world.

Brands are facing a challenging future. Some marketers are unsure how they fit into a world powered by algorithms, data and fast sales. Others are worried about connecting with consumers in the age of voice control. All want to know how to build brands of the future, not relics of the past.

Changing consumer behaviour is just one of the new challenges. Voice assistants such as Siri, Cortana and Alexa are shortening the traditional path to purchase, and the increasing number of connected devices in our homes are merging the points of engagement and

transaction. But to successfully respond, brands need to focus on three key areas: data, purpose and innovation.

First, it's often said that data is the new oil, and the brands that have it are most likely to be able to adapt and thrive. Getting data right is a complex task – which is why some brands are finding new ways to target consumers more precisely. Technology is a game changer. However, it is important for Irish marketers to remember that the best marketing today is driven by neither people nor tech, but people playing alongside technology.

Second, purpose gives people a reason to believe. Consumers are increasingly expecting brands to give something back to society, and there are many ways of doing this. Many Irish advertisers are already aware of the improved commercial dynamics that purpose brings to a brand. Now is the time to add more creativity and action behind brand purpose to demonstrate how socially aware and purpose-led the brand is.

Finally, while brands have always had to innovate to keep pace with changing trends, that skill is becoming even more essential in the digital age. That's why it pays to have a formalised innovation programme. It can help you negate risk and leave you free to experiment with new technologies. As important as innovation is to Irish marketing campaigns today, iteration is equally important. It should not be treated as opposed to innovation but rather as a complement.

Building brands for the future won't be easy, of course. It will require marketers to learn new skills, and in some cases, restructure their businesses for the digital world. But while that might sound like a daunting task, it's a wholly necessary one.

I hope you find our thoughts useful and inspiring.

Regards,

Ian McGrath, Managing Director, MediaCom Ireland.

Click to read more content from [‘BLINK #12 – Building the brands of the future’](#).

BRANDS OF THE FUTURE