

CHAIR'S REPORT 2023

Chair's Report, Craig Inglis, to be Presented at the AGM 6 June 2024

2023 was an incredibly successful year for The Marketing Society. Our membership continued to grow, our events inspired and connected marketers around the world, and our initiatives made a positive impact on our industry and society at large.

As detailed in our Honorary Treasurer Jason Foo's report, in 2023 our turnover increased to £3.3M, reflecting a growth of 17% compared to the previous year. I am pleased to report a surplus of £130k, the highest in 27 years, despite the challenges posed by the global economic landscape. This financial success is a testament to the ongoing support of our members, and the resilience, adaptability and hard work of our leadership team and entire staff.

Key highlights of the year include:

Our members

Our senior marketing leader community grew by 6% and it continues to be the number one priority for the team. During 2023 the membership grew to 2855 members. Of these members, 43% are based in England, 27% in Scotland, 16% in Dubai and 12% in the hubs outside of the UK.

Business team membership (formerly known as corporate) now makes up 70% of the total membership and continues to be a key driver of membership growth and income.

Our partnership programme continued to add value by inspiring, accelerating and uniting members.

International

Our focus on being 'intentionally international' saw us triple our size in APAC and growth in the UAE and Scotland. We also expanded successful initiatives like the Pioneering Spirit Awards into APAC and UAE and our member survey internationally. The team returned to Cannes after a 3-year gap to execute our biggest presence to date, which grew our reach, community awareness, membership and partnerships. This year was the second year where 'Digital Day' moved beyond Scotland. A successful Glasgow event and one in the UAE and in London.

Inspiration

We continue to aim to deliver positive event experiences. We showcased business leadership at its very best – with our Awards ceremonies and with exceptional leaders and speakers being featured across our programme. Highlights for me included Dame Amanda Blanc at the Annual Lecture talking about responsible leadership and Greg Jackson from Octopus Energy talking about doing things differently, as well as the inspiring Frank Cottrell-Boyce, the writer behind the 2012 Olympics and that Paddington sketch giving the Amplify Lecture in Scotland. Our conference speakers included CMOs and headteachers, those fighting to change biases and to create innovation in AI, those who helped us see what was possible when facing even the toughest challenges – when we think smartly, act with integrity and work together.

The Annual Dinner was attended by over 500 members and guests. The Marketing Leaders Programme powered by Accenture Song returned to in person for the first time in three years and we launched a new look and website to celebrate the 20-year Anniversary of this brilliant programme.

Community

The Society helped to raise money for good causes, hosting for the third year running, the marketing industry Sprintathon in partnership with Stand up to Cancer. This industry event saw brands, agencies and media companies nominate 4 of their team to each run 100m around a track, with the distance of all teams equalling the length of a marathon.

The Society partnered with Fortune Hill's Massive Marketing Festive Fundraiser, helping them raise over £97k for charity in 2023 especially for Motor Neurone Disease Association. Following the sad passing of Suki Thompson, a Fellow and previous Chair, and the late Keith Moor, CMO at The National Lottery and Society Board member we contributed to raising £72,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support via various initiatives and events.

In November, The Marketing Society UAE partnered with Sacred Groves to secure biodiverse habitats, offering new members the opportunity to protect a forest cluster, aligning with our Sustainability Squad's efforts to lead conversations around ESG through content, events, and training. We continued our membership campaign in England to support The Trussell Trust, providing members of the Society with an opportunity to give back to society, as demonstrated by the pledge to donate £50 to The Trussell Trust food banks for every new membership.

In addition, the society supports many other organisations and initiatives across the year. To call out just a few, Sophie, our CEO was invited to host three panels at Anthropy, a three day event to inspire a better Britain to work and live. The sessions covered female leadership, the future of marketing and the power of brands. To be at such an event that covered the future of Britain in such a diverse range of topics was inspiring and energising.

The Marketing Society is proud to partner with the Marketing and Advertising category of the 2023 WorkL Happiest Workplaces, celebrating winning organisations such as We Are Social, Mindshare, Ogilvy, and others, who set an example in creating engaging and fulfilling work environments for their employees.

2024

Looking ahead to 2024, our vision remains clear – to build the most influential community of marketing leaders in order to grow organisations and change the world for the better. Our mission is to inspire, accelerate and unite our global community to raise marketing's positive impact.

In 2024 we will continue our transformational "B.I.G." plan for growth – Building our Brand, being Intentionally International, and maintaining a Growth mindset. But we want to be bolder, aiming higher with the confidence and courage our progress so far has given us. With a relentless focus on planning, process improvement, partnerships and performance, I believe we can achieve remarkable things.

It is a true privilege to act as Chair of this influential, vibrant community. I am especially proud of our growth, impact and financial health after the challenges of recent years.

Many thanks to all who have contributed to The Marketing Society's success - our members, partners, Global and Regional Boards, and our brilliant staff led by CEO Sophie Devonshire, CFO Penny Hilton-McNerney, CCO Sarah Woodley and Global Director Alasdair Hall-Jones.

Together, we are a positive and progressive force, and I'm excited to see what more we can achieve in the future. Thank you for your continued support.

Craig Inglis
Chair, The Marketing Society