

The Digital Day UAE 2025: Key Takeaways

Thanks for joining us for The Digital Day UAE 2025. Let's delve into the top ten takeaways and key insights from our amazing sessions across three packed events. You can look out for more content from The Marketing Society's Digital Day series from their seven global locations.

Top 10 Key Takeaways

- 1. AI Agents Are Reshaping Business:** We're heading into a world where AI agents will handle complex tasks autonomously, with the potential to capture significant value from a \$10 trillion service market - representing possibly the biggest wealth transfer in history.
- 2. Agentic AI is the Game Changer:** AI agents can now use any tool with an API, access browsers, and collaborate with each other. This represents a fundamental shift from basic automation to intelligent, autonomous problem-solving at scale.
- 3. The Service-as-Software Revolution:** Just as Software-as-a-Service transformed the 2000s, we're now entering an era where services can be delivered entirely by software, creating unprecedented opportunities for automation and efficiency.
- 4. Gaming is the Largest Entertainment Vertical:** Gaming is bigger than music and movies combined, with 3.3 billion gamers generating \$193 billion in micro-transactions - making it incredibly relevant for brands seeking authentic engagement.
- 5. Authenticity Trumps Popularity in Content:** Success in user-generated content requires strong brand cues, authentic values, and treating creators as partners rather than statistics. Brands must "let go" and allow creators to interpret their message authentically.
- 6. Hyper-Personalization at Scale is Now Possible:** AI agent teams can create highly personalized experiences (like customized travel recommendations) that would be impossible or prohibitively expensive using traditional methods.
- 7. Multi-Agent Collaboration Beats Individual AI:** Teams of specialized AI agents working together consistently outperform single, more expensive models - enabling complex business processes to be automated end-to-end.

8. Customer Experience Must Be Redesigned for AI: Companies need different approaches for human versus AI interactions, with 20% of digital commerce expected to be handled by AI agents by 2028.

9. Growth Mindset Requires Experimentation Culture: Successful organizations embrace a "safe to fail" mentality, expecting most experiments to fail while learning from each attempt and scaling what works.

10. Human Connection Remains Essential: Despite increasing automation, the most successful approaches still prioritize human insights, authentic relationships, and emotional intelligence in customer engagement.

Introduction

The Marketing Society's Digital Day UAE 2025, brought together leading marketers, innovators, and thought leaders across multiple sessions to explore the rapidly evolving digital landscape. The events centered on themes of AI transformation, creative authenticity, and the balance between technological advancement and human connection.

From AI agents revolutionizing business processes to gaming partnerships creating new forms of brand engagement, speakers shared real-world case studies demonstrating how organizations are navigating unprecedented technological change. A central theme was the emergence of "agentic AI" - intelligent software that can reason, plan, and execute complex tasks autonomously, representing what many see as the next major technology inflection point.

AI and the Future of Business

The Agentic AI Revolution

SEBASTIAN KÜPERS

Chief Transformation Officer , Plan.Net Grou[

- The Scale of Opportunity: The entire service industry historically represents a \$10 trillion market, with AI agents now capable of capturing significant portions of this value

- Exponential Performance Growth: AI capabilities are doubling every six months, making it difficult for humans to comprehend the pace of change

- Agent Architecture: Modern AI agents combine three components:

1. A model for reasoning and planning

2. A prompt defining role and objectives

3. Access to tools and APIs

- Real-World Applications: Lufthansa case study showing AI agent teams creating hyper-personalized travel recommendations at scale

- Multi-Agent Teams: Specialized agents working together (customer data analysis, content creation, brand compliance, journey management) outperform individual solutions

Future Customer Experience

STEPHAN DAVIES

General Manager, Customer Experience and Network Development, Al Masood Automobiles

- Voice of Customer Platform: Analyzing over 36,000 survey responses and 26,000 sentiments using AI to proactively enhance satisfaction

- Omnichannel Evolution: Moved from voice-only contact center to full omnichannel with 50% increase in digital interactions

- Results-Driven Approach: 70% increase in NPS scores, 5% increase in service retention, 437% reduction in customer complaints

- The "Oxpecker Bird" Philosophy: Be the partner that's always around, never intrusive, but always adding value at the right time

Gaming and Brand Partnerships

The Gaming Opportunity

LANGER LEE

Head of Global Operations, TikTok Gaming, TikTok

KAVERI KHULLAR

SVP Consumer Marketing & Sponsorships, Asia Pacific, Mastercard Asia Pacific

With JASPER DONAT

Co-Founder and CEO, Branded

- Market Size: Gaming generates 100x more revenue than Taylor Swift's tour across all industries, yet partnerships cost a fraction
- TikTok Gaming Scale:
 - 2.5-3 trillion video views annually
 - 100 million users publishing gaming content daily
 - 16.6 billion hours of watch time per year
- MasterCard's Gaming Strategy: Focus on removing friction from gaming payments and creating value for the 3.3 billion gamers worldwide
- Partnership Principles: Success requires compatibility of goals, long-term commitment, and creating genuine value rather than just seeking brand exposure

Authentic Partnerships

- Six-Year Partnership Model: MasterCard and Riot Games demonstrate how transactional relationships can evolve into symbiotic value creation
- Community Building: Gamer Academy providing year-long training and mentorship programs
- Avoiding Advertising Pitfalls* Gamers don't like being advertised to - success requires being genuinely useful and relevant

Content Creation and Authenticity

The LEGO Approach to User-Generated Content

ULA BIEGANKA Head of Marketing MEA, Lego

Four Key Principles for UGC Success:

1. Strong Brand Recognition: You need recognizable brand cues that people want to engage with
2. Authentic Values: Like Keanu Reeves, authenticity can't be manufactured - it must be genuine and consistent
3. Let Content Creators Lead: Avoid over-controlling the message - creators know their audience best
4. Treat Creators as Special: Make them feel valued rather than treating them as statistics

Building Creator Relationships

- Personal Book Publishing Example: Building relationships with smaller, engaged accounts rather than chasing large follower numbers
- Collaborative Approach: Involving creators in product development (book cover quotes) rather than just asking for promotion
- Long-term Perspective: Focus on building relationships that provide ongoing value rather than one-off campaigns

Growth Mindset and Experimentation

Washmen's Growth Strategy

OMAR MOHATAREM Vice President of Growth, Washmen

- Growth Function Definition: Aligning marketing, sales, customer support, and revenue management under unified growth objectives
- Data-Driven Experimentation:
 - Early launch experiment: 3x higher conversion rate for customers receiving unexpected starter kits
 - Basket estimation feature: Learning from failed experiments to improve future tests
- Organizational Maturity* Growth role scope depends on company stage - established companies may limit growth to "leftover" functions while startups can integrate growth more holistically
- AI Integration: Using AI for idea generation and scalable execution while maintaining human oversight

Safe-to-Fail Culture

- Expectation Management: Most experiments will fail - success requires learning from failures rather than avoiding them
- Resource Allocation: Separate "test and learn" budgets with no ROI expectations
- Rapid Testing: Getting market feedback within 24 hours rather than spending months on planning

The Creative-AI Relationship

AI as Creative Partner

ALEX BRUNORI

Vice President Brand & Brand Experience, G42

- Redefining Creativity: "Creativity is connecting already existing elements in a new and useful way"
- AI's Creative Advantage: Machines can process vastly more input than humans and aren't limited by individual experiences
- The Human Element: Humans currently excel at "seeing the future" while AI excels at processing existing information
- Creative Process Comparison: Both humans and AI follow similar patterns of input, processing, and output, but at different scales

Practical Applications

- 24-Hour Campaign Creation: Entire video campaigns created using AI for voice, music, images, and editing
- Asking Better Questions: In an age where AI can provide any answer, the most valuable skill becomes asking the right questions

Customer Experience Innovation

Digital Transformation at Al Masood

- Agile Approach: "Don't wait for perfect" - listen, take action, and scale what works
- Customer Data Platform: Consolidating data to personalize experiences across 180,000+ customers
- Multi-Channel Engagement* 96 campaigns with 20% customer engagement rate
- Technology Integration: Using AI for text analytics and real-time sentiment analysis

Measurable Results

- NPS Improvement: From baseline 42 to 73 (70% increase)
- Customer Retention: 5% increase in service retention
- Complaint Reduction: 437% reduction in formal complaints
- Proactive Service: Resolving issues before they become complaints

Looking Forward

The Agent-to-Agent Future

- Cross-Company Collaboration: AI agents from different companies will work together to solve complex customer problems
- Payment Evolution: Majority of future transactions may be triggered by AI agents rather than humans
- Protocol Development: Google's recent launch of agent-to-agent communication protocols laying groundwork for this future

Preparing for Change

- Agile Mindset: Organizations must embrace technology and remain adaptable
- Human-AI Collaboration: Success requires combining AI efficiency with human emotional intelligence
- Brand Values: Strong brand values and clear positioning become even more critical in an AI-driven world

Closing Thoughts

The Digital Day UAE 2025 highlighted that we're at a critical inflection point where AI is moving from a helpful tool to an autonomous partner in business operations. The most successful organizations are those that embrace experimentation, maintain authentic human connections, and build systems that can adapt to rapid technological change.

The common thread across all sessions was the importance of balancing technological advancement with human insight - using AI to enhance rather than replace human creativity and relationship-building. As we move into this new era, the brands that thrive will be those that can harness AI's capabilities while staying true to their core values and maintaining genuine connections with their customers.

Success in this new landscape requires both technical fluency and emotional intelligence - the ability to leverage cutting-edge technology while never losing sight of the human elements that drive meaningful engagement and lasting relationships.