



**The 6
mission-critical
questions
marketers
faced in
2020**

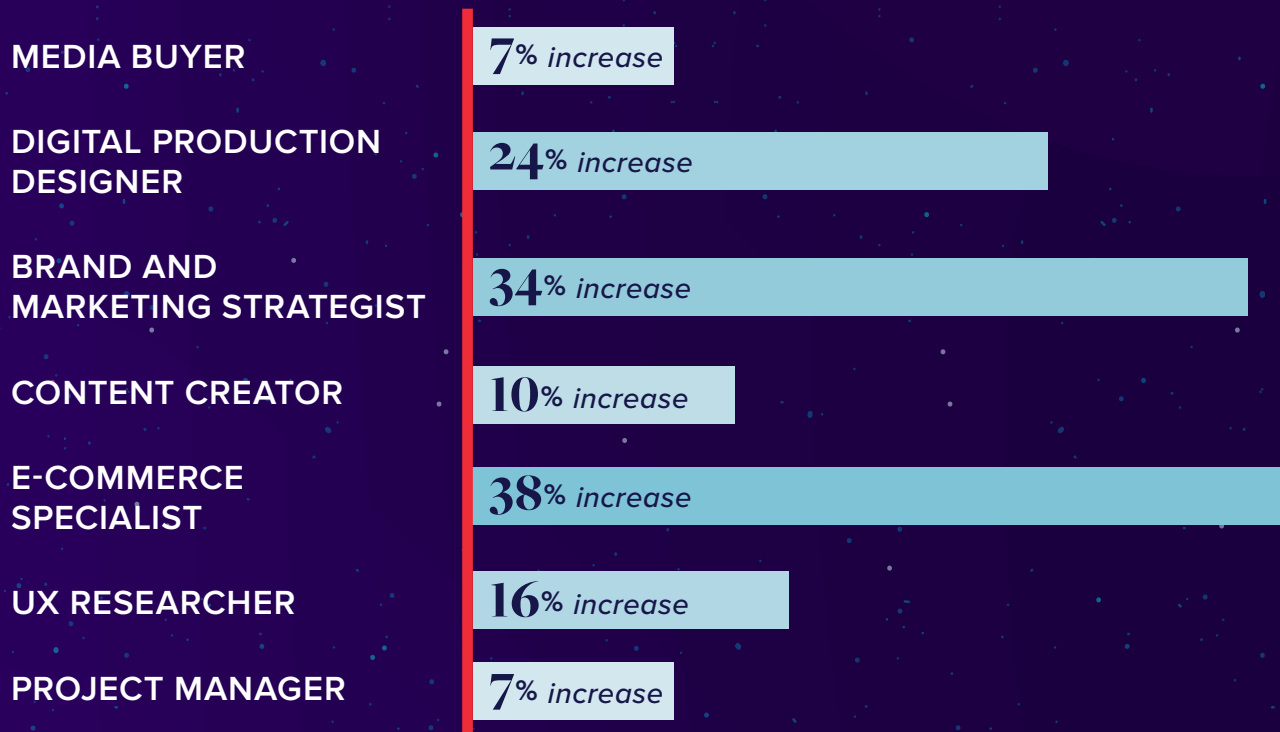
**And our predictions for
a post-COVID world**



2020 is finally over, and while we're not out of the pandemic woods yet, we feel comfortable starting to recount what we, as marketers, learned during the past 12 months. Under the "covidstances," we've all been living on our devices, trying to be positive and productive during what may be this young century's most grueling year. It often felt like navigating an asteroid belt in an aluminum can.

What follows is our review of the changes 2020 brought to hiring, based on the experiences and insights of 100+ Creative Circle recruiting experts. Also included are our predictions as to which of these trends will be with us in 2021 (and perhaps beyond).

According to Creative Circle data, the following job titles saw an increase in demand in 2020:



All numbers represent a percentage change from 2019 to 2020



1: “Could we do this in-house for less?”

Some traditional agency roles are shifting to in-house positions, with agencies under more pressure to perform combined with diminished trust in agencies. Analysts at Forrester estimate U.S. agencies will shed 52,000 jobs through 2021, and the major holding companies will lay off or furlough 49,000 employees globally. Some of the positions being brought in-house include **media buyers, digital platform specialists, and digital production specialists.**



Telescopic Insights:

The pendulum will continue to swing toward bringing roles in-house. As the availability of specialists grows, marketing teams will leverage this advantage and bring these professionals on full-time, allowing for increased control over the creative process and digital performance.



2: “Everyone is at home, on their phones, scrolling social media. Are we on their radar?”

Given the massive shift to online purchasing, we’ve seen a number of marketing trends emerge this year, all of them implemented to improve the customer experience. This includes account-based marketing (ABM) for B2B sales, performance and affiliate marketing in D2C contexts, the growth of online merchandising roles, and a renewed, sharpened focus on content.

Social media continued to gain popularity in 2020. In a Hootsuite survey, 60% of businesses said they intended to increase their Instagram budget in 2021 and 46% plan to increase Facebook spend. To really make an impact, marketers should consider ephemeral content, including Instagram stories, which are becoming key to gaining customers' sought-after attention.

“When you let your customers interact with your content, they make choices that are relevant to them, and you learn more about them each time they click.”

-JENNIFER BURAK, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, TECHSTARS



Telescopic Insights:

The 2020 CMO Survey revealed that 62% of marketing executives have seen the role of marketing grow in importance due to the pandemic. We predict this trend will continue into 2021 and beyond, as more companies realize the value of brand awareness, lead generation, and customer experience.



3: “Houston, we have a problem... Does our website convert??”

This past year, we saw a dash by many companies to transform themselves into online entities, with companies retooling their websites to accelerate and improve UX. According to KPMG, 67 percent of the CEOs of the world's largest organizations are more likely to invest in capital-acquiring technology than staff development.

Digital transformation in 2020 was driven by a significant increase in remote working, along with changing customer needs and preferences brought on by COVID. Apps, software, and websites to support digital initiatives, particularly mobile, grew to paramount importance this year.

- We've filled a number of these highly specialized roles this year, including **Salesforce Marketing Cloud Email Marketing Specialists, Adobe Experience Manager Developers, Hubspot Developers, and Instagram Brand Managers.**



“These shifts will remain after the crisis, and we shouldn’t expect a return to pre-crisis norms. These trends were already in motion—but because of COVID, brands did not have the choice to keep their marketing efforts offline.”

-GEORGE SANCHEZ, HEAD OF BRAND PARTNERSHIPS, HEADY



Telescopic Insights:

“Digital transformation” will be a 2021 buzz phrase. As customer expectations evolve, more organizations will find ways to digitize and optimize their operations — focusing on service-related technology, innovative partnerships, and AI.



4: “ROI. ROI. ROI. How do we prove ours?”

With the shift to solely digital marketing and the added pressure of tighter budgets, marketing leaders have been under more pressure to prove ROI on every dollar spent. Demand is growing for business intelligence experts, data scientists, and senior analysts.

Attribution marketing is growing, including measurable cost per lead. According to a 3Q survey by Gartner, investments in marketing analytics continue:

- 44% of respondents surveyed plan to increase the size of their marketing analytics teams over the next two years
- Nearly half expect this growth to be fueled by an expectation for analytics to increase its influence over business outcomes



Telescopic Insights:

The growth in demand for data analysts will match the growing demand for data. Creative Circle continues to meet this demand for data by providing clients with analysts, data architects, data scientists, and data visualization specialists.



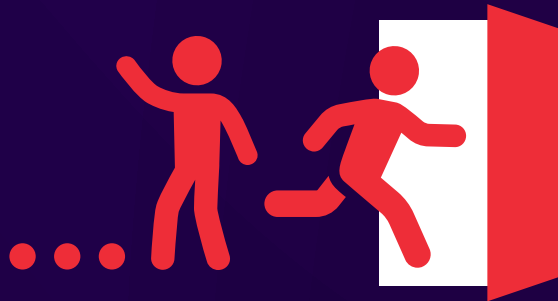
5: “Wait, what is CX? Are we doing that?”

Customer experience is the new marketing.

Customer experience has overtaken price and product as the key brand differentiator; according to Salesforce,

**HALF OF CUSTOMERS
WILL SWITCH BRANDS
IF A COMPANY DOESN'T
PERSONALIZE ITS
COMMUNICATIONS —**

and this number increases to 65% in B2B markets.

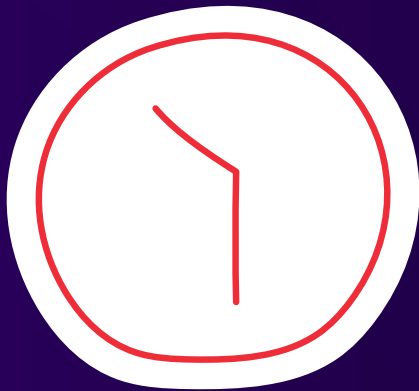


Telescopic Insights:

CX and UX will begin to merge. So much of the customer experience is based on online interactions — UX experts will need to collaborate with the CX teams to create superb online experiences.

6: “Is content still king??”

Content consumption is up all over the world. Compared to 2019,



AMERICANS ARE
SPENDING **215%**
MORE TIME ONLINE
READING GLOBAL
NEWS & ASSESSING
CURRENT EVENTS

Video is a key driver when it comes to content: **the word “video” in an email subject line boosts open rates by almost 20%, while personalized videos achieve an almost five-fold unique click-through increase.**



Telescopic Insights:

The blog is back. Tightened 2020 budgets required marketing teams to turn to content marketing to get in front of their audiences — leading to a reemergence of long-form content. Brand blogs have been a natural spot for companies to share their mission, values, and differentiators.



THANK YOU
for being in our
orbit; we appreciate
the opportunity to
partner with you. We
are here to help you
chart new galaxies in
2021,
and beyond...

To learn how Creative Circle can help you act on these insights to improve your business performance, contact us at CREATIVECIRCLE.COM/CLIENTS.