New research by WARC in partnership with Spotify Advertising finds B2B is coming of age as marketers find new opportunities

"Changing Channels in B2B" study finds work from home culture has amplified the voice of a new generation of B2B influencers in the tech and telco sectors

February 3rd, 2021 – Today, WARC, the global authority on marketing effectiveness, in association with the advertising arm of Spotify, the world’s most popular audio streaming subscription service, released an analysis of B2B marketing within the technology and telecommunications sectors. The report looks at themes that B2B marketers in these industries are focusing on, and how they are planning to develop their marketing strategies into 2021.

The study is based on interviews with chief marketing officers from leading businesses in tech and telco, in addition to a survey of more than 330 B2B marketers within these industries based in 10 markets across the world. The data from this research, conducted in November 2020 were combined with WARC’s global data, industry knowledge, examples and expert contributors.

David Tiltman, VP Content, WARC, says: “The shifts highlighted in this report makes the year ahead a real opportunity for B2B marketers - in tech, telco and beyond. Consumer habits have been disrupted. Communications are being rethought. There are new opportunities to reach end-users. It is ultimately a time when quick-thinking marketers can gain advantage.”

Jorrit DeVries, Global Category Development Officer, Tech & Telco Vertical, Spotify, says: “Together with WARC, we’ve created a key piece of research for Spotify and other ad industry players to better understand what matters most to B2B marketers as their business needs shift and the complexity of the marketplace evolves. We’ll be using the findings to help these marketers understand how digital audio can be leveraged to deliver impact and creativity.”

The key themes outlined in “Changing channels in B2B” a report by WARC, in association with Spotify Advertising are:

1. **The reshaping of B2B: Drivers of change**
   
   B2B marketing is undergoing a transformation. Having lagged behind B2C marketing in terms of multichannel strategy evolution, leaders in the industry have started to drive growth for their businesses by innovating and experimenting with their media choices, indeed 66% of respondents plan to increase their digital audio budgets in 2021.  
   
   COVID-19 has accelerated this digital disruption, depriving marketers of live events and in-person meetings and fuelling changes in decision-maker behaviour that had begun long before the virus took hold. This is a time of learning and discovery for B2B marketers, as they seek out new, progressive ways of reaching their customers across both live and virtual touchpoints.

2. **B2B audiences are changing**
With so many people setting up offices at home, the worlds of tech and telco have become consumerised like never before. Add to this the accession of millennials to senior roles within organisations, and you have a workplace where decisions are being made differently, forcing marketers to find new ways to adapt to these changing audiences.

83% of respondents agree that employees have a strong voice on tech and telco services, providers, or partnerships.

3. **B2B marketers are exploring new ways to drive reach through channel planning**

The dominance of digital marketing and the need to reach a more diverse audience have triggered a new approach to channel planning from B2B marketers. It is a time of experimentation and there is still a lot to learn, but the strategy has moved towards achieving a broader multimedia mix, introducing newer channels like audio and streaming. 50% of B2B marketers are experimenting with channels they have never tried before as they seek to drive reach.

4. **The rise of creativity and brand-building in B2B**

New challenges in engaging B2B audiences have inspired marketers to put more emphasis on building their brands, in order to provide a secure base from which their content can work harder and more effectively. More than 80% of respondents agree that they need to be more focused on building strong brands.

Creativity is flourishing in tech and telco B2B marketing, as businesses place a new significance on storytelling and finding relevant partners to deliver those stories in compelling ways. 51% of respondents are actively trying to find new ways to tell their brand story.

“Changing channels in B2B” includes a deep-dive into each of the four themes, CMO views, data analysis and key takeaways. The report is available to download [here](#).

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**About WARC – A global authority on marketing effectiveness**
WARC is part of Ascential: the path-to-purchase company that combines intelligence, data and insights to drive growth in the digital economy. We do this by delivering an integrated set of business-critical products in the key areas of product design, marketing and sales.

For over 30 years WARC has been powering the marketing segment by providing rigorous and unbiased evidence, expertise and guidance to make marketers more effective. WARC services include 18,000+ case studies, 90,000+ best practice guides, research papers, special reports and advertising trend data, webinars, awards, events and advisory services; has 1,200+ client companies, 21,500+ active users in 100+ countries; collaborates with 50+ industry partners; has offices in the UK, US, China and Singapore.

**About Spotify**
Spotify transformed music listening forever when it launched in 2008. Discover, manage and share over 60 million tracks, including more than 2.2 million podcast titles, for free, or upgrade to Spotify Premium to access exclusive features for music including improved sound quality and an on-demand, offline, and ad-free listening experience.

Today, Spotify is the world’s most popular audio streaming subscription service with 345m users, including 155m subscribers, across 93 markets.