The AI-Native Marketing Organisation

How a future-ready Target Operating Model enables scalable AI in Marketing

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Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has experienced a rapid evolution, and it not only changes how organizations operate but also how they govern and organize their main functions. In the case of marketing departments, AI has the capability to revolutionize almost every facet of operations, from customer engagement and creative output to analytics, decision-making, and workflow architecture. But for marketers, AI adoption is not just a technology upgrade; it is a transforming process of **the Target Operating Model (TOM)**. Structures, roles, processes, and governance must be reimagined to ensure that AI becomes an enabler of value rather than a source of complexity or risk.

This transition reflects the philosophy of **PwC's M3X – the Marketing & Customer eXperience Mastery Model**, an innovative framework that harmonizes marketing practices, promotes transparency, and facilitates holistic performance beyond traditional Target Operating Models. M3X is the TOM of the future and centers around a customer while optimizing structures, processes, and technology use. The introduction of AI within this framework expands the functionality from reactive push tactics to predictive, customer-driven engagement.

This paper explores how a future-ready Target Operating Model serves as the foundation for scalable, AI-enabled Marketing operations. It is organized around five guiding theses that encapsulate the dimensions of this change. **AI as the Fabric of Work** argues that true adoption happens when AI is seamlessly embedded into everyday workflows. **Frankenstein's Lab: Keep Control of Your Creation** highlights governance, accountability and ethical oversight. **Test Kitchen, Not Fine Dining** encourages a cycle of experimentation and iteration regarding building and scaling AI. **Botsourcing over Outsourcing** explores how intelligent agents can swap out traditional outsourcing models, internalizing efficiency and learning. Finally, **The AI Ghost: Always Present, Never Seen** considers how AI operates quietly and invisibly as an enabler of performance and creativity.

Together, these theses provide a blueprint for marketing leaders to reimagine their Target Operating Model for the AI era: from one which holds innovation tightly but ensures control, from one where governance is tested with experimentation, and automation is employed in concert with people's own creative imagination.

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PwCs Five Guiding AI Theses

T1: AI as the Fabric of Work – Seamlessly Woven into Everyday Workflows

Many organisations still see Artificial Intelligence as an additional layer added onto their marketing operations, a set of tools to optimise existing processes. **However, this mindset misses the real opportunity**. AI should be viewed as the very fabric that connects people, processes, and technology. A marketing Target Operating Model (TOM) gains agility and resilience when AI is embedded in workflows, enhancing efficiency and creativity. The goal is not to add AI as a tool, but to redesign marketing with intelligence at its core.

This TOM perspective requires an entire **paradigm shift on how marketing processes are designed, controlled, and even experienced**. The focus moves away from implementing individual AI applications towards the development of intelligent workflows where human creativity and machine learning collaborate to co-create.

To achieve this, **AI should be directly embedded into core marketing processes** such as campaign planning, customer segmentation, content creation, and performance optimisation. Instead of introducing stand-alone solutions, organisations should integrate AI directly into existing infrastructures such as CRM, marketing automation, or content management systems. When insights, recommended initiatives, or creative recommendations naturally emerge within familiar tools, system adoption becomes intuitive and productivity improves without adding complexity.

Cross-functional collaboration is crucial for this integration. Organisations should establish interdisciplinary teams that combine marketing, data science, and technology expertise to ensure that AI capabilities align with business goals. These fabric weavers embed predictive analytics, personalisation, and automation meaningfully into workflows, ensuring that AI strengthens the connection between strategy and execution.

Simultaneously, the **TOM's design logic should progress from tool adoption to capability enablement**. The question should not be which AI tools to deploy to close the 'tool gap', but which capabilities AI will unleash (real-time decision-making, orchestration of the customer journey, optimisation of creative assets, etc.). Implementing and structuring the operating model around these capabilities provides flexibility in the face of evolving technologies whilst keeping the core of the system connected.

T2: Frankenstein's Lab: Keep control of your creation

Artificial Intelligence presents marketing organisations with an incredible promise, from hyper-personalised customer journeys to predictive optimisation. But without clear ownership, control, and governance, **AI can evolve from a strategic asset into an unpredictable creation**. In the context of a Target Operating Model (TOM), this paper advocates **the need for transparency, accountability, and ethical governance mechanisms** to ensure that AI contributes to business and brand impact.

Future-proofing TOMs means balancing creativity and control, combining openness to innovation with strong governance and risk management. In a world where AI increasingly shapes customer experience and brand perception, mastering this balance is essential and a key competitive advantage.

It all starts with **clear ownership**. Marketing leaders need to assign responsibility for data, model results, and ethical implications, with roles such as AI Ethics Stewards ensuring that every AI-based decision can be tracked, explained, and is strategically aligned. It is an ownership model that ensures AI will never be a black box, cut off from the vision of the brand.

Equally important is an adaptive governance framework. There is no such thing as static rules in AI, as technologies evolve rapidly and fixed rules cannot keep pace. Regular model reviews, algorithmic audits, and real-time monitoring of systems maintain fairness, accuracy, and compliance without slowing down operations. These mechanisms should be embedded into day-to-day workflows, helping to keep AI highly agile and accountability-driven.

Strong data stewardship forms the heart of control. Marketing is reliant on huge amounts of data, which must be handled with integrity. Data quality, consent management, and privacy-by-design principles protect trust and create boundaries within which innovation can safely flourish

In addition, understanding Generative AI's limits is key to control. While it excels at creative tasks like content generation and ideation, it struggles with numerical reasoning, scoring, and optimisation. These analytical functions must be handled by external systems, with their outputs fed into GenAI as structured inputs to ensure reliable decision-making and governance.

Human oversight remains a necessity. Automated systems may streamline campaigns or create content, but people need to be responsible. Incorporating human-in-the-loop review processes allows AI outputs to reflect brand identity, culture, and ethical standards. Finally, organisations must build AI literacy across all levels.

Once marketers get their heads around how AI systems function, they are free to question and improve outputs rather than rely on them blindly. Knowledge gives teams the authority to drive innovation responsibly. At a higher level, **maintaining control of your creation requires adapting a TOM in which AI innovation operates within a framework of accountability**. Organisations which utilise elements of governance, human oversight, and literacy will not lose control of the laboratory. Instead, they will use AI as a trusted co-creator to boost creativity, productivity, and confidence.

T3: Test Kitchen, Not Fine Dining – AI thrives on Iteration

For a long time, marketing has always been about precision, planning and polished execution, a fine dining approach in which campaigns are perfectly crafted before going live. **Artificial Intelligence changes this logic**. AI is used for iteration, learning, and continuous improvement. To realise all of its potential, marketing organisations must redesign their Target Operating Model (TOM) to operate more like a test kitchen, so that experimentation and fast learning are embedded in the very fabric of the organization.

In this kind of environment, imperfection is not failure but progress. In the TOM, experimentation is institutionalised to enable teams to continually test, learn, and iterate AI-driven initiatives as an ongoing and iterative process (rather than waiting or a finished product). This transition from delivery to discovery is one of the major enablers of sustainable AI adoption.

Marketing teams need the freedom of experimentation with AI models, creative algorithms and personalisation strategies in controlled, low-stakes environments such as sandbox systems or pilot programs. Introducing these iterative processes into day-to-day workflows allows for ongoing feedback between the model and customer performance as well as human evaluation, ensuring that AI tools develop in sync with real business problems.

Collaboration is essential. The TOM should establish agile, cross functional structures that combine marketers, technologists, and data scientists to review outcomes, exchange information, and make informed adjustments. This helps ensure that AI experimentation remains aligned with brand vision and consumer insight.

Data feedback is the core ingredient in this test kitchen. AI can only evolve with a steady flow of high-quality, real-time data turning every campaign into an experiment, and every experiment into smarter marketing.

Leadership acts as the head chef, **cultivating a culture of learning, experimentation and iteration over perfection**. Success metrics must evolve from efficiency-based to learning-based KPIs such as time-to-insight, iteration speed and improvement rate. Finally, organisations should build knowledge-sharing infrastructure to collect and share learnings arising from AI experiments. Establishing an internal AI playbook or repository allows to build scaling insight without duplications and accelerate collective learning collective learning across teams and markets.

To conclude**, AI in marketing is not about perfection, but constant adaptation and fostering an innovation mindset**. When the TOM operates as a test kitchen, where experimentation is structured, learning is embraced and insights are quickly translated into practice. Organisations adopt a measured yet agile approach to innovation that is intelligent and constantly improving.

T4: Botsourcing over Outsourcing

For many years, marketing organisations have relied on outsourcing to handle repetitive operational tasks and transactional activities such as data processing or campaign execution. This paradigm is being revolutionised by the emergence of AI and autonomous agents. Jobs that once required external resources can now be done by AI agents built into the Target Operating Model (TOM), signaling the rise of **botsourcing.**

For botsourcing to be successful, the **TOM needs to shift from function-based to capability-based architectures** which combine human and AI agents. AI can be treated as a digital workforce, processing data-intensive, rule-based or high-frequency tasks, while humans focus on strategic, creative and relational work. Clear process mapping between humans and agents creates scalability, clarity and efficiency.

Capability development shifts from vendor management to agent orchestration. New roles emerge, including AI Ethics Stewards ensuring alignment between AI systems and business priorities and marketing objectives. Data infrastructure becomes the supply chain for the AI workforce, providing high-quality, structured data to support reliable autonomous decision-making.

Organisational culture needs to adapt to a reality where AI handles routine, repetitive tasks, freeing human marketers to focus on higher-value activities such as strategy, creativity, and relationship-building. By shifting the emphasis of human work toward these areas, employees can use their time more meaningfully, while the need for traditional outsourcing decreases. The TOM should support this transition by clearly defining which tasks are automated and ensuring humans remain responsible for interpretation, decision-making, and strategic oversight, creating a more efficient, empowered, and innovation-friendly environment.

The human–AI cooperation should foster a true symbiosis, enabling both intuition and automation. Humans are about creativity, empathy, and strategic wisdom, while AI deals with scale, accuracy, and speed. In this scenario, the TOM must outline distinct interaction points where AI proposes changes or concepts for human confirmation, while keeping human creativity at play and elevated.

Botsourcing, in effect, **shifts marketing away from outsourcing capacity and towards insourcing intelligence**. Embedding AI agents directly into the TOM puts speed, quality, and knowledge retention capability at the center of an organisation, reducing dependence on outside vendors. The result is a leaner, faster, more adaptable operating model in which intelligent agents are carefully orchestrated by people to deliver marketing excellence.

T5: The AI Ghost: Always Present, Never Seen

Even the most revolutionary technologies tend to fade into the background. Fully integrated into a marketing organisation, **Artificial Intelligence is a stealthy enabler that quietly orchestrates processes, analyses data, and optimises decisions**. In an intelligent Target Operating Model, AI functions as ambient intelligence, turning every stage of marketing performance into a manifestation of an invisible assistant.

Designing a TOM for this invisible AI is a challenge, one that seeks to capture intelligence without smothering human instincts or losing the organisation's identity. For this reason, marketers want to experience AI as an intuitive addition to their work, operating automatically and contextually.

Invisible integration is key. **AI should be integrated directly into the platforms and tools** teams already use, including CRM systems, analytics platforms, creative suites, and content management systems. When insights, recommendations, and automation cues are made intuitively part of workflows, adoption is simple, and AI effectively enhances outcomes quietly.

The overall data and technology architecture is the nervous system of the TOM. The flow of seamless data across functions feeds AI systems with real-time inputs, enabling autonomous, contextual, and predictive optimisation. Marketing operations now function as self-learning ecosystems where AI predicts, anticipates needs, personalises communication, and enhances decisions in real time.

The human–AI cooperation should foster a true symbiosis, enabling both intuition and automation. Humans are about creativity, empathy, and strategic wisdom, while AI deals with scale, accuracy, and speed. In this scenario, the TOM must outline distinct interaction points where AI proposes changes or concepts for human confirmation, while ensuring human creativity remains at the forefront.

Governance must remain visible even when AI operates invisibly. Transparency and ethical guidelines as well as monitoring of models contribute to the alignment of unseen intelligence with brand and regulatory standards. With trust in the system, marketers collaborate with AI more confidently, aware of its capabilities, limitations, and learning behaviour.

Thus, the AI ghost embodies the apex of AI maturity**: omnipresent yet unobtrusively guiding action, maximising decision-making, and enabling creativity in seamless contexts**. The most advanced marketing organisations will see AI not as a project, tool or stand-alone capability, but as an invisible force woven into the fabric of work: always present, never seen and even more powerful for it.
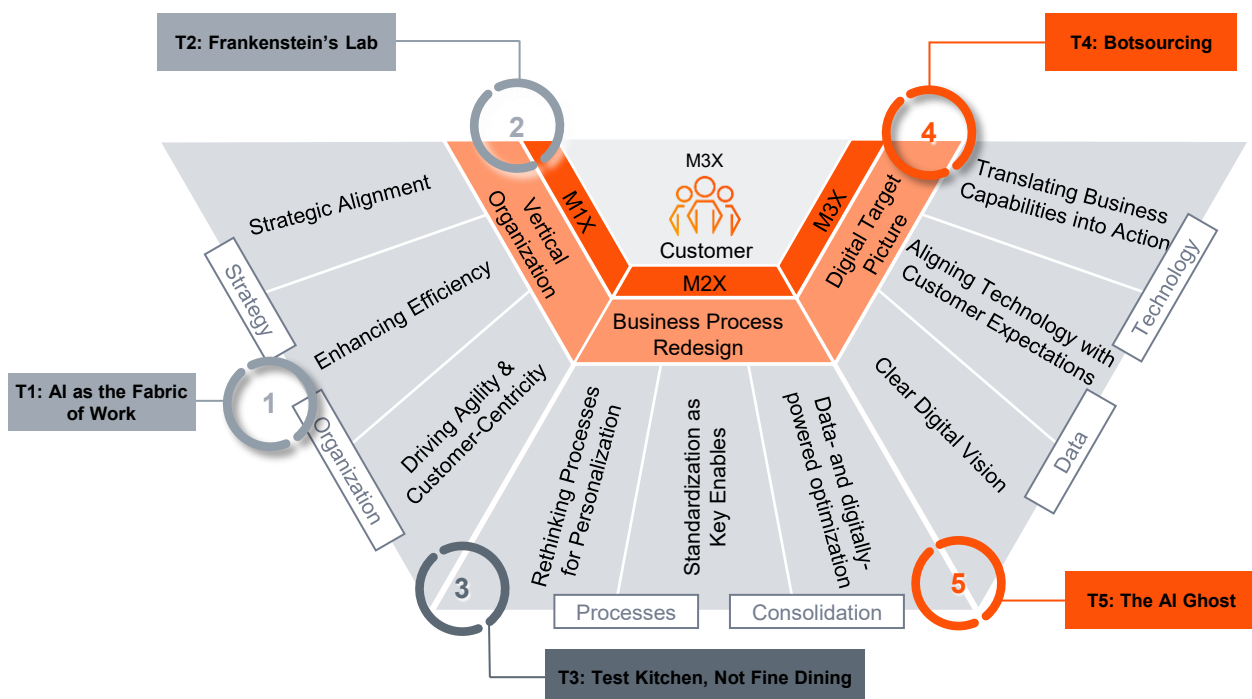
Conclusion and Outlook

The incorporation of Artificial Intelligence in marketing organisations' Target Operating Model is not merely a technological evolution, but also, a change of organisation and culture. Over the five theses covered in this viewpoint, a central story runs throughout the narrative: **"AI will not only change what marketing does, it will redefine how marketing works"**. To unlock the full benefits of AI, organisations must move beyond tool adoption and redesign their operating models. This includes rethinking how automation complements creativity, how governance is embedded, and how continuous learning is institutionalised.

AI as the Fabric of Work shows us that success lies in fading from perception, in weaving AI seamlessly into everyday workflows so that it boosts human capabilities rather than displaces them. **Frankenstein's Lab** reinforces the point that control is fundamental: governance, ownership and responsible stewardship should be embedded into the TOM to ensure innovation advances with, not beyond, accountability. **Test Kitchen, Not Fine Dining** reconceptualises AI adoption as a continuous experiment: one of iteration, feedback, and change that keeps the organisation agile in a changing, dynamic world. **Botsourcing over Outsourcing** illustrates how marketing organisations can regain efficiency and intelligence by embedding AI agents directly into their operating models. Finally, **The AI Ghost** encompasses the complete vision: a marketing organisation in which AI is omnipresent yet unobtrusive, enhancing creativity, precision and performance.

Together, these theses are the blueprint for the AI-native marketing company: one where data flows freely, processes evolve and change constantly, and human–AI alliance lies at its core. Operationalising such a model requires not only technology, but new mindsets: a shift from control through hierarchy to control through design, from fixed processes to adaptable systems, and from human–machine separation to true symbiosis.

Graphic: PwCs M3X – the Marketing & Customer eXperience Mastery Model in combination with the five guiding theses.

Embedding AI into **a future-ready TOM like PwC's M3X** enables the marketing organisations to evolve into adaptive, intelligent, customer-centric businesses. Organisations that integrate AI into business processes, maintain strong governance, and embrace experimentation while enabling invisible intelligence can achieve measurable business impact, operational excellence, and sustainable innovation.

Looking ahead, the most successful marketing organisations will be those that view AI not as a project to be managed, but as a living capability to be cultivated and continuously evolved. Their strategy must progress as customer behavior changes, and the organisational ethos must transform from a position where it doesn't matter what form AI takes, or whether each change aligns with the others. When AI starts to be the invisible fabric of the marketing enterprise, the TOM has evolved into a living system: flexible, intelligent, and perpetually learning. Marketing in this future will start to involve much more than simply harnessing AI. At its core, **marketing is going to be enabled by AI.**

Explore the full M3X approach and learn how your organisation can evolve into an AI-native marketing enterprise: