

The Outlook for Data 2017: A Snapshot Into the Evolving Role of Audience Insight

*Research from the IAB Data Center of Excellence
January 2017*





Research Objectives and Methodology

What is this report?

The second annual benchmarking **study exploring how digital marketing and media practitioners are using audience data**, and how they intend to evolve their data-centric practices in the year ahead

What is this research intended to do?

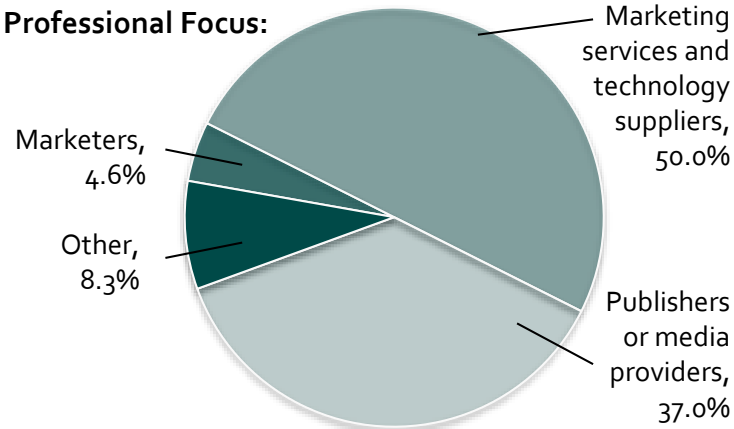
Help practitioners **benchmark their own practices** and provide **perspective on rapidly evolving industry priorities and developments**, helping stakeholders plan their future initiatives

How were these findings compiled?

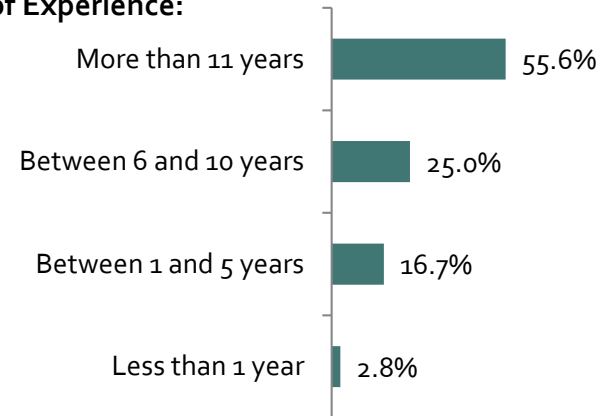
Through an **online survey of IAB special-interest council members***, including some of the most senior stakeholders in the digital media and marketing community. The survey was opened in December 2016 and closed in January 2017

Survey Panel Profile (N=108)

Professional Focus:



Years of Experience:



**Including the IAB Data and Programmatic councils; survey respondents were not required to answer every question*



2017: The Year of Attribution (Finally!)

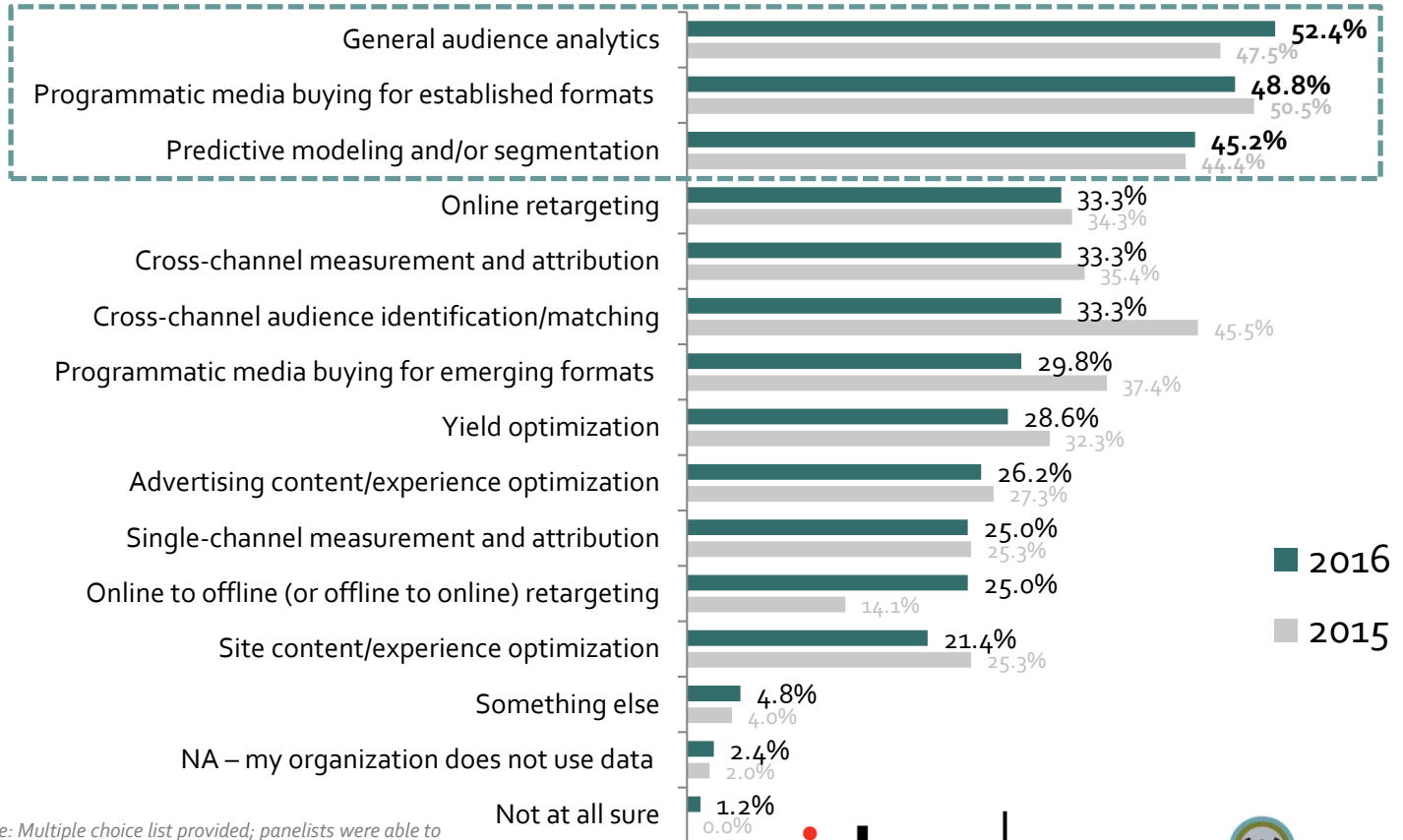
Though data is playing an increasingly critical role across a vast range of advertising and marketing applications, users said that 2017 has ushered in a renewed focus on measurement and attribution as the centerpiece of their efforts

- **From Execution... to Attribution:** Marketers and publishers continue to shift the emphasis of their data-driven efforts from basic campaign deployment to more complex use cases that aim to leverage an array of audience insights. Last year at this time, for example, panelists ranked “**programmatic media buying for established formats**” first among the applications that occupied their time and resources during 2015 (endorsed by 50.5% of panelists). In 2016, that primary focus shifted to “**general audience analytics**” (52.5%). And over the coming year, users said they expect “**cross-channel measurement and attribution**” will take center stage in the organizations (57.1%)
- **Keeping Pace with Rapid Innovation Difficult Given Organizational Issues, Lingering “Attribution Challenge”:** While the availability and actionability of technology and raw information might have represented challenges for data users in past years, panelists said that these issues are receding in relative importance. Taking their place as serious hurdles: ongoing **problems associated with the measurement and attribution of data-related spending**, along with internal challenges that include **talent gaps** and **organizational structures** not suited to support modern data applications
- **Data Spending Up... and Up:** Despite those lingering measurement issues, **more than two-thirds of panelists (67.1%) said their organizations increased their spending on data and related services in 2016** (relative to the previous year). Even more (70.7%) said they expect their equivalent spending will grow even further in 2017 compared to 2016 investment levels



General Audience Analytics, Programmatic Execution Continued to Drive Data Utilization in 2016

"Which use cases most occupied your time, attention and resources during the previous year?"

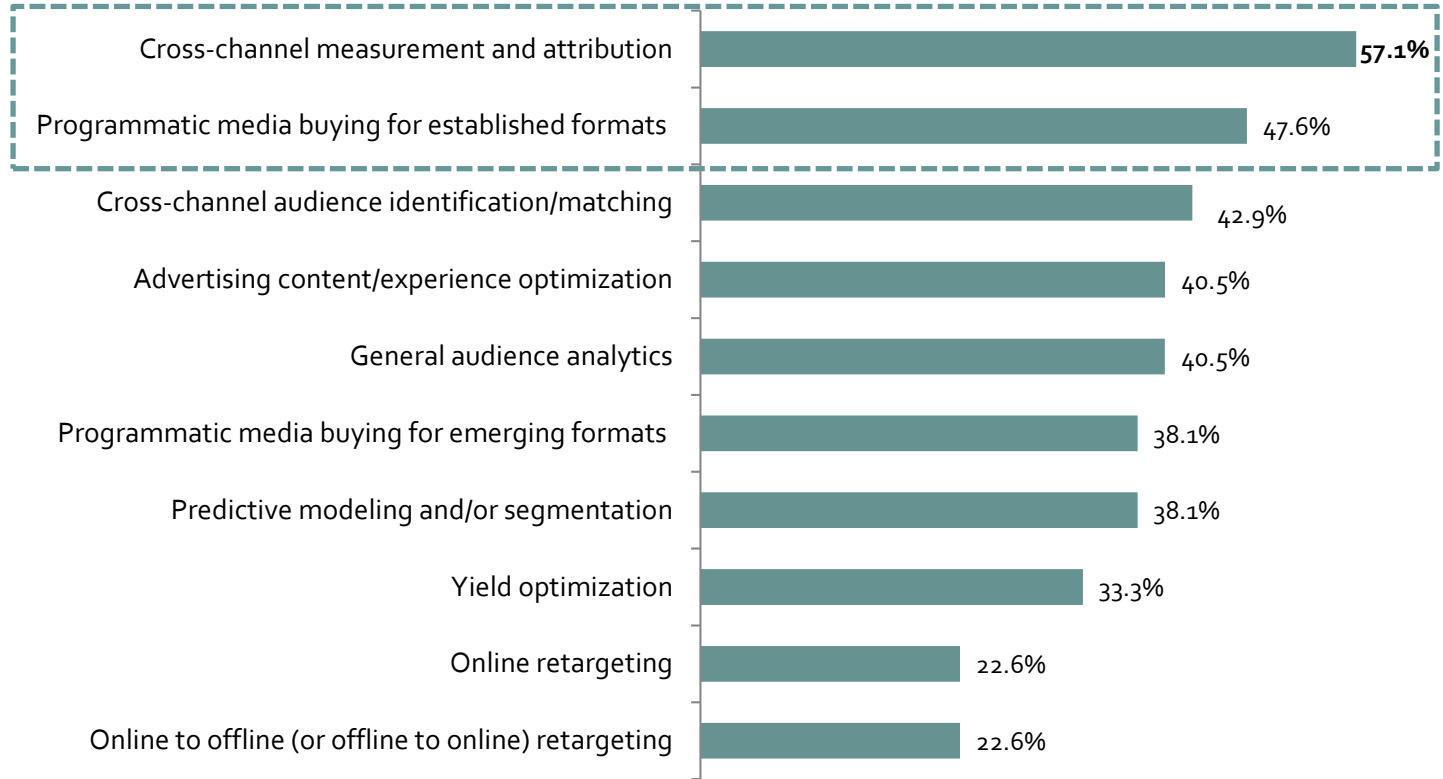


Note: Multiple choice list provided; panelists were able to select up to 5 use cases; 84 panelists responded



Cross-Channel Program Measurement, Audience Engagement Still Among Top Priorities for Coming Year

"Which use cases do you expect will most occupy your time, attention and resources during 2017?"

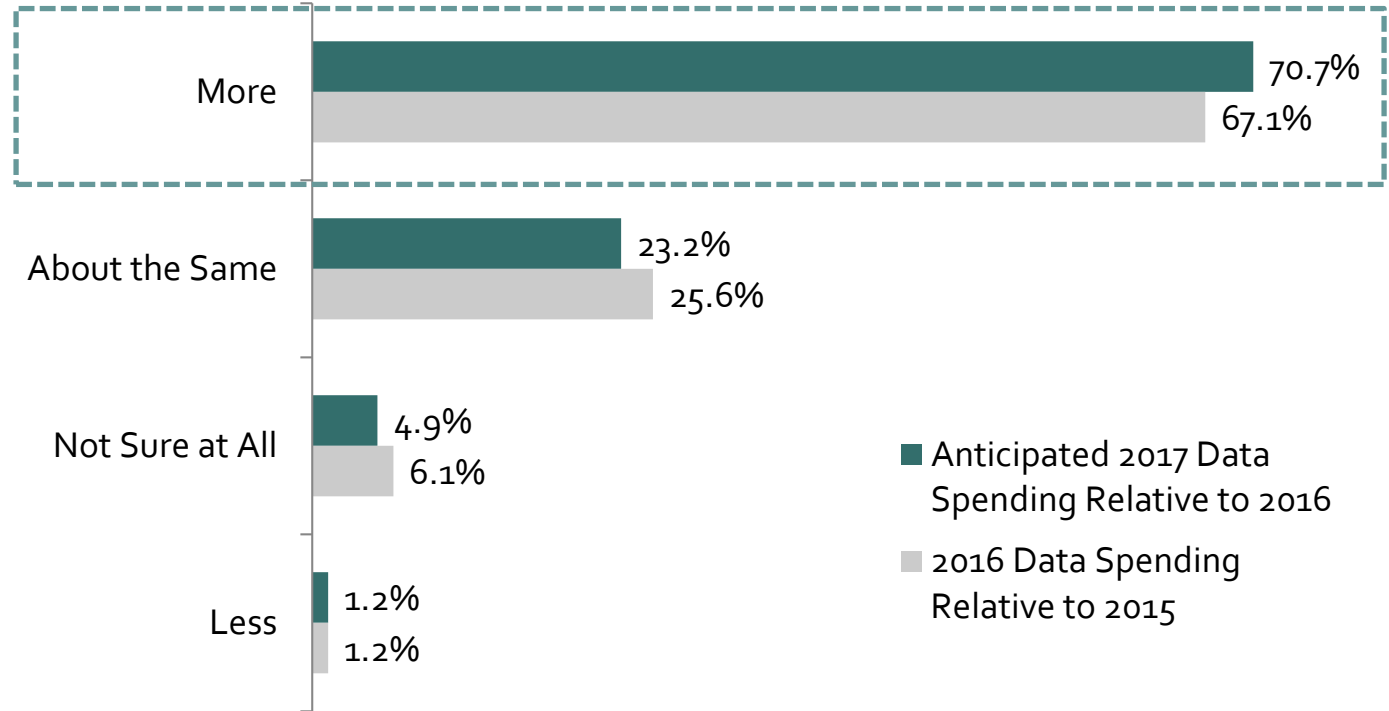


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Two-Thirds of Users Grew Spending on Data and Related Services in 2016; Even More Anticipate New Investment This Year

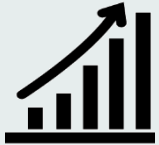
"Do you expect your organization will spend more, less or about the same on audience data and related services/solutions* in 2017 relative to last year? How did your equivalent spending change in 2016 relative to 2015?"



*e.g. data management/processing, analytics, DMP solutions, onboarding, matching, etc.

Note: Multiple choice list provided, panelists could only select one answer;

82 panelists responded



Availability of More, Better Data (and the Tools to Use It) Reinforcing a “Virtuous Circle” of Demand, Driving Greater Interest in Data-Driven Applications

“Which factors do you expect will be most important in driving your data-driven marketing and media initiatives in the year ahead?”



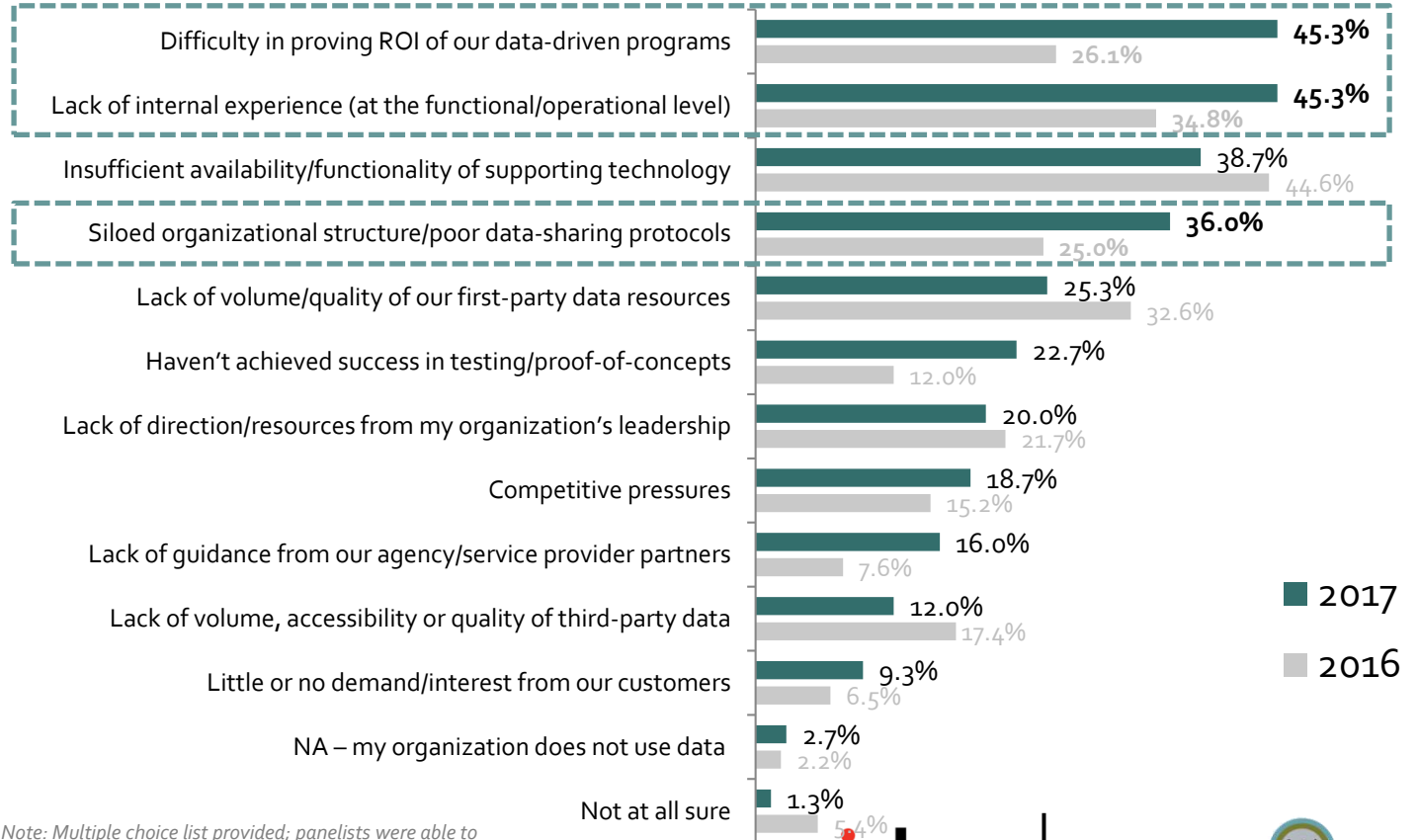
Note: Multiple choice list provided; panelists were able to select up to 5; 76 panelists responded

Challenges to Overcome



Legacy Organizational Issues—Talent Gaps, Silos—and Attribution Challenges Emerging as Hurdles Given Growing Growth of Demand for Data Solutions

“What obstacles or challenges may impede your ability to deploy or derive value from your data-driven marketing and media initiatives in the year ahead?”

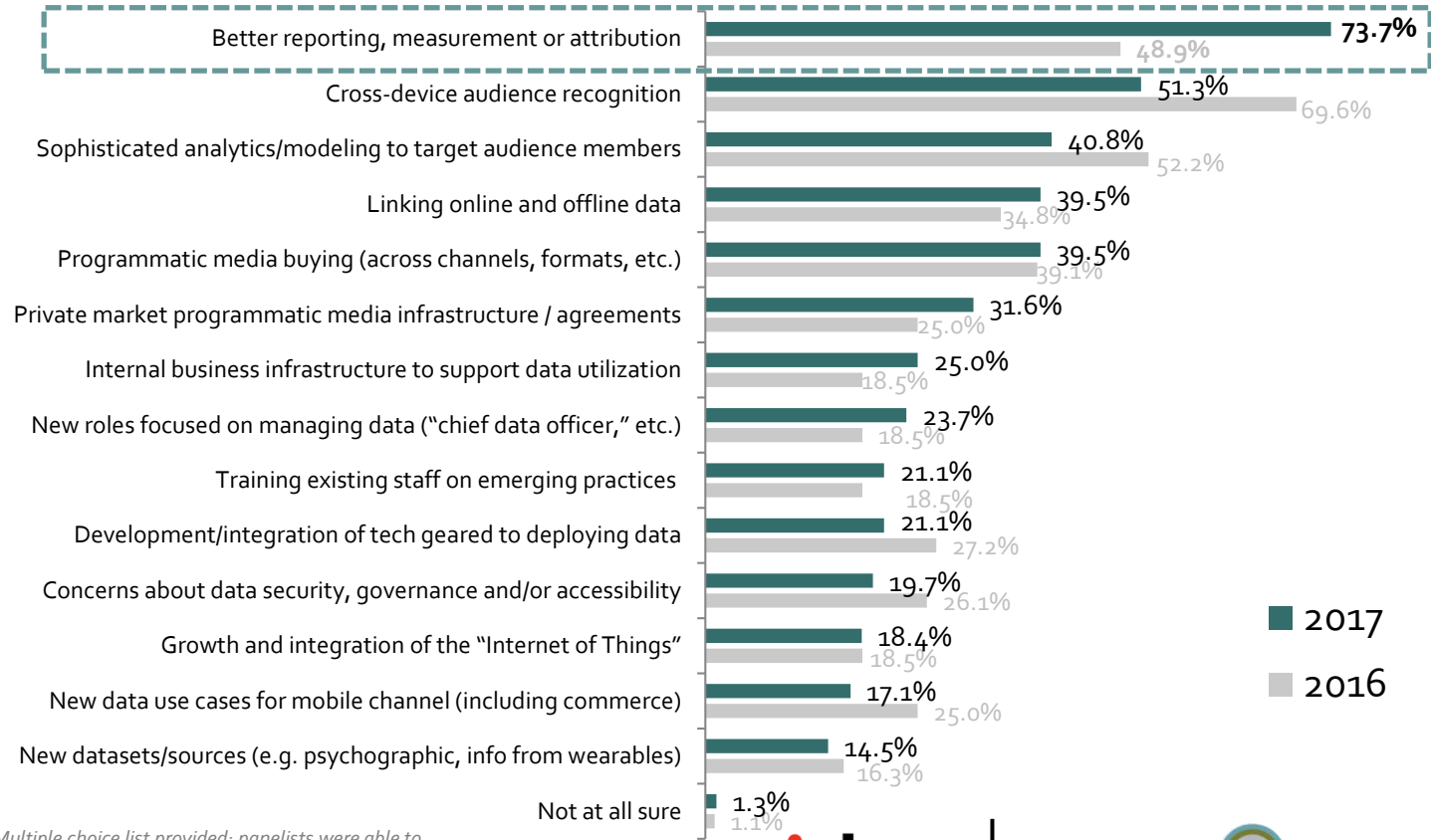


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The Unrivaled Theme for 2017: Attribution, Attribution, Attribution

"What general topics or industry developments do you anticipate will command your attention the most in the year ahead?"



Note: Multiple choice list provided; panelists were able to select up to 5; 76 panelists responded

ABOUT THE IAB DATA CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Members include:

The **IAB Data Center of Excellence** is a independently-funded unit within IAB, founded to enhance existing IAB resources and drive the “data agenda” for the digital media, marketing and advertising industries.

IAB Data’s mission is to help advertisers and marketers operationalize their data assets while maintaining quality, transparency, accountability and consumer protection





The **Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB)** empowers the media and marketing industries to thrive in the digital economy. It is comprised of more than 650 leading media and technology companies that are responsible for selling, delivering, and optimizing digital advertising or marketing campaigns. Together, they account for 86 percent of online advertising in the United States. Working with its member companies, the IAB develops technical standards and best practices and fields critical research on interactive advertising, while also educating brands, agencies, and the wider business community on the importance of digital marketing. The organization is committed to professional development and elevating the knowledge, skills, expertise, and diversity of the workforce across the industry. Through the work of its public policy office in Washington, D.C., the IAB advocates for its members and promotes the value of the interactive advertising industry to legislators and policymakers. Founded in 1996, the IAB is headquartered in New York City and has a West Coast office in San Francisco.

For more information, please visit www.iab.com or contact [Dennis Buchheim](#), Senior Vice President, Data & Ad Effectiveness and General Manager, Data Center of Excellence



Winterberry Group (WG) is a unique strategic consulting firm that supports the growth of advertising, marketing, media, information and technology organizations. Primary competencies include corporate strategy, transaction diligence, marketing and data transformation and market intelligence services. Affiliated with Petsky Prunier LLC—a leading investment bank providing merger and acquisition advisory services to companies in the same sectors—the Firm offers its clients strategic perspective that is unparalleled in its addressable industries, while PPLLC maintains exceptional relationships with industry executives and business owners. This combination of market perspective, research and strategic operating experience provides an educated outside perspective that we bring to each engagement.

For more information, please visit www.winterberrygroup.com or contact [Jonathan Margulies](#), Managing Director: [@jcmargulies](#)

Over the past six years, IAB and WG have collaborated on the publication of numerous white papers exploring the ongoing integration of data, technology and media functions.

Recent published research includes:

