

A Quad
Insights
guide

Home is where the data is

How marketers can navigate
the Great Data Upheaval with a
game-changing source of consumer intel

Quad 



Introduction

Data-driven marketing has always been a rather complicated process — one that involves navigating a convoluted matrix of correlation, extrapolation, modeling and artful guesstimates.

It's never been for the faint of heart. But over the past few years it's gotten downright *messy*.

Mounting concerns over consumer privacy have spurred a wave of new data regulations across the United States (and the world). On-again, off-again Chrome cookie deprecation has left marketers feeling whipsawed and uncertain of what comes next (and wondering whether Google will change course yet again). Even email is facing new limitations as a channel for trackable targeting of customers and potential leads.

As the digital landscape evolves with aspirations for a better, safer online experience for consumers, it is also turning marketing itself upside down — forcing brands to rework their campaign playbooks and scramble for access to compliant sources of validated consumer data.

Change at this scale — especially unpredictable change — is by definition disruptive, and therefore rather unpleasant. But it's also arguably a blessing in disguise. Because the dominance and accessibility of many incumbent digital marketing tactics made it easy to overlook their shortcomings.

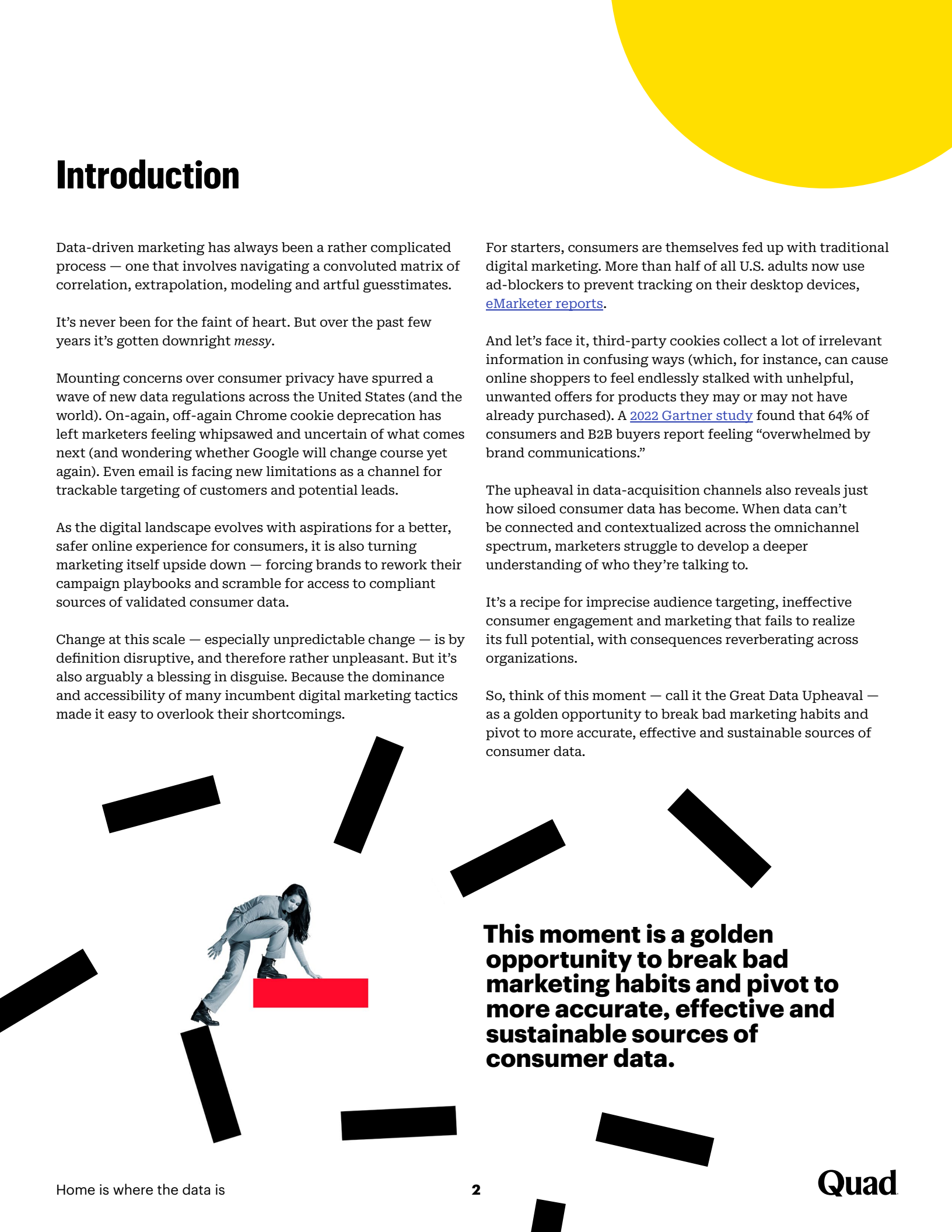
For starters, consumers are themselves fed up with traditional digital marketing. More than half of all U.S. adults now use ad-blockers to prevent tracking on their desktop devices, [eMarketer reports](#).

And let's face it, third-party cookies collect a lot of irrelevant information in confusing ways (which, for instance, can cause online shoppers to feel endlessly stalked with unhelpful, unwanted offers for products they may or may not have already purchased). A [2022 Gartner study](#) found that 64% of consumers and B2B buyers report feeling “overwhelmed by brand communications.”

The upheaval in data-acquisition channels also reveals just how siloed consumer data has become. When data can't be connected and contextualized across the omnichannel spectrum, marketers struggle to develop a deeper understanding of who they're talking to.

It's a recipe for imprecise audience targeting, ineffective consumer engagement and marketing that fails to realize its full potential, with consequences reverberating across organizations.

So, think of this moment — call it the Great Data Upheaval — as a golden opportunity to break bad marketing habits and pivot to more accurate, effective and sustainable sources of consumer data.



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It's time to pivot from device-centric marketing to people-based marketing

Beyond surviving the Great Data Upheaval, let's plainly state the endgame: reorganizing your omnichannel marketing strategy around a new, improved source of compliant consumer data — one that offers more precision and validity, is more resilient over time and can be formatted to integrate consumer insights across devices, campaigns and channels.

A tall order, yes — but it's actually doable with the right shift in perspective.

"The mission for marketers hasn't changed," says Earl Potter, Senior VP of Media Analytics at Quad. "The problem is that marketing campaigns have often started at the device level, collecting anonymized IDs and trying to connect them back to a relevant audience, which is a messy and costly process."

A better, more effective path to data relevance? The household.

Simply put, the household can become the new center of gravity for collecting, connecting and using behavioral and demographic data.

Email addresses can multiply, device standards can reset and privacy regulations can keep spreading, but through it all, there's just one place we call home — and for marketers, this opens the door to a better, more informed view of customers and prospects.

A consumer's home address is what Quad calls the "resilient identifier" in omnichannel marketing. While digital identifiers change over time, home addresses can bring stability and consistency to your audience-targeting capabilities.

By using the household as the starting point for targeting an audience, marketers can use identifiable passions and interests to enhance personalization and engagement across the omnichannel experience.

With this approach, your omnichannel marketing can more effectively and efficiently reach your target audience anywhere — from direct mail and in-home advertising to out-of-home exposures and mobile devices.

In this guide, we'll explore the new era of household data addressability and explain its critical role in the evolution of omnichannel marketing. We'll also provide a path forward in helping marketers adopt these new omnichannel capabilities within their own organizations by applying the right creative, media and production services that make for winning campaigns.

Addressability and the household: a new paradigm for marketing in 2024 and beyond

Over the years, the term "addressable" in the digital world has meant various things to different marketers.

"In the past, the word *addressable* simply meant that you could identify an audience based on demographics or interests," says Potter. "You could buy that audience, and they were 'addressable' because it would go to their devices."

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Addressability is an essential component of omnichannel marketing success — especially when attempting to connect with a consumer across their buying journey. But addressability depends on identifiers that may or may not be helpful in validating the accuracy of your audience targeting efforts.

“Data sources may have thousands of data points attempting to describe what you care about as a consumer, many of which could be wrong,” says Joshua Lowcock, President of Quad Media. “One data source, for example, has a classification called ‘explosions in the sky,’ meaning that any consumer with that classification likes explosions in the sky — presumably referring to fireworks, or maybe the post-rock band. Either way, it’s an example of the sheer volume of nonsense consumer data that is out there.”

Placing the household at the center of data addressability

Omnichannel addressability depends on access to validated data that can be layered together to power more personalized marketing experiences. By leveraging the household as a resilient identifier, data addressability can give marketers access to a new ecosystem of options for finding and engaging their target audience. The goal is to begin with information available at the household level and match it with additional consumer data points gleaned from other channels, including digital and social, as well transactional activity. The sum is a more complete portrait of what consumers care about, how they act and where they can be reached.

The average consumer spends more than 7.5 hours per day consuming media, [according to eMarketer](#). And most purchases at brick-and-mortar stores take place within a 20-minute radius of the home, [per Access Development](#). Making the household the center of your data world only makes sense.

“Each consumer’s day starts and ends at the home,” says Joolee Bouton, VP of Product Marketing at Quad. “By starting with household-centric addressable data, we can reach audiences throughout their day and across different media channels, including in-store and online. We can



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understand their passions and continuously connect with them throughout their journey.”

At Quad, all of this data is housed together within our proprietary data stack. By using household data as the anchor for addressability, we’re able to target marketing activations at the individual consumer level with greater confidence than ever before.

“The key differentiator for us is, we are going to activate in whatever channel is the best for your business,” says Potter, adding that many marketers make the mistake of working with partners that prioritize channel deployment based on “what’s convenient for them. We want to disrupt that model and break those paradigms.”

The value of household addressability plays out in many ways, from campaign performance to cost efficiencies to compliance. Here are some of the most significant benefits of this approach:

The household delivers more reliable insights into consumer passions

The household serves as a core identifier where consumer passions and interests can be connected to an individual consumer. The types of physical mail consumers receive can inform a deeper understanding of them to guide more relevant marketing engagements.

Quad is building a database of passions that can be mapped to households to help marketers learn more about their customers' interests. By combining these passions with an organization's first-party customer data, marketers can use household-led addressability to better find, understand and connect with their audience.

"Household data is valuable because it's built upon self-declared interests and passions," says Lowcock. "If you pay money to subscribe to a running magazine, you're interested in running. We start with a single source of truth, which is the home. Then we find the person and then we attach interests and passions back to the home."

Consumers have a greater connection with marketing materials in their physical mailboxes

Studies consistently show that people engage with direct mail in a more positive way than digital advertising. For instance, [a 2024 Vericast survey](#) found that 53% of consumers say they look forward to receiving direct mail ads — vs. 38% for digital ads. And 55% say they pay more attention to direct mail ads — vs. 39% for digital ads.

"The reality is, we get stuff in our physical mailbox all the time," says Potter. "Some of those mailings don't offer any value to us, and we call it junk mail and we put it into recycling. We all have different levels of comfort. But most consumers are comfortable getting targeted mail in their physical mailbox."

That comfort level, Potter adds, "allows us to use the 'resilient identifier' of the household as the nexus to which we attach other information within our data stack."

Household-centric data covers most U.S. consumers

The data in Quad's data stack touches 92% of all U.S. households and 97% of the U.S. adult population. By comparison, only 68% of U.S. adults say they use Facebook even occasionally, [per the Pew Research Center](#).

Across any given 18-month period, Quad's data stack contains more than 3 billion validated/revalidated data points to anchor addressability for any marketer targeting any consumer segment.

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3B

validated/revalidated data points in Quad's data stack across any 18-month period

How regulatory and technology wild cards could further transform the data landscape

The sweeping changes reshaping the current data landscape are far from over. New and revised data regulations are being pushed forward at the state and federal levels, making it difficult to predict how access to traditional tranches of consumer data may be affected in the coming years.

To date, 19 states have passed privacy laws and Congress is considering national privacy legislation. This creates a major compliance challenge for marketers — though not an unfamiliar one since the 2018 implementation of the landmark General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the European Union. The patchwork of laws adds complexity as brands must ensure their data practices are compliant across regions. (See [“Five big questions — and zero predictions — for the U.S. state privacy landscape in 2024,”](#) from the Future of Privacy Forum.)

The compliance conundrum is also not unfamiliar to certain vertical industries, such as healthcare and finance, which for years have faced rigorous regulatory environments surrounding the protection of personally identifiable information. (Quad has extensive experience in healthcare and finance as a marketing services partner with companies in both verticals.)

Legal challenges to state regulations could also serve as a wild card, [according to NAI](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to responsible data collection and its use for digital advertising. For example, lawsuits caused delays in the implementation of regulations in California, Utah and Ohio, per NAI.

Another area of uncertainty is in the use and regulation of artificial intelligence (AI) in gathering and using consumer data. In particular, advocates for increased AI regulations have highlighted consumer safety concerns related to algorithmic discrimination, automated decision-making and other capabilities of AI solutions, [according to a legal alert from the law firm Holland & Knight](#).

Use cases for household data addressability

What does all this mean for the marketer on a daily basis? In short, household addressability offers the opportunity to integrate consumer data from multiple sources, offline and online, to create a clearer picture of who you're trying to reach and where you can find them.



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“Advertisers want to know, ‘What’s the best audience?’” Potter says. “We start with the household and then figure out the overlap between prospects and customers for our clients. Then we figure out where they live and what they look like, how can we talk to them and what kinds of offers would be appropriate.”

Household data allows marketers to be more precise in everything they do, tailoring messages to specific audiences or channels, says Liz Fowler, Director, Data Platform and Partnerships at Quad.

It's also important to remember that the data you collect is only as good as your ability to deploy it in support of your brand's objectives, Fowler adds.

"It is what you do with the data, and the strategy you put around it, that truly differentiates you," she says. "What we're providing is targeting strategy by selecting the right audience, the right channels and the right offer."

The path forward: A household addressability game plan

Putting your data-driven marketing strategy on a path to improved audience engagement and sustained success requires flexibility and the right partner.

Perhaps the most important step toward success: deepening knowledge of your audience as *individuals*.

Take marketing data out of silos and connect it to the living, breathing *people* your business wants to reach. Household data addressability can help you humanize and understand your target audience and enable creative teams to do their best work.

"It's getting harder to connect with real people and their needs," says Bouton. "At Quad, we've grounded our processes in the human experience. This allows us to create marketing experiences that are much more relevant to the consumer."

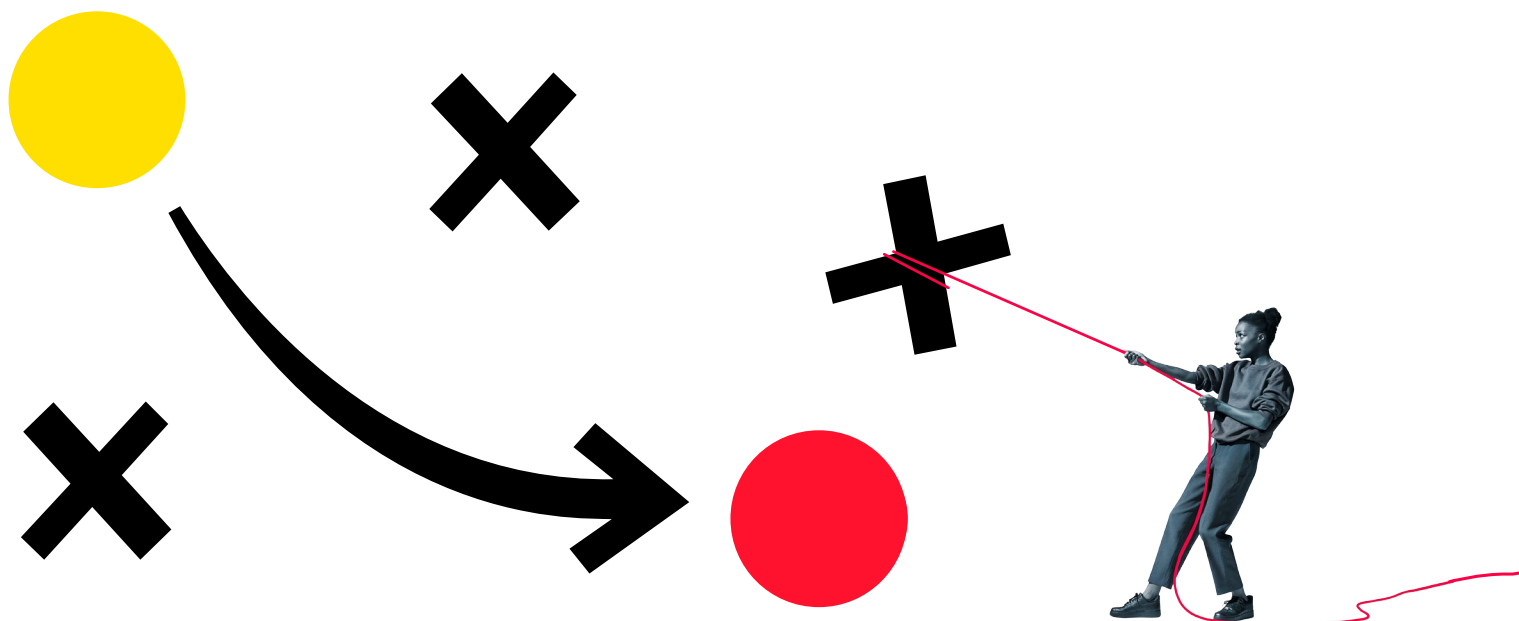
Other considerations as this new reality rolls across the marketing landscape:

- **Think beyond digital channels.** Build a stronger, more integrated data operation that starts at the household but then extends wherever your consumers are. The new paradigm allows for integrating consumer data from the mailbox to online, to in-store engagements and out-of-home activations.
- **Reach the right individual at the right time.** Integrated consumer profiles, which include data about media consumption, can help advance a remarketing practice through which insights gained at the household level can be leveraged with messages appropriate in other channels, such as social media.

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Director, Data Platform and Partnerships at Quad



Move your marketing strategy forward

Your brand's marketing experience (MX) depends on data. Quad's proprietary data stack and [MX suite of solutions](#) are designed to provide the best possible marketing experience for our clients.

Two key parts of the MX suite are [MX: Intelligence](#), which leverages our proprietary household data and advanced audience targeting capabilities to support media addressability wherever your consumers go, and [MX: Media](#) solutions to activate addressable media across channels.

Meanwhile, Quad's strategic technology solutions, part of our [MX: Tech](#) suite, help brands connect marketing strategy, content creation, analytics and personalized engagements across offline and online channels.

Our smart tech solutions are tailored to the needs of each brand to automate manual processes, tighten production time and improve speed-to-market across all available media and channels.

As the data landscape continues to evolve, Quad can elevate your marketing plan while streamlining processes and achieving new cost efficiencies.

Take the next step toward a better marketing future. Request a consultation with Quad to discover how we can help your business leverage data addressability for better marketing performance and sustained business value.

About Quad

Quad (NYSE: QUAD) is a global marketing experience company that helps brands make direct consumer connections, from household to in-store to online. Supported by state-of-the-art technology and data-driven intelligence, Quad uses its suite of media, creative and production solutions to streamline the complexities of marketing and remove friction from wherever it occurs in the marketing journey. Quad tailors its uniquely flexible, scalable and connected solutions to clients' objectives, driving cost efficiencies,

improving speed to market, strengthening marketing effectiveness, and delivering value on client investments.

Quad employs approximately 13,000 people in 14 countries and serves approximately 2,700 clients including industry leading blue-chip companies that serve both businesses and consumers in multiple industry verticals, with a particular focus on commerce, including retail, consumer packaged goods, and direct-to-consumer; financial services;

and health. Quad is ranked among the largest agency companies in the U.S. by Ad Age, buoyed by its full-service [Rise](#) media agency and [Betty](#) creative agency. Quad is also one the largest commercial printers in North America, according to *Printing Impressions*.

For more information about Quad, including its commitment to ongoing innovation, culture and sustainable impact, visit quad.com.

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