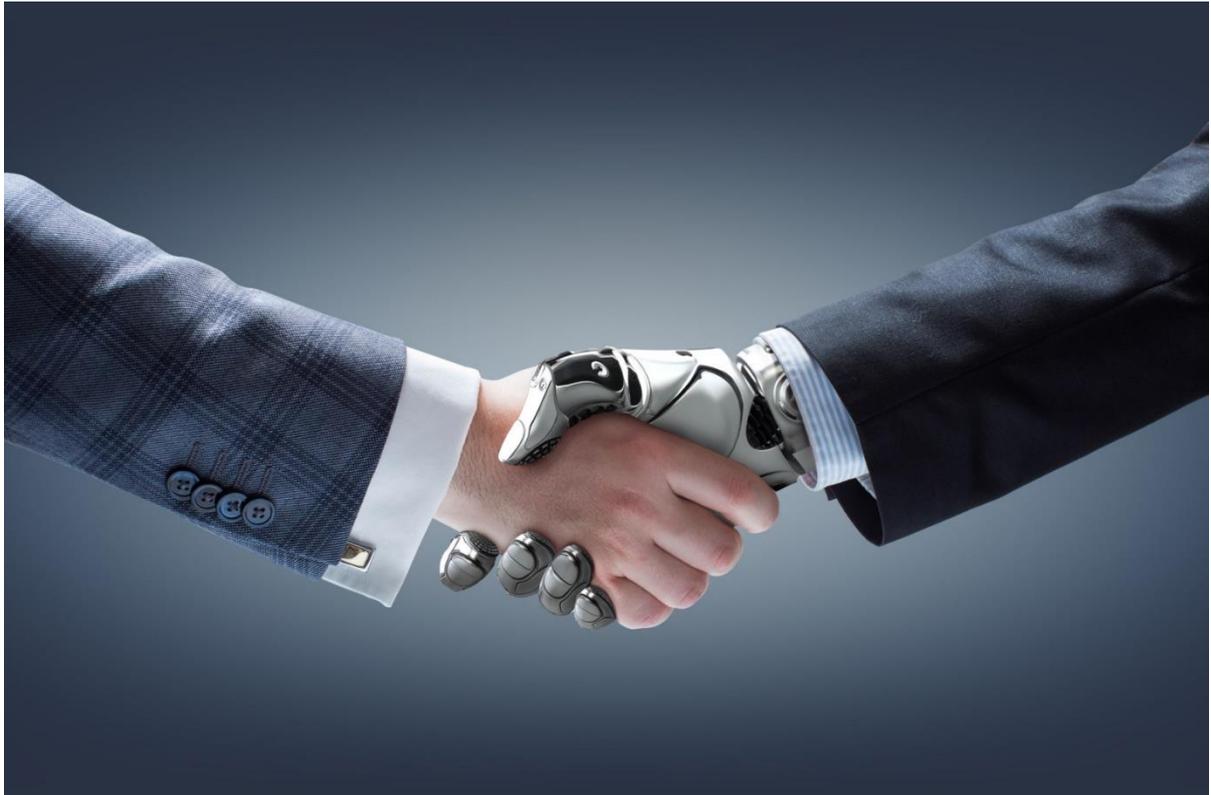


# Marketingheads®

## CEO Future Trends Survey



# 2020



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## CEO Future Trends Report 2020

### Executive summary

Market Confidence is a major theme coming from this year's survey. This drives the expectation around growth for the coming year where we are seeing a 20% drop in growth forecasts compared to last year. Companies are now expecting to achieve the same as last year's results. The tightening of bank finance and or credit is limiting companies' ability to invest and grow.

Engagement with customers and client relationship are standout strategies that CEOs say are most important success factors and are the ones they can most influence to achieve growth. See chart 5.0 and 6.0. The longitudinal view (Chart 5.0) clearly shows this perspective has not changed for 9 years, but has consolidated. This is supported by marketing and communication that utilises a planned strategic messaging approach to touch points.

Constraints to effective marketing are somewhat interesting. We see culture playing an increasing role to constrain effectiveness of the marketing role, identified as Willingness to innovate and change and Attitude/motivation playing second to Finance and Cost as the most prominent constraint.

Business leaders this year were much more ready to offer unprompted responses re the above. They were also vocal about lack of internal resources and the skills and competency of those in the marketing role. Perhaps this is a reflection on their perceived lack of growth expectation for 2020.

Sluggish markets also mean that a majority of Business leaders are now wanting to focus on what's really happening in markets and what customers are saying about them (Market perceptions). This will enable review and a resetting of customer strategies, communication narratives and lead to better targeting of message and engagement of customers and build a depth of relationship. It will also provide a better understanding of what your competitive advantage is from a customer's perspective so that you can compete more effectively.

The decline in social media as an influence on your business has now consolidated as social media is demystified and better understood to be a marketing tool or tactic as part of an overall marketing and communications strategy and not the "magic carpet ride" to win new business.

Thank you to everyone that has participated in the Annual Marketingheads CEO Future Trends Survey for 2020. A special thanks to those who have supported us now for 9 years.

### Business forecast 2020

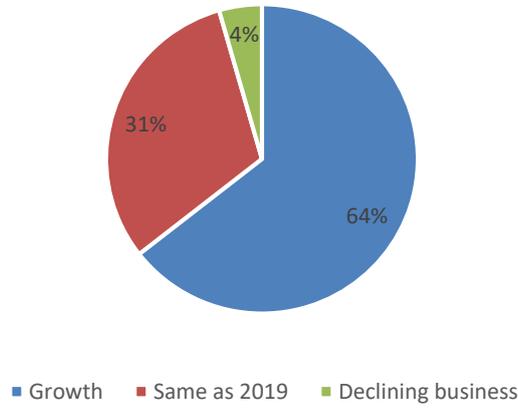


Chart 1.0

95% of business are forecasting growth or same as last year.

### Three Year Comparison Business Forecast

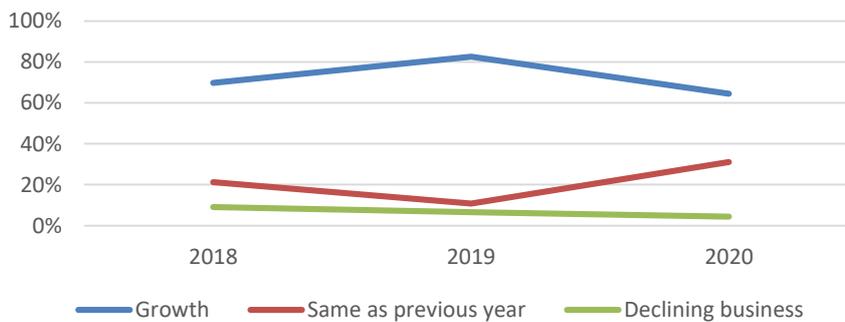


Chart 2.0

Growth forecast for 2020 has declined 20% from prior year which corresponds with the increase in “same as last year” expectation.

Industries Surveyed 2020

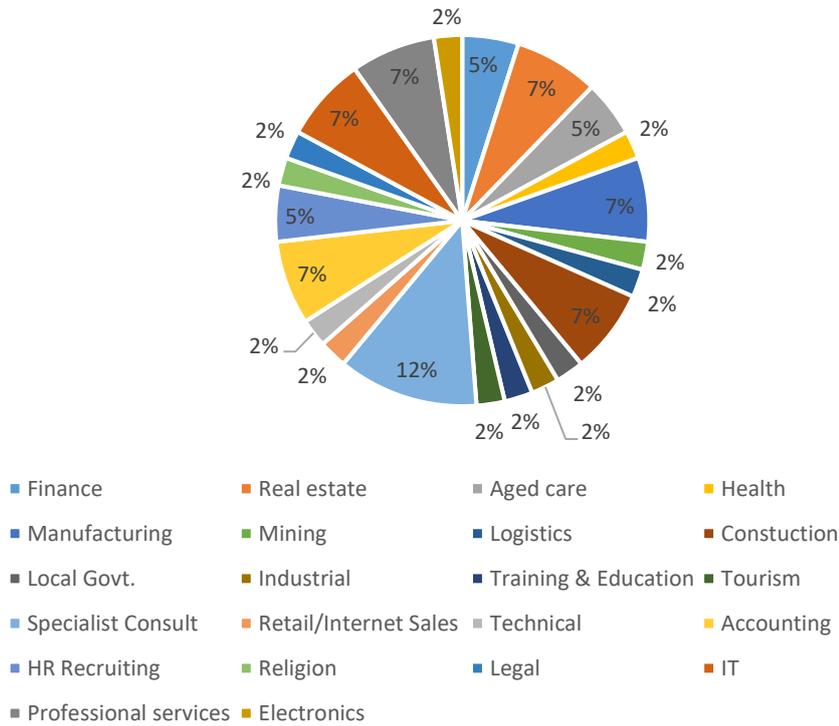


Chart 3.0

Economic Factors Affecting Business

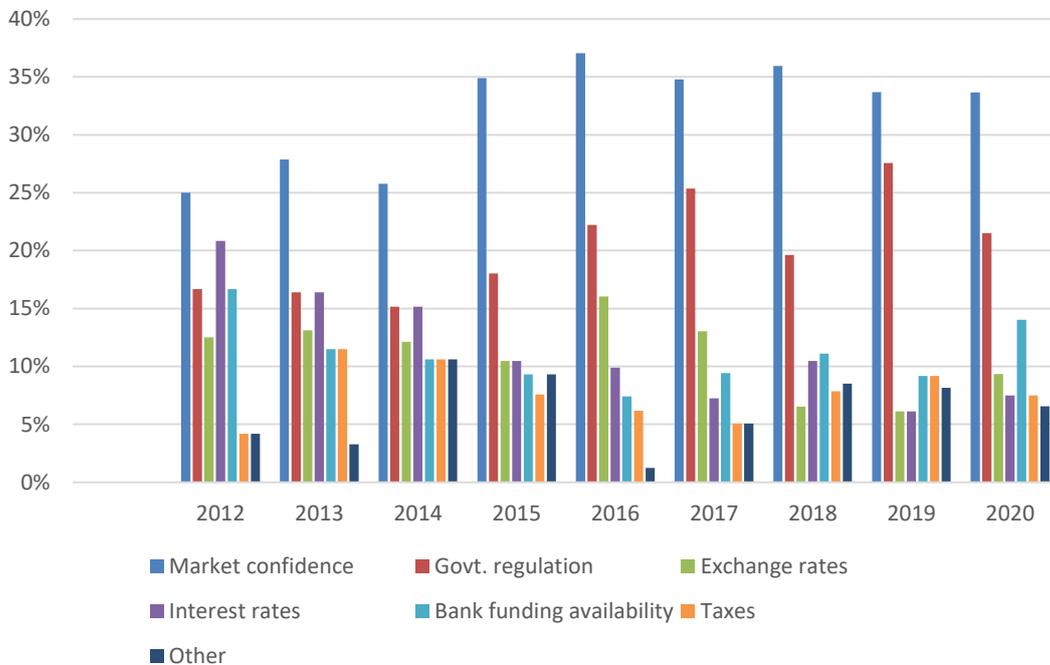


Chart 4.0

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Market confidence is again identified as a key success/detractor factor affecting economic activity, as is govt. regulation. This year we see Bank funding becoming difficult for business as are exchange rates for those supplied from overseas. Essentially these findings support what is being discussed at all levels of business and in the media about a sluggish economy. Chart 1.0 and 2.0 above are evidence of how business is generally feeling towards growth expectations for 2020.

*What other major issues affect the success of your business?*

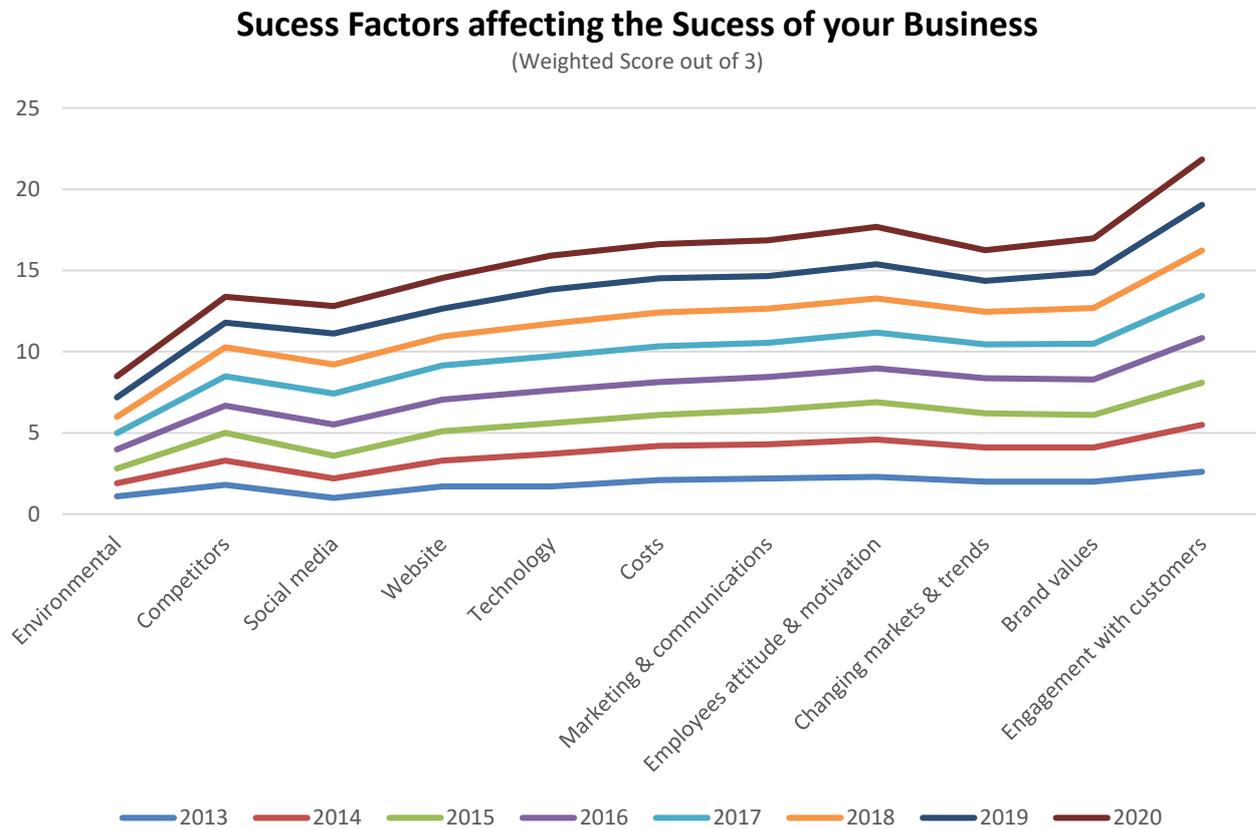


Chart 5.0

A clear winning strategy is engagement with customers. As you can see from the longitudinal data this has increasingly been relevant to business success. Not to be overlooked are employee attitude and motivation, brand value and marketing and communication.

This clearly indicates the need to regularly engage with customers through a range of touch points. Having a planned campaign approach including personal contact by well-trained and motivated staff, backed by effective engaging marketing that creates a differentiated competitive advantage for your products and services that will create enviable results.

*Of all the things that affect your business prospects, which is the most important to your business and the one that you can influence the most?*

**Unprompted  
Success Factors CEO's Believe they  
can most Influence to Achieve Growth**

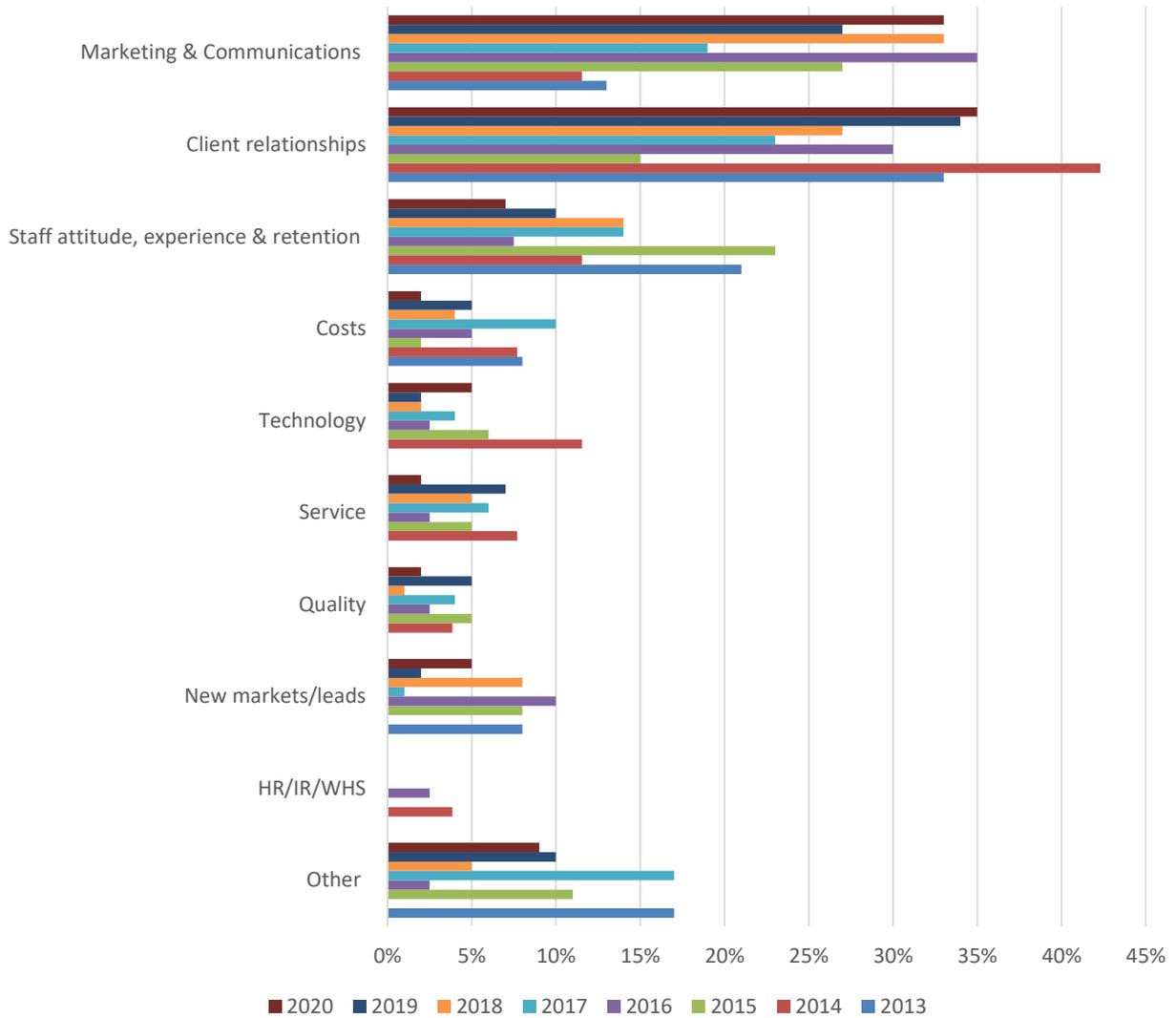


Chart 6.0

As an unprompted response to what CEOs believe they can influence most to achieve growth we see Client relationships and Marketing and Communications as the key success factors, followed by Staff attitude, motivation, experience and retention.

This is a resounding message, particularly as business leaders support this again when asked about the success factors that most affect their success. We see the same metrics identified.

### Companies with a Propensity to Innovate in 2020

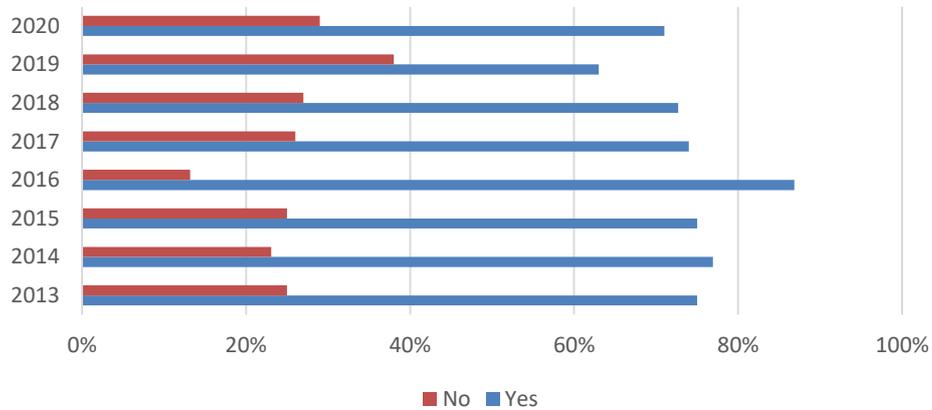


Chart 7.0

*If you said no to the above question, what do you think your organisation needs to do to improve?*

Suggested ideas relate to improving existing systems and utilisation of smart technology:

- Become innovative within your business.
- Utilise Apps, and technology to increase productivity. New document control procedures.
- New manufacturing processes. Automate functions. AI was mentioned.
- Generate more visitors to the website. Review CRM's and compare to existing.
- Make it easy to do business.
- Better adoption of digital marketing.
- Expand sales & marketing horizons to include new territories.
- Make time for strategic planning.
- Improve strategic planning to focus on advancements in Smart Technology relating to management and planning.

### What Constrains the Effectiveness of the Marketing Function?

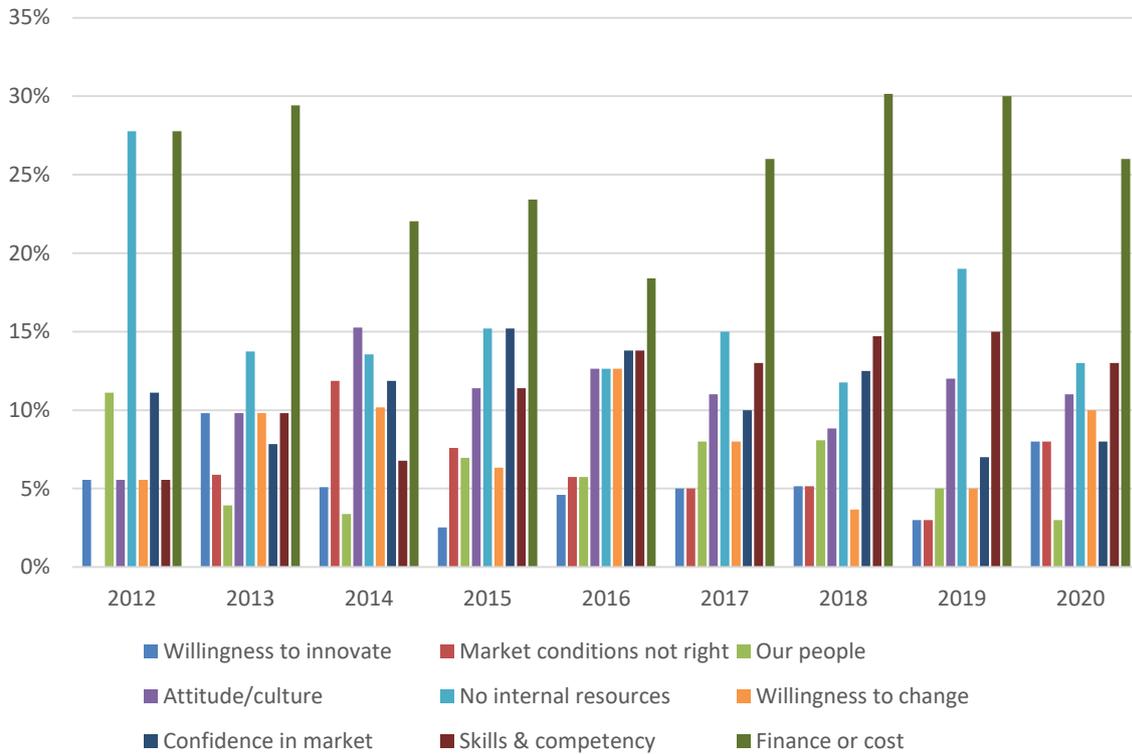


Chart 8.0

Culture appears to play a significant role as a constraint e.g. Willingness to innovate and change and attitude/motivation.

Whilst “Finance or Cost” is the major constraint to the effectiveness of the marketing function we see that internal resources and skills and competency of those in the role are seen as an issue. This year there was a surprising level of unprompted comment re the above constraints.

### Interested in Knowing What Customers Say

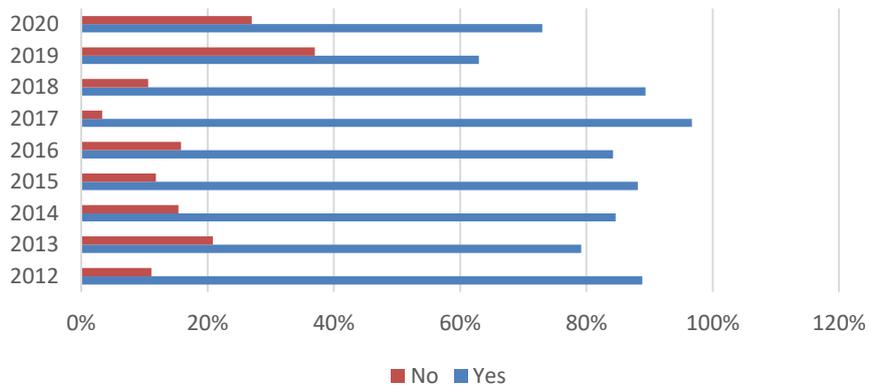


Chart 9.0

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Importantly many of those wanting to know what customers are saying want to talk to Marketingheads to find out what are the most important issues so that their competitive advantage remains relevant. We look forward to assisting them on this journey.

## Will Social Media be an Important Influence on your Business in 2020?

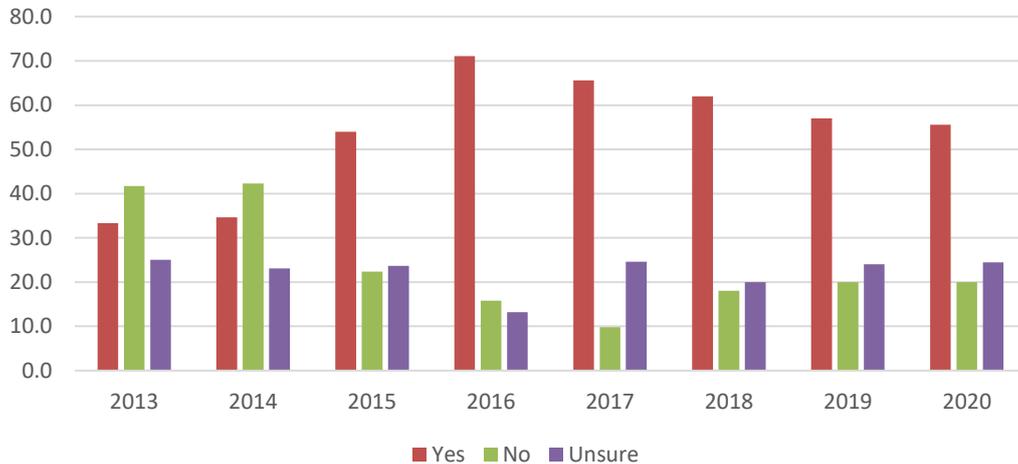


Chart 10.0

Further consolidation is seen as social media is demystified and better understood to be a marketing tool or tactic as part of an overall marketing strategy. Of importance is the need to be more targeted with messaging and have a properly constructed campaign around specific business objectives whilst continuing to monitor and reset as needed. The test is can social media create and deliver an environment rich in information to keep customer's attention, build client relationships and create sales, or do you need to support this activity with other strategies?



John Wakeling

Being a market research business with senior researchers who are marketers with more than 21 years' experience assures clients don't just end up with a report but a road map as to how to address competitive challenges or to better sell/market their competitive advantage. This has clearly differentiated Marketingheads for over 21 years.

Marketingheads is a multi-awarded market research, marketing and strategy business that will celebrate its 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary this year. Prior to Marketingheads John held senior sales and marketing positions in the pharmaceutical industry. John is an accomplished marketer and strategist who relishes the challenges faced by business. His methodology has identified game changing strategies and achieved exceptional results for many clients across a diverse range of industries and businesses.

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