



DIGITAL MARKETING  
SKILLS BENCHMARK

October 2023

TARGET  
INTERNET

CIM

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The ■ demand for Marketers with a more general Marketing skillset remains. Recruitment is reporting a notable ■ increase in demand for Marketing Managers and Marketing Executives. ■

The latest Benchmark results are a reflection of the uncertain environment we are currently operating in, where nothing remains the same and change is now expected as opposed to anticipated.

It's been a challenging year for every industry, marketing included. As businesses navigate ever-changing operational environments - the cost of living crisis being this year's major challenge - marketers become increasingly important. In a world of uncertainty, it falls on the communicators to reassure customers, clients and suppliers that business is carrying on as normal.

Digital-first is the approach that many businesses are adopting, and this is borne out by the data from our Digital Marketing Skills Benchmarking Report. Social media and SEO skills in particular have improved year on year, but it's reassuring to see that virtually every digital skill is being developed by marketers. We as an industry must remain eager to learn - those who keep ahead of the curve will see their careers grow the fastest. Continued professional development therefore remains as important as ever.

Macro factors will inevitably play a disruptive role over the next 12 months, so the ability to adapt and flex our skill-sets will help to smooth over what could be a bumpy ride.

■ James Delves, MCIM  
Head of PR, Content and Community

## Background

Now in its 4th iteration the 2023 benchmark report compares data to 2021 and outline key trends since 2018 which allow us to see changes since the benchmark began. We have covered more industries, as well as broken down the data into quintiles to understand the range of skills within each industry and within the overall results. Over 10,000 people have now been tested for the benchmark, making it the largest and most thorough digital marketing skills benchmark globally.

Digital has fundamentally changed the way we buy, make decisions, and interact with one another. As such, it has become an essential element of not only any marketing strategy but of any organisational strategy. The environment of constant change has led to a huge skills challenge for individuals and organisations. Combine this with a vastly changed working environment caused by the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, and we have a recipe for some big challenges.

The ongoing pace of change means a straightforward process of 'one-off' training is no longer fit for purpose. You can no longer expect to sit on your current skillset and progress. Skills need to be updated on an ongoing basis, and a culture of ongoing learning needs to be developed by organisations and adopted by individuals. Culture is an essential element of the solution to any skills gap, as simply providing learning opportunities and training does not necessarily lead to its adoption and usage.

A starting point to addressing this skills challenge is to understand where our skills gaps lie and how this differs between industries, roles, and seniorities. The Digital Skills Benchmark aims to be that starting point, to inform the conversation and drive an ongoing skills improvement agenda.

This fourth edition of the digital skills benchmark highlights some very significant shifts in skills in the past year and explores the impact this will have on organisations of all types.



The latest iteration allows us to compare the ● progress made over the last three years. The questions were taken from a bank of questions on each topic that tested both tactical and ▲ strategic ■ knowledge.

## ▲ About the Benchmark

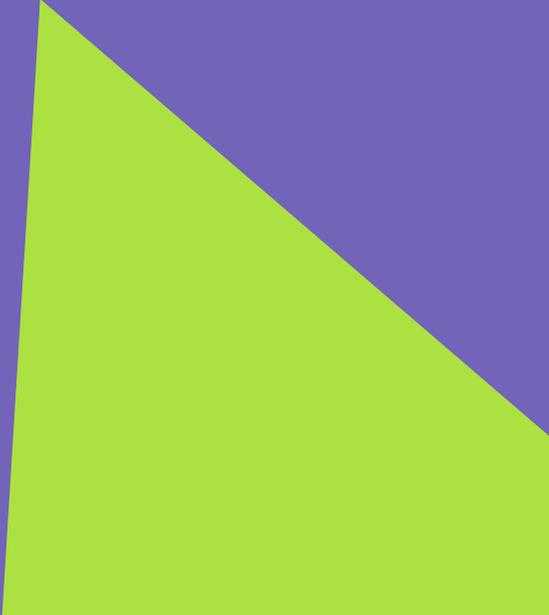
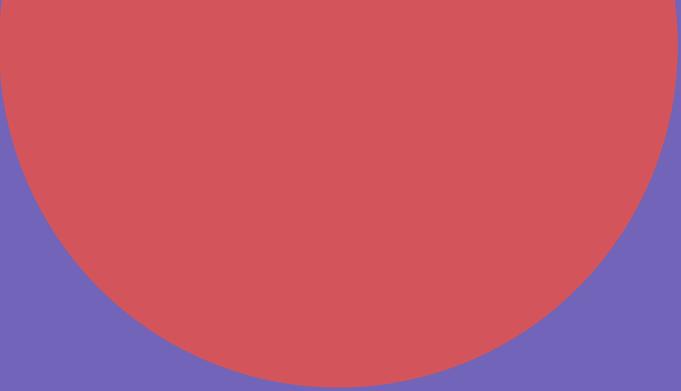
The Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark is the only study of its type and scale that looks at skills across such a wide range of industries and levels of seniority. Rather than being opinion based like many other studies, the core of the benchmark assesses the skills of thousands of individuals (you can read more about the methodology below).

This approach allows for a frank look at digital marketing skills in the UK market and identifies a range of skills gaps and challenges that need to be overcome in order for businesses to thrive. The benchmark combines raw data on where skill levels currently lie, whilst also providing insights and opinions on what this means in practice. The aim of the benchmark is to help industry make informed decisions about improving skills and to reinforce the need for a culture of ongoing learning in all organisations. The benchmark, now in its 3rd edition, also compares how skills have changed over the past three years, and analyses what we can learn from our progress (and lack of it in many cases).

The benchmark has now tested over 10,000 people's digital marketing skills. The latest iteration allows us to compare the progress made over the last three years. The questions were taken from a bank of questions on each topic that tested both tactical and strategic knowledge. These questions were weighted according to difficulty/level of specialism, and a percentage score was calculated out of a possible 100%. The benchmark has been tested in a range of commercial organisations before being made more broadly available. This confirms the results are aligned with the reality of an individual's skills. Questions are regularly updated to reflect the latest industry best-practice and are aligned with the Chartered Institute of Marketing professional standards and qualifications.

A Note on Quintiles:

Quintiles allow us see not only the average scores by industry but also understand within each industry where the range of skills are focussed. The quintiles breakdown shows what percentage of people sit within each of 5 segments across a 0-100% range. Identifying industries with the highest percentages in the top two quintiles allows us to identify industries that are doing particularly well (and those that aren't).



## ● Summary Results



# Digital Disciplines Breakdown

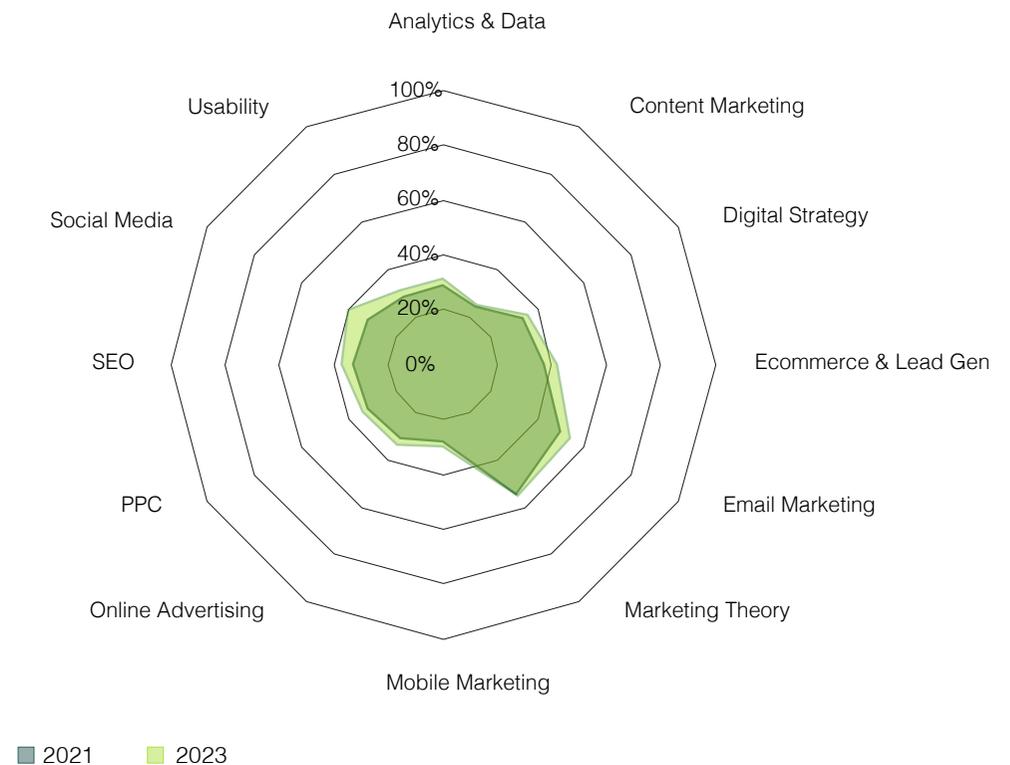
Overall, it's been a more positive picture in digital marketing skills over the past two years when compared to the period during and immediately after the pandemic. However, improvements made across most digital disciplines have been minor, and we are still a long way from having the level of marketing skills across all disciplines that our organisations really need. The digital marketing skills gap is still very clearly still an issue, and in several disciplines, skills have only just increased above pre-pandemic levels, with some areas having still not recovered.

Social media, Email, SEO, Lead Generation & Ecommerce have all seen reasonable improvements in skills levels over the last two years, with Usability and Online Advertising seeing improvements, but not quite at the same level. Analytics, Strategy, Mobile and PPC have seen small improvements, with Content and Marketing Theory barely improving at all.

Although we have seen improvements in Analytics & Data from 29% in 2021 through to 31% in 2023, this is still much lower than the previously recorded peak of 35%, which reflects much of the uncertainty and lack of familiarity with Google's GA4 analytics package.

It is important to note that the minor improvements we have seen have happened in an environment of increasingly rapid change, so this should reassure us that our investments in upskilling are paying dividends. However, we need to continue this investment and look at innovative ways of continuing to improve skills.

## All industries overview



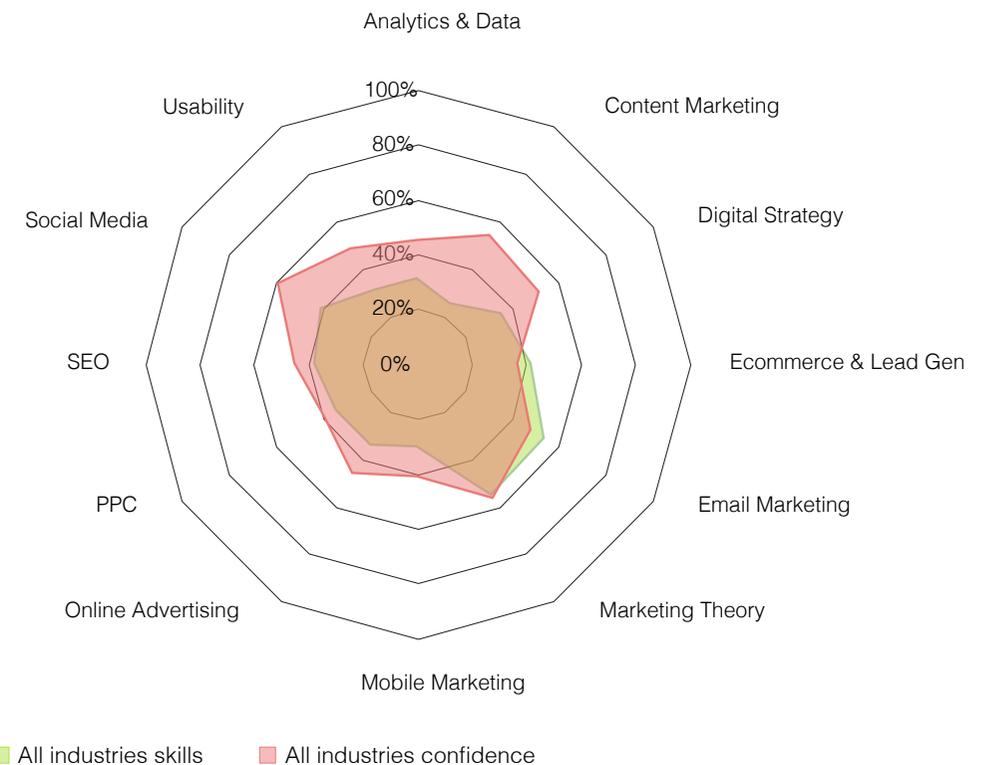
# Confidence ▶ vs Skills

The most concerning area that the data from the benchmark draws out is the gap between confidence and actual skill levels across the majority of digital marketing disciplines. With the exception of Marketing Theory, Email, Ecommerce and Lead Generation, our confidence levels are way beyond our actual ability. This was worst in Content, Usability and Social Media. When combined with overconfidence in Analytics, this leads to poor quality content, social engagement, and user experience, all of which are not being measured effectively to drive improvements.

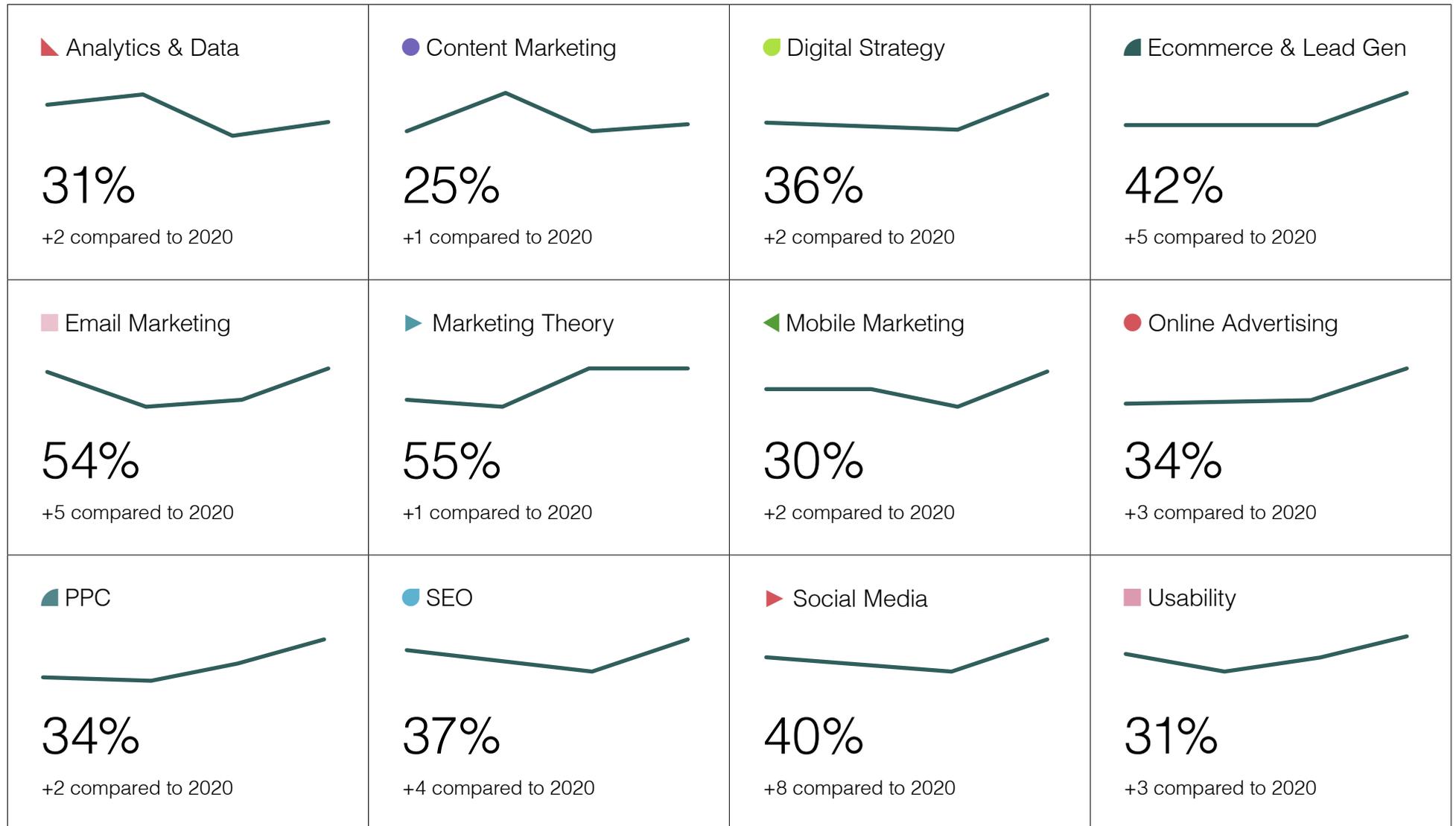
We also need to be aware of the quintile distribution within each discipline of digital marketing to see the impact that those with high skills levels and low skills levels are having on the average results we see. In many disciplines, we have a fairly well-spread-out range of people at different skill levels, and we would expect this with people who have different areas of specialism. However, within Analytics and Content, we have the majority of people at the lowest skill levels, with a much smaller number of people at anything above this.

In an environment of financial uncertainty, combined with rapid digital change being driven by AI, it is more important than ever that we take the digital skills challenge seriously and look at effective ways of improving our teams' skills and knowledge.

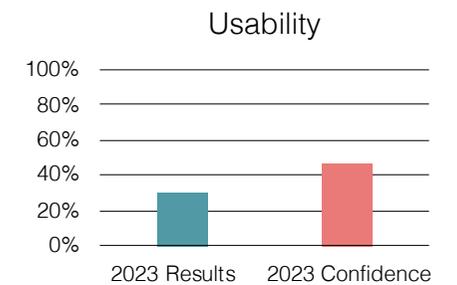
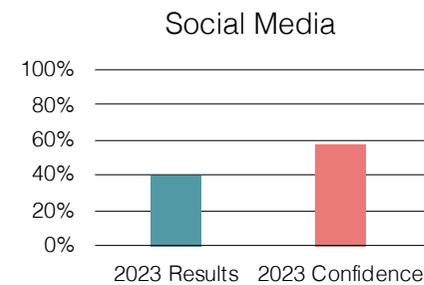
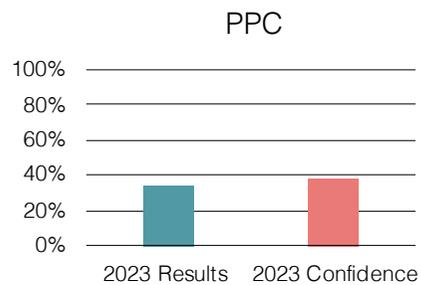
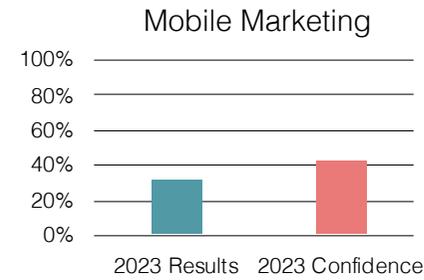
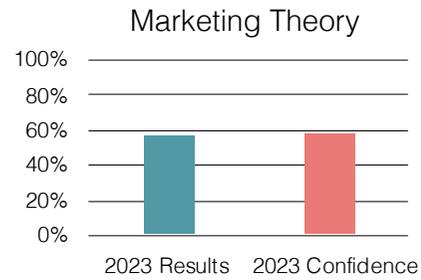
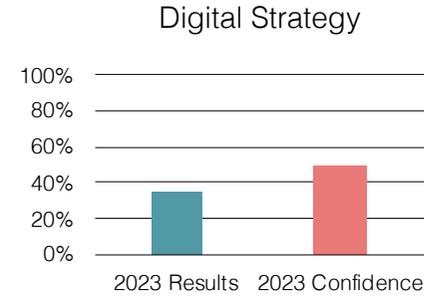
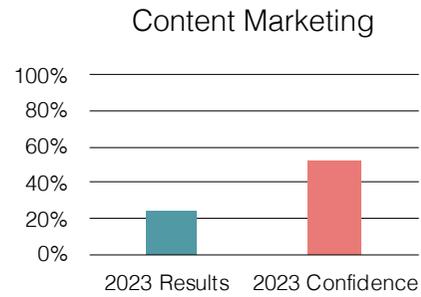
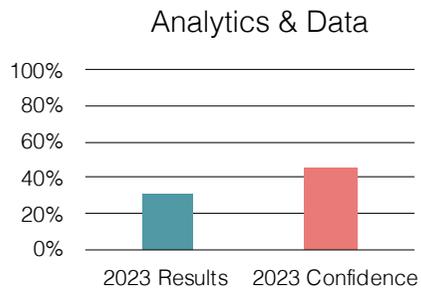
## ■ All industries overview



# All industries change over time



# All industries change over time



# Digital Discipline ◀ Quintile Breakdown

The quintile breakdown allows us to see the distribution of scores that made up the overall score for any particular area of digital marketing capability, and we have also provided this for each of our industry summaries.

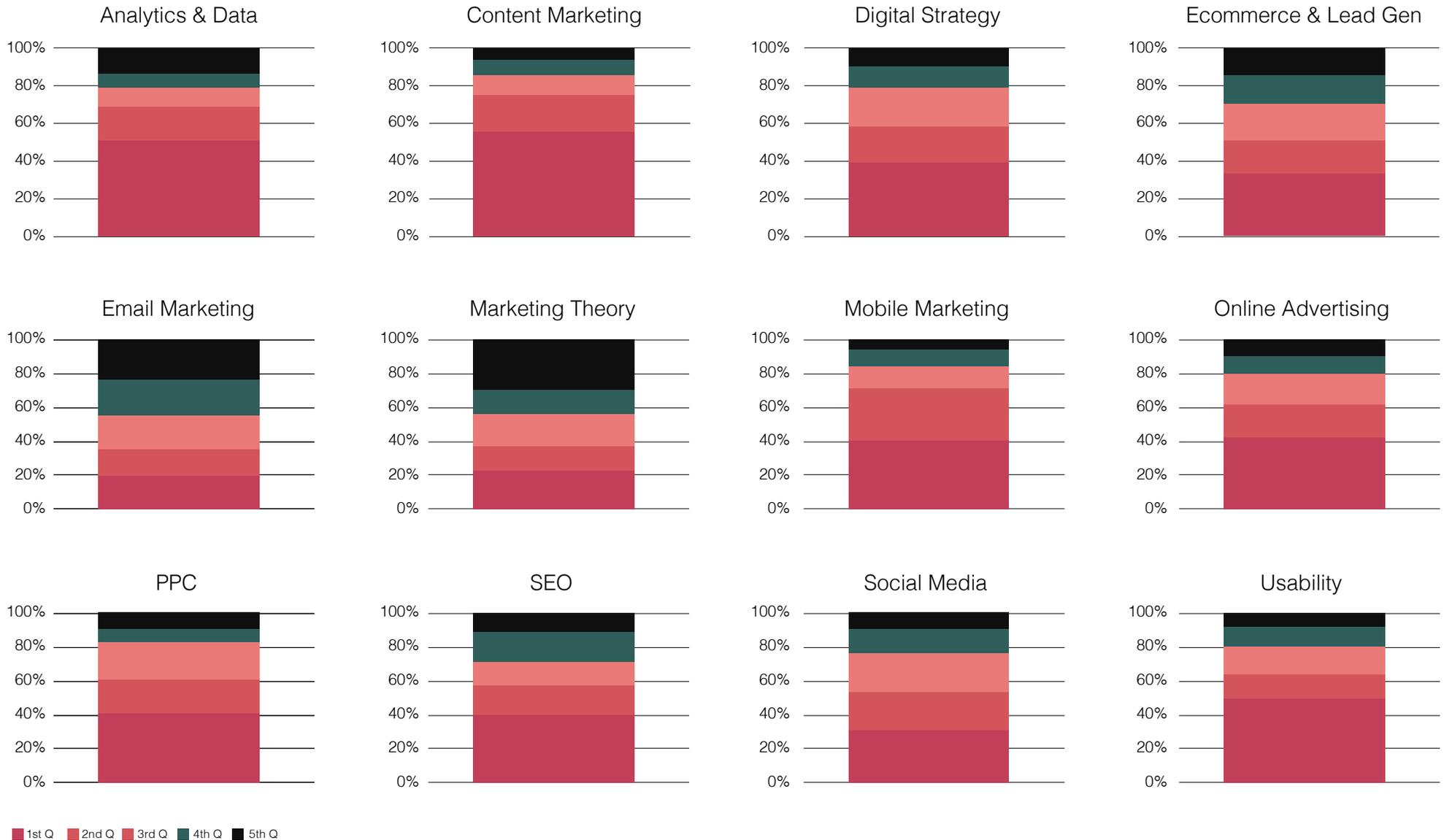
The lower quintiles represent people that achieved the lowest scores and the higher quintiles people that achieved the highest scores. The quintiles allow us to check how the overall score was achieved and can help us identify and major knowledge gaps.

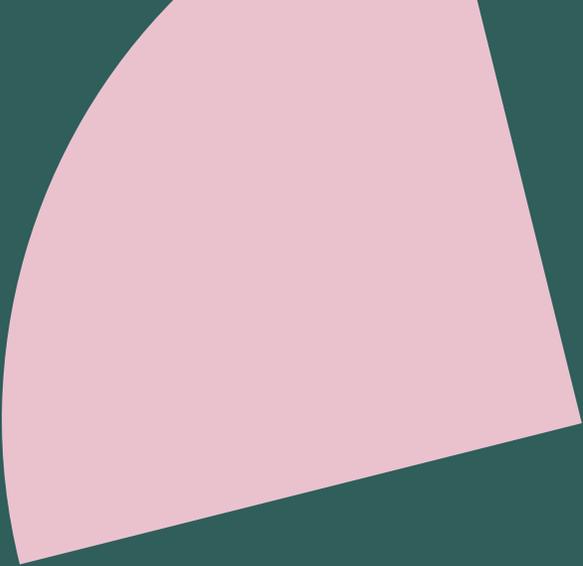
Analytics and data, Content Marketing and Usability have the highest percentage of people in the lowest quintiles. This is an area of concern, as it not only indicates a lack of expertise, but also is generally indicative of a group that 'don't know what they don't know'. Bearing in mind that Analytics & Data will impact all other areas, this should be an area of priority for many organisations. Analytics and Data however had a solid percentage of people in the highest quintile, indicating that this is an area where some organisations have specialists, but many people lack knowledge.

Marketing Theory has the highest percentage of people in the top quintile, followed by Email Marketing, indicating good levels of expertise across these topics. However, these are the two most 'traditional' and long standing of the capability areas measured, so this would align with people having more experience in these areas.



# Digital Discipline ◀ Quintile Breakdown





# Industry Breakdown





# AGENCY

As you would hope, agencies' general level of knowledge of digital was better than most other industry sectors. Of particular note, both SEO and social media marketing came in substantially higher - especially compared to more traditional digital marketing techniques, such as email marketing.

One area of disappointment came from digital strategy, which saw a disappointing drop compared to the data from 2021. As new technologies continue to emerge, it's critical we continue to deliver actionable, results focused marketing to benefit both businesses and wider society.

◀ Ellie Murphy FCIM  
Director, Flourish Marketing  
CIM Scotland Chair

# Agency

As we'd hope and expect, agencies continue to score above average across the majority of digital disciplines. However, we have seen some significant changes in scores in comparison to our previous benchmark. It is positive news within Social Media, with scores increasing significantly, which is particularly good to see in such a fast-changing environment. We've also seen decent improvements in Mobile and SEO, and a slight improvement in Usability.

What is more concerning is that we have seen slight drop backs across Strategy, Email, Analytics, Content and Advertising, with Strategy and Email being significant changes.

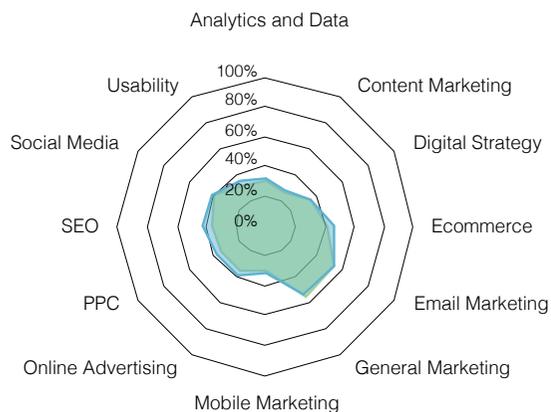
These changes could be reflective of the focus on fast-changing areas like Social and Search, without the same focus being on topics that are not perceived as changing quickly, like Strategy and Email. At the same time as seeing a fall back in scores in Strategy and Content, there is a big disparity in confidence levels and reality in these areas.

It's certainly a mixed picture for Agencies, which should mean a more comprehensive approach to skills is required.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Analytics & Data	32% -3 compared 2021		45%
Content Marketing	27% -2 compared 2021		55%
Digital Strategy	35% -6 compared 2021		55%
Ecommerce	46% 0 compared 2021		35%
Email Marketing	53% -6 compared 2021		45%
General Marketing	52% -4 compared 2021		54%

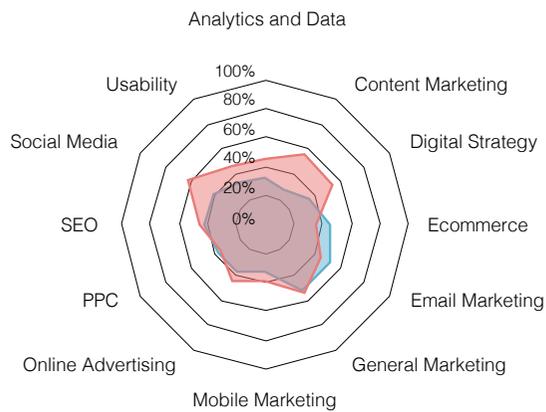
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Mobile Marketing	32% +4 compared 2021		39%
Online Advertising	37% -3 compared 2021		46%
PPC	38% +1 compared 2021		36%
SEO	42% +4 compared 2021		46%
Social Media	42% +11 compared 2021		62%
Usability	34% +2 compared 2021		46%

Skills vs All industries



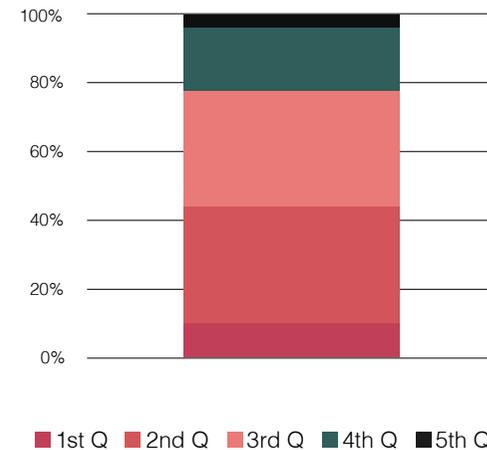
All industries Agency

Skills vs Confidence



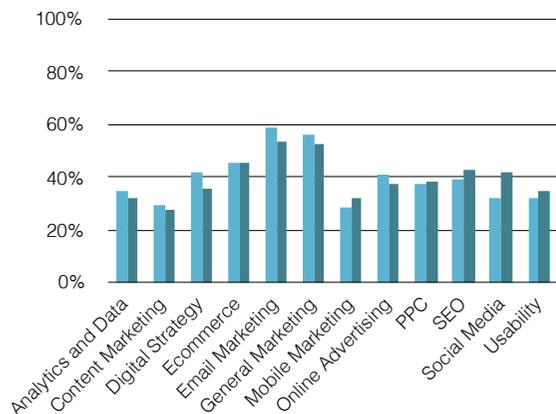
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



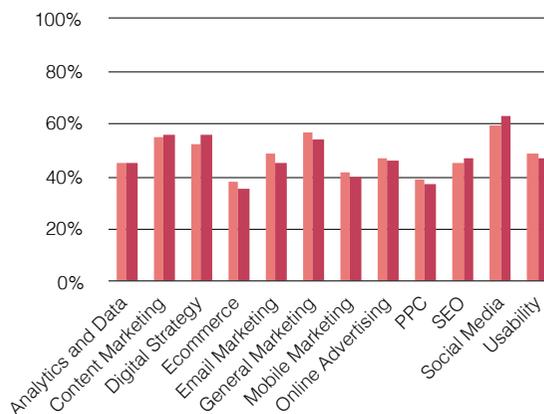
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Agency



AUTOMOTIVE



# Automotive

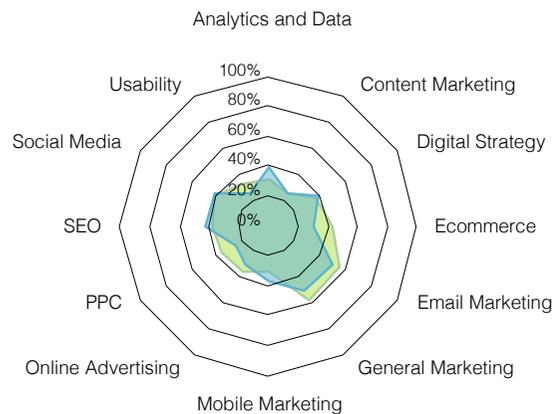
A real mixed picture for the Automotive industry this year, with as many areas of competency falling back as those improving. In better news, the Automotive industry has caught up with average results in many areas and has significantly improved in many important areas such as Strategy, Analytics, SEO, and Social Media. Interestingly, Paid Search and Ecommerce are the areas that have fallen back the most, and this could align with the broader challenges the industry has been facing in supply chain, sales volumes, and the move to electric vehicles.

The biggest disparities between confidence and ability fall in Ecommerce and Usability, potentially indicating that a greater focus on the user experience is required. There has certainly been improvement in the Automotive industry, but a more robust approach to skills with a greater focus on the user experience is required.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	39% +89 compared 2021		52%
 Content Marketing	25% -2 compared 2021		39%
 Digital Strategy	38% +8 compared 2021		51%
 Ecommerce	30% -12 compared 2021		54%
 Email Marketing	49% -5 compared 2021		49%
 General Marketing	48% +7 compared 2021		46%

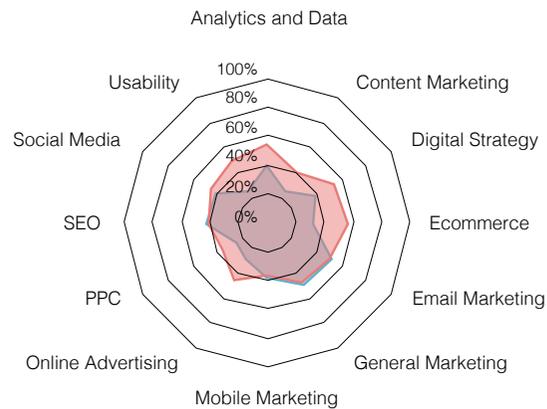
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	36% +8 compared 2021		34%
 Online Advertising	28% -2 compared 2021		44%
 PPC	25% -11 compared 2021		34%
 SEO	40% +7 compared 2021		39%
 Social Media	41% +7 compared 2021		44%
 Usability	25% -4 compared 2021		48%

Skills vs All industries



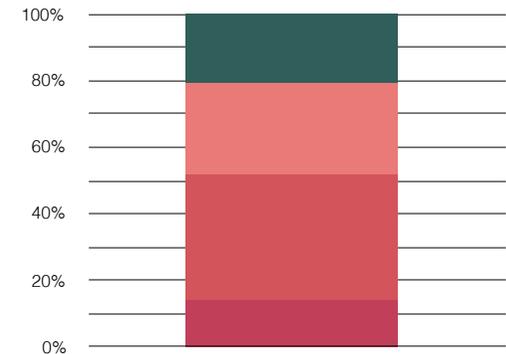
All industries Automotive

Skills vs Confidence



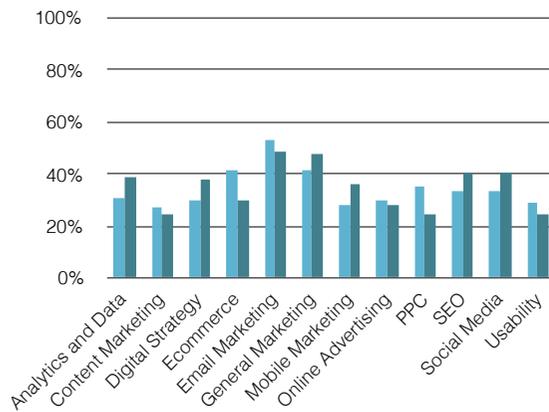
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



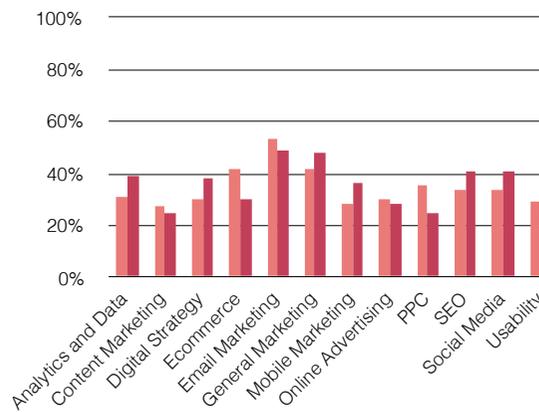
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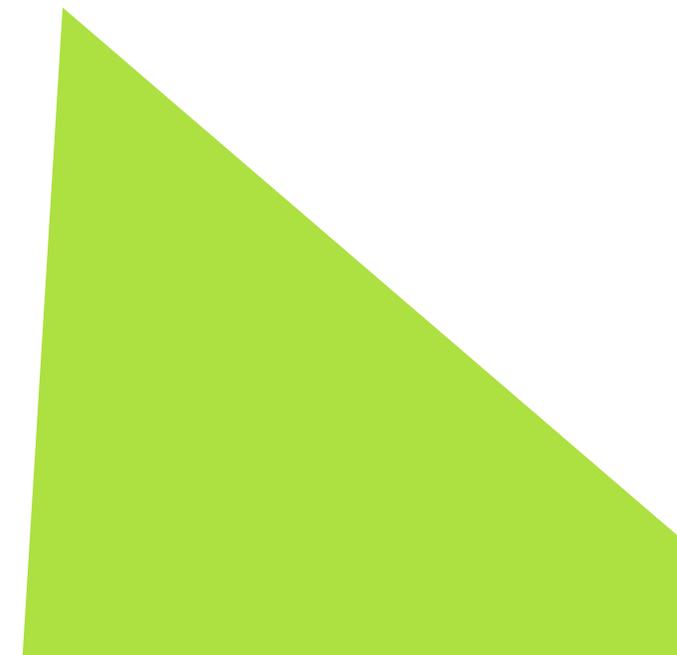


2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Automotive





■ AVIATION ●



# Aviation

It's the first time we've included the Aviation industry within the Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark, having now collected statistically significant data on the industry.

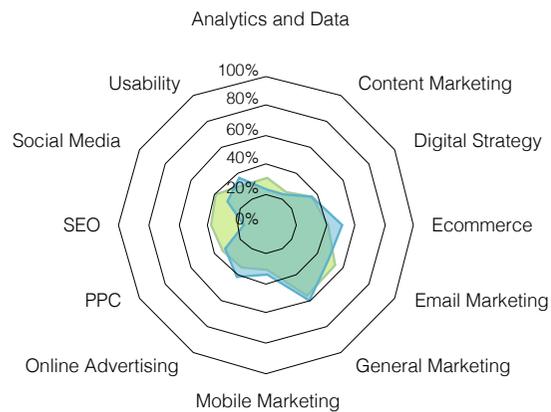
With the exception of SEO, the Aviation industry has scored pretty much in line with average scores, with slightly above average scores in Usability, Ecommerce and Paid Search, most likely reflected by the focus on online flight sales.

As an industry, confidence levels are way above the reality of skills within organisations, particularly in the areas of Strategy, Content Analytics and SEO. Overall, the results reflect an industry that is focused on a particular route to market, with many players doing similar things. This also means that anyone who takes a different focus or excels in a particular combination of competencies could really stand out.

Discipline	Result	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	24%	53%
 Content Marketing	23%	48%
 Digital Strategy	36%	63%
 Ecommerce	52%	55%
 Email Marketing	48%	55%
 General Marketing	59%	55%

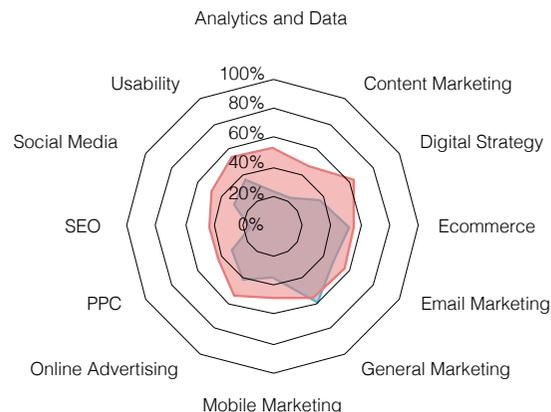
Discipline	Result	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	34%	48%
 Online Advertising	40%	53%
 PPC	32%	43%
 SEO	16%	43%
 Social Media	31%	48%
 Usability	36%	55%

Skills vs All industries



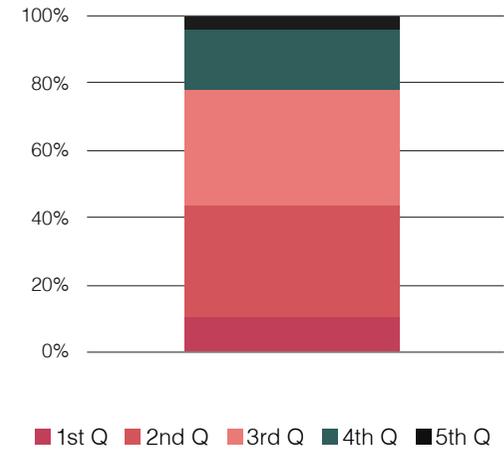
All industries Aviation

Skills vs Confidence

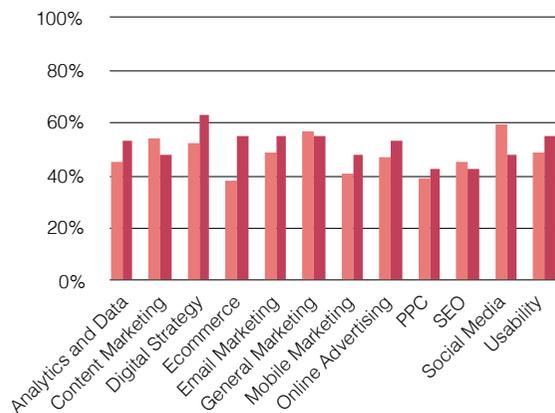


Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



Confidence vs All industries



All industries Aviation



## BEAUTY & COSMETICS

A very ▲ impressive return for the beauty and cosmetics industry as it ◀ improves almost every marketing discipline measured in the report. Exceptional gains in general marketing and mobile marketing are the headline figures, but social media and email marketing improvements should also be commended. There are just a couple of small areas of concern in analytics & data and online advertising, so if these can be addressed then the industry will be set up nicely for continued strong ■ performances.

● Louise Yankovic-Jenkins  
Global Marketing Director, Pai Skincare

# Beauty & Cosmetics

Overall, there has been excellent progress in the Beauty and Cosmetics industry since our last benchmark. There have been very significant improvements across Core Marketing, Mobile, Email and Social Media. This means an industry that was previously lagging behind average is now in line or very slightly ahead of average in all areas of competency.

A concern is overconfidence across a number of areas, particularly within Strategy, Analytics, Content, Usability and Social Media.

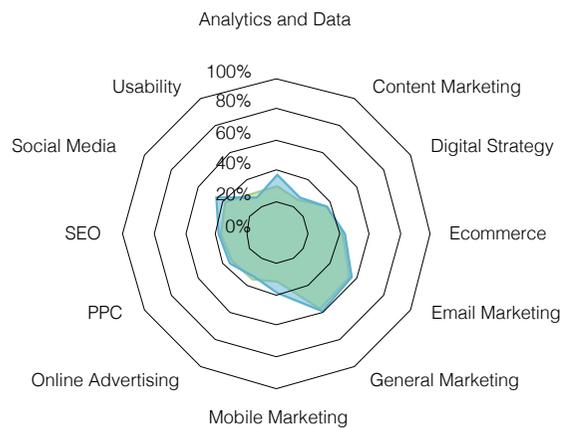
Another point to note is the lack of respondents that fall into the top quintile, indicating a lack of internal advanced skills, which is often reflective of a reliance on agencies for some areas of expertise.

Overall, there is some great progress for Beauty and Cosmetics, with a need to focus on ongoing skills development to avoid any overconfidence, which can lead to marketing missteps or wasted budget.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	38% -2 compared 2021		58%
 Content Marketing	27% +1 compared 2021		64%
 Digital Strategy	36% +4 compared 2021		63%
 Ecommerce	43% +3 compared 2021		44%
 Email Marketing	55% +9 compared 2021		39%
 General Marketing	68% +24 compared 2021		64%

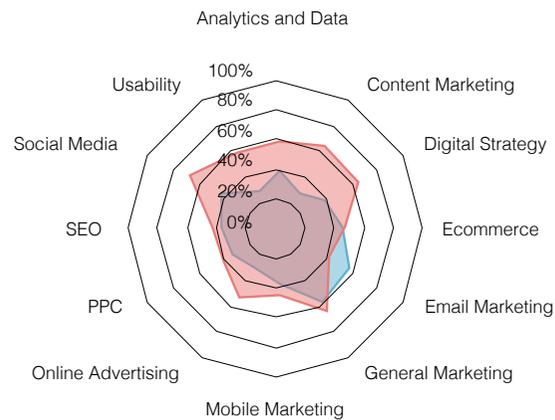
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	38% +15 compared 2021		46%
 Online Advertising	31% -4 compared 2021		55%
 PPC	36% +6 compared 2021		44%
 SEO	39% +2 compared 2021		46%
 Social Media	46% +9 compared 2021		70%
 Usability	28% 0 compared 2021		59%

Skills vs All industries



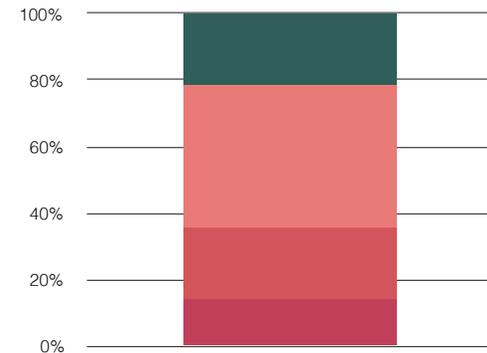
All industries Beauty & Cosmetics

Skills vs Confidence



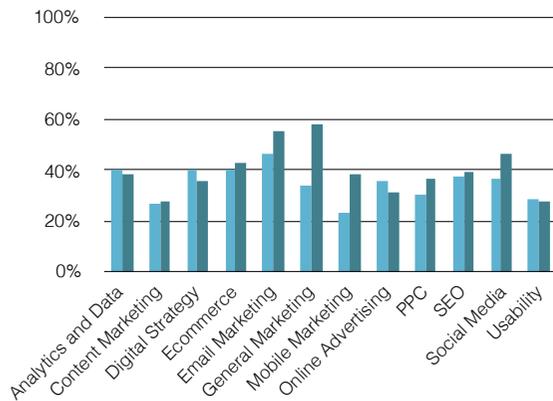
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



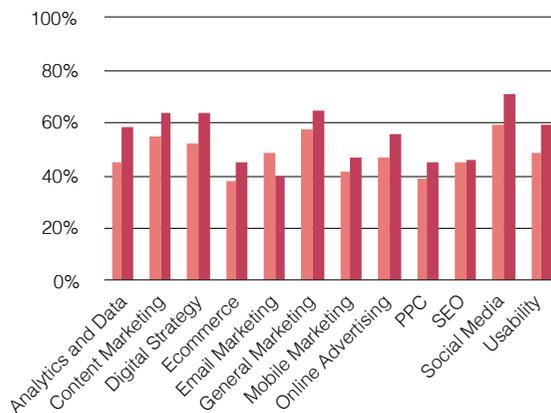
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21 vs 23

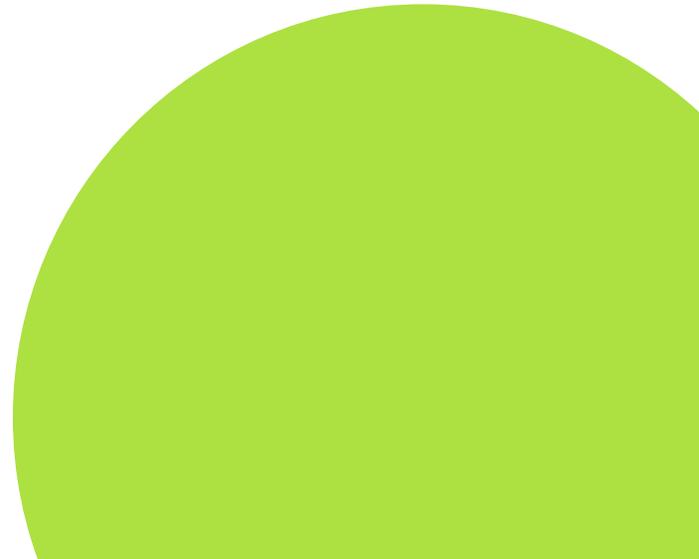


2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Beauty & Cosmetics





# CHARITY

Big ◀ improvements across the board, with double digit advancements across four individual areas, including digital strategy and social media. This considerable improvement reflects an industry that is making better planned use of the opportunities presented by ● digital marketing, and there's wellfounded optimism that the sector is ▲ transforming its capabilities in such a competitive landscape.

● Sarah Raine  
Colley Raine and Associates  
CIM Charity and Social Marketing Chair

# Charity

Overall, it is a picture of great progress within the charity sector, with all capability areas except one seeing good improvements. Most notably, there were significant improvements in Content, Strategy, Social and Usability. The only area that didn't improve was Core Marketing, as this stayed static.

Previously, the Charity sector had lagged behind average benchmark results, so this change puts the sector mostly in line with average scores with some small variances.

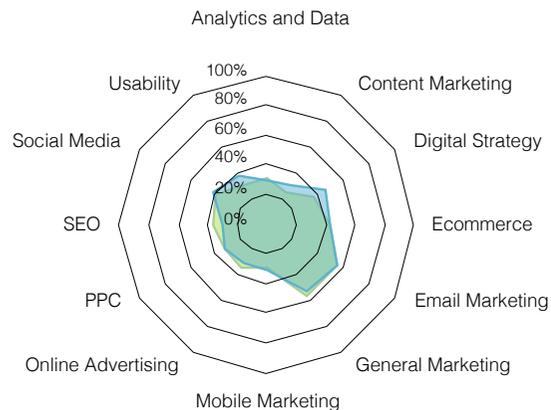
There is also less of a gap between confidence and reality compared to most sectors, with the only real overconfidence in Content, which is common in the majority of industries.

This means the Charity sector has made great progress, and any organisations that can push their skills beyond these industry averages have the opportunity to make their marketing efforts really stand out.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	29% +2 compared 2021		42%
 Content Marketing	30% +11 compared 2021		54%
 Digital Strategy	45% +11 compared 2021		49%
 Ecommerce	43% +5 compared 2021		26%
 Email Marketing	55% +3 compared 2021		53%
 General Marketing	53% 0 compared 2021		58%

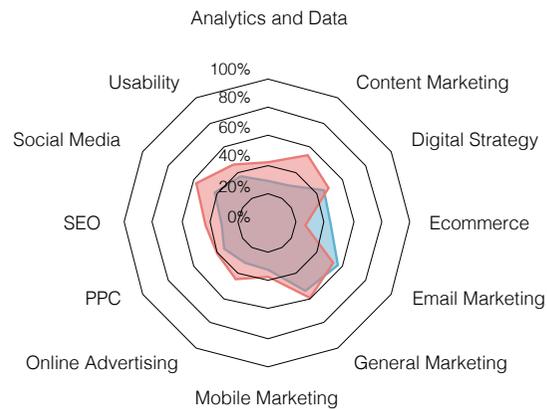
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	30% +6 compared 2021		36%
 Online Advertising	31% +7 compared 2021		43%
 PPC	34% +8 compared 2021		40%
 SEO	31% +3 compared 2021		42%
 Social Media	43% +11 compared 2021		57%
 Usability	38% +12 compared 2021		46%

Skills vs All industries



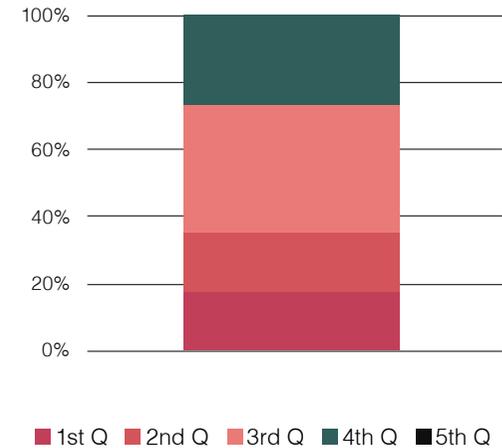
All industries Charity

Skills vs Confidence



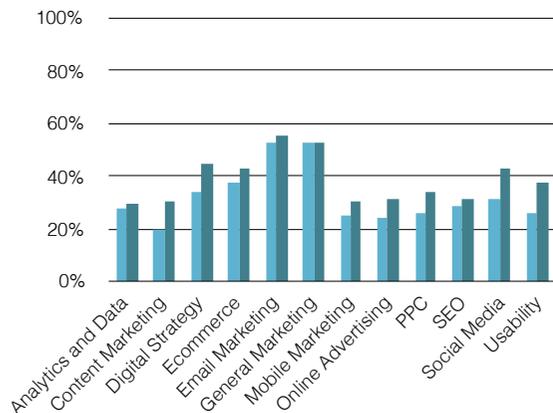
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



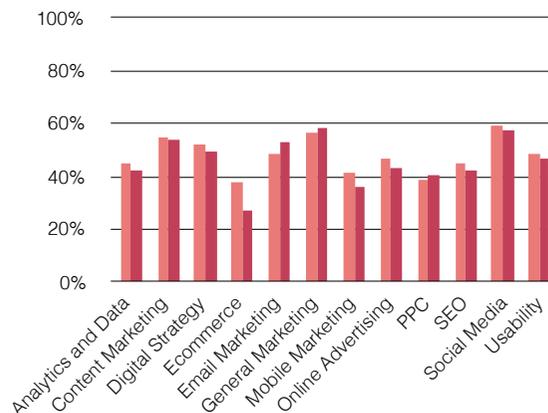
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Charity



# CONSTRUCTION

# & PROPERTY

This is the third time the construction and property industry has been analysed independently in the ◀ benchmark, again scoring poorly overall against the average in all disciplines. There is plenty to be optimistic about though, with the sector witnessing a huge swing in a number of ▲ digital areas, in particular general marketing, email marketing and social media. There are still areas to focus on ● improving, and with the increasing investment in AI it's time to further consider how we approach ■ content generation and campaign development.

◀ Alex Aldous  
Head of Marketing and Communications, Gleeds  
CIM Construction Chair

# Construction & Property

Some really good progress for the Construction and Property industry in this benchmark, with improvements in all but two competency areas (and only a very slight fall back in the areas that didn't improve). The most significant improvements were in Core Marketing, Social Media, and Usability.

Previously, the Construction and Property sector had lagged behind average benchmark results, so this change puts the sector mostly in line with average scores with some small variances, with only Mobile lagging behind significantly (reflecting the poor user experience still given some major market players).

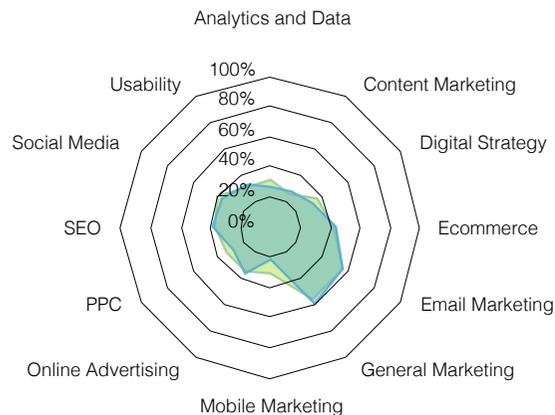
An area for concern is overconfidence across a number of areas, particularly within Strategy, Analytics, Content, Usability and Social Media. This overconfidence is common across many industries but should be noted in an industry that is only just catching up with average scores.

The Construction and Property sector is another one that has shown great progress but is still wide open for disruption for any industry player that can really excel and use their skills to stand out.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	26% -2 compared 2021		49%
 Content Marketing	26% +2 compared 2021		51%
 Digital Strategy	31% +3 compared 2021		55%
 Ecommerce	43% +6 compared 2021		31%
 Email Marketing	55% +9 compared 2021		48%
 General Marketing	57% +16 compared 2021		56%

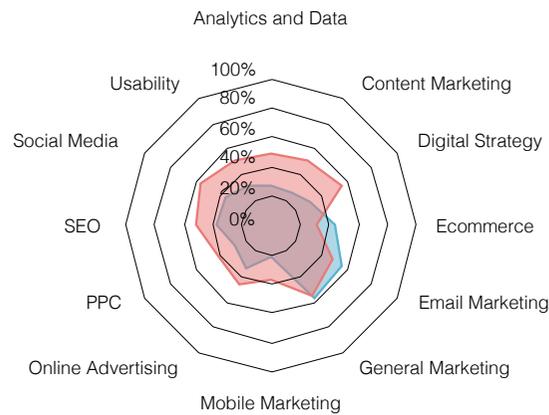
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	22% -2 compared 2021		38%
 Online Advertising	37% +4 compared 2021		36%
 PPC	29% +3 compared 2021		43%
 SEO	38% +3 compared 2021		52%
 Social Media	37% +10 compared 2021		57%
 Usability	31% +8 compared 2021		51%

Skills vs All industries



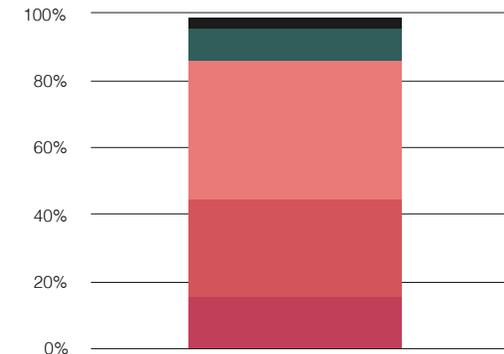
All industries Construction & Property

Skills vs Confidence



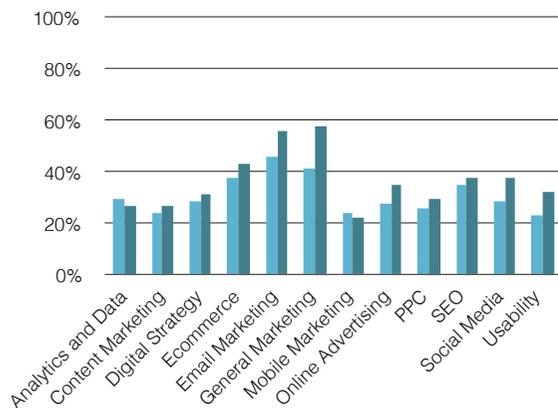
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



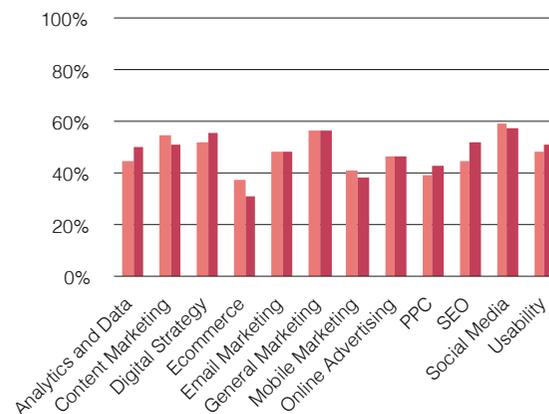
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Construction & Property



# CONSULTANCY

Consultancy  performed well in almost all areas of digital, with a considerable uptick in both general and email marketing. These are areas in which B2B sectors have traditionally  performed well. Since digital impacts almost all areas of business, and should be a key area of focus for the consultancy industry, it is positive to see organisations prioritise  improving digital skills.

 Max Stricker  
Founder & Director, Ortum Consulting

## ► CONSULTANCY

The Consultancy industry had previously, and perhaps counter-intuitively, always struggled in the Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark and fallen behind average scores across pretty much all competency sectors. This was because of the specialist nature of many organisations that fall into this category, such as accountancy and other professional services. This benchmark has seen great progress, however, and moved the industry much more in line with average scores.

There was significant improvement across Content, Strategy, Email, and Core Marketing, with smaller but good improvements in Analytics, SEO and

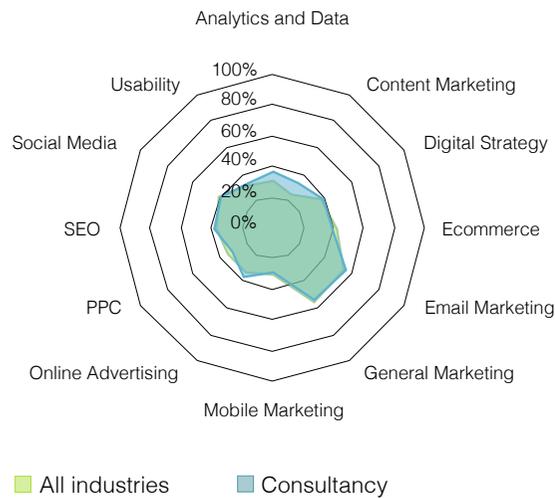
Social. It was only in Advertising, Mobile and Ecommerce that saw small moves backwards. There is also less of a gap between confidence and reality compared to many sectors, with the only real overconfidence in Content, which is common in the majority of industries.

Overall, there is some great progress in the Consultancy industry, with room for improvement to move beyond the overall average results.

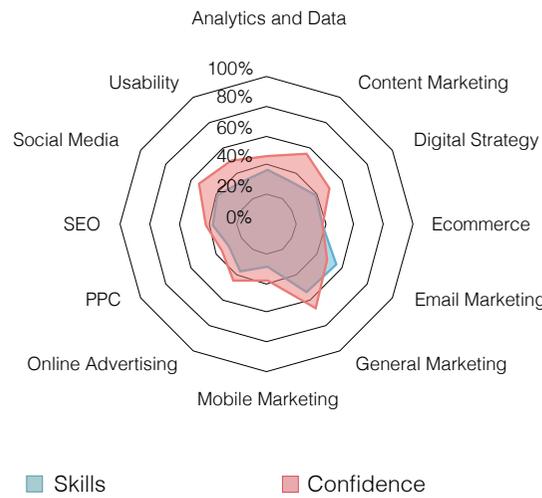
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Analytics & Data	36% +6 compared 2021		46%
Content Marketing	34% +11 compared 2021		55%
Digital Strategy	38% +9 compared 2021		49%
Ecommerce	39% -3 compared 2021		38%
Email Marketing	56% +14 compared 2021		48%
General Marketing	53% +14 compared 2021		66%

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Mobile Marketing	29% -1 compared 2021		39%
Online Advertising	36% +4 compared 2021		45%
PPC	30% -4 compared 2021		35%
SEO	38% +5 compared 2021		42%
Social Media	39% +7 compared 2021		54%
Usability	33% +3 compared 2021		50%

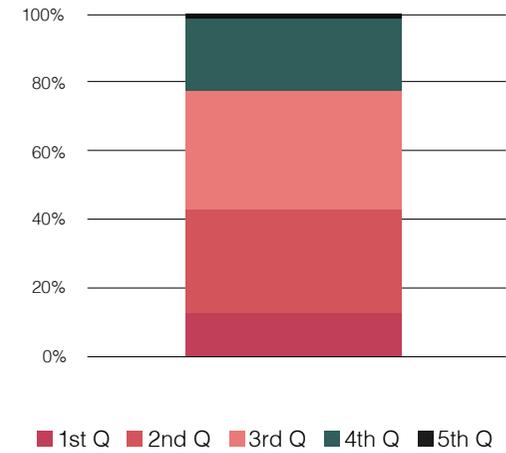
Skills vs All industries



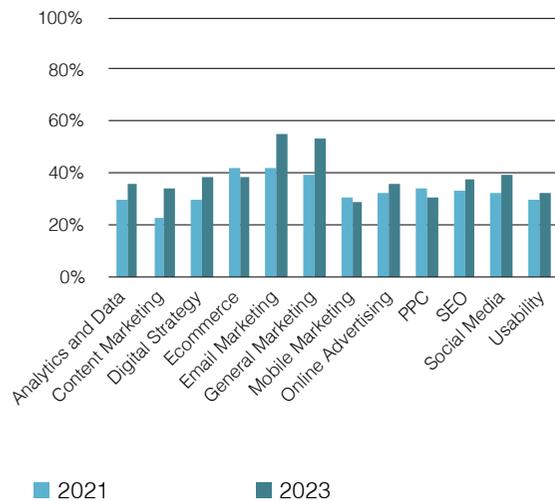
Skills vs Confidence



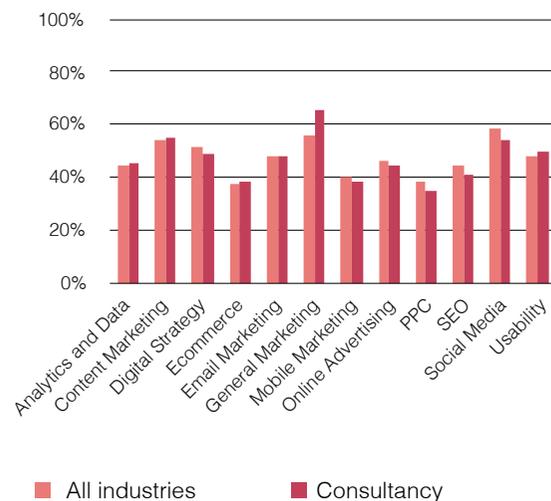
Quintile Distribution



21 vs 23



Confidence vs All industries





CONSUMER

GOODS

Significant ■ gains in general marketing, PPC and content marketing are at odds with some underwhelming results elsewhere for consumer goods. With a number of disciplines seeing negative growth or remaining at 2021 levels, the industry should focus on more ▲ sustainable improvements across the board rather than putting too many eggs in too few baskets.

● Ankur Bagga  
E-commerce and Retail Marketing Manager,  
TP-Link UK

# Consumer Goods

A very interesting industry in this benchmark due to very significant improvements in some competencies that were previously a weak point for the industry. This was accompanied by a slight drift in many other areas. Core Marketing, Paid Search, Content and Strategy all saw great improvements, with all other areas staying static or falling back. The most significant fall back was in Social Media.

This mixed bag of changes means that the Consumer Goods industry doesn't really fall in line with average results. Against average, the results the industry does above average in Core Marketing, Strategy, Content and Paid Search

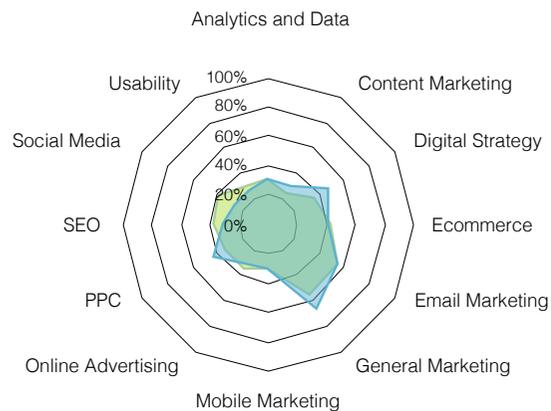
and lags behind in most other areas. These unusual results are common for any industry that relies on non-direct routes to market, such as retailers and partners. However, it should be noted that some outliers that went direct to consumers, scored above averages across the majority of areas.

These results mean that there is still lots of opportunity for Consumer Goods brands to stand out from their competitors by utilising poorly leveraged channels, taking original routes to market or by building brands in original ways.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Analytics & Data	31% 0 compared 2021		49%
Content Marketing	31% +11 compared 2021		54%
Digital Strategy	48% +8 compared 2021		46%
Ecommerce	40% +2 compared 2021		44%
Email Marketing	54% -3 compared 2021		46%
General Marketing	66% +29 compared 2021		56%

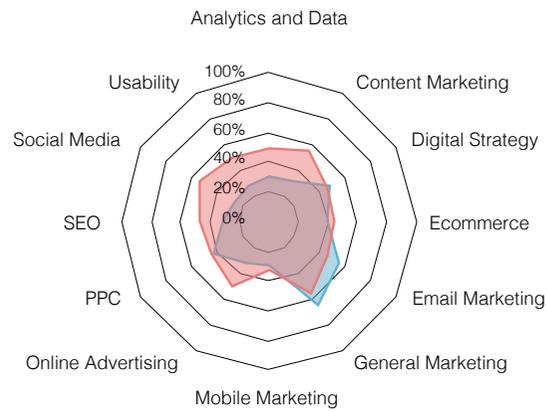
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Mobile Marketing	30% -3 compared 2021		33%
Online Advertising	32% -1 compared 2021		51%
PPC	44% +14 compared 2021		44%
SEO	31% -2 compared 2021		47%
Social Media	27% -6 compared 2021		54%
Usability	27% +1 compared 2021		50%

Skills vs All industries



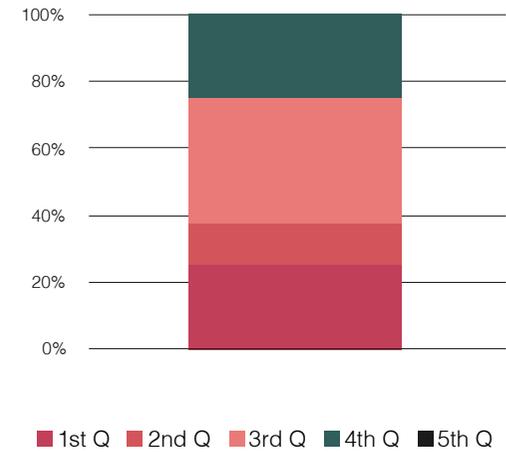
All industries Consumer Goods

Skills vs Confidence



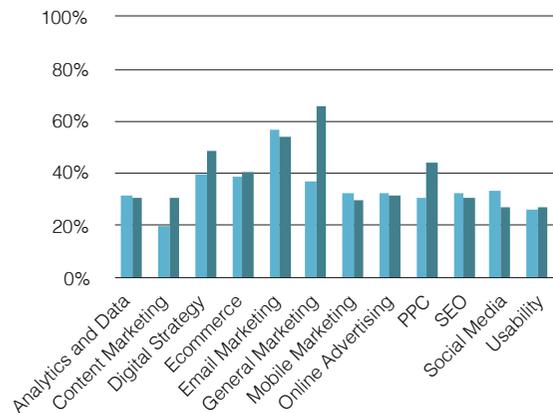
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



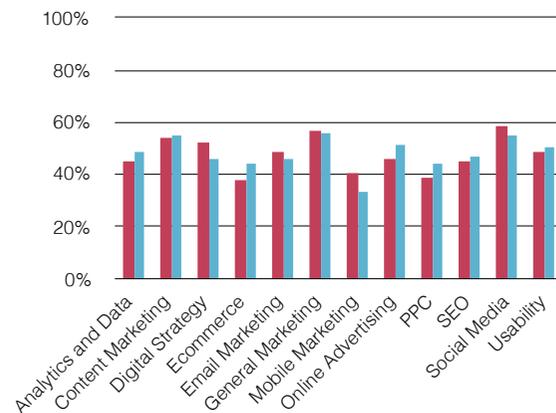
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23

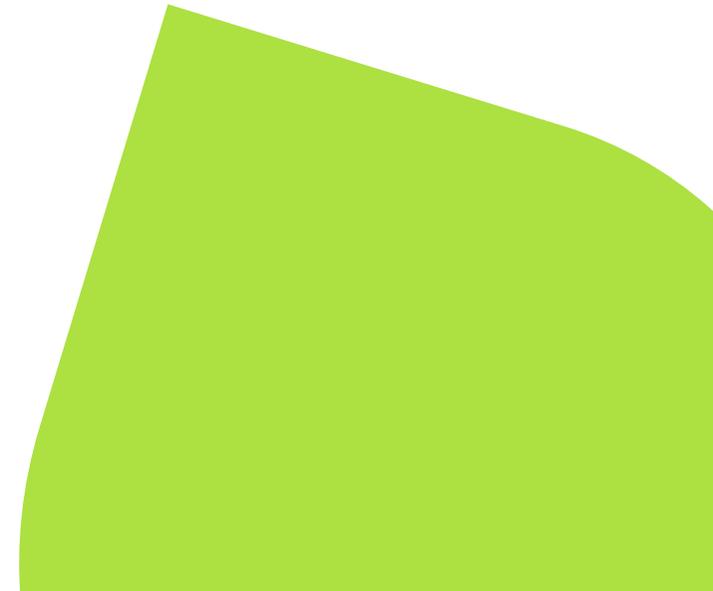


2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Consumer Goods



A group of people are gathered around a table, looking at a laptop. The scene is brightly lit, possibly from a window. On the table, there is a laptop, a smartphone, a coffee cup, and some papers. A red and teal graphic overlay is positioned over the laptop and the people's hands. The text 'ECOMMERCE &' is in a red box, and 'ONLINE' is in a teal box. A large teal shape is in the bottom left corner.

# ECOMMERCE & ONLINE

Ecommerce has been a ● forerunner within the digital space, witnessing ▲ growth across all but one discipline in the last survey, with content marketing seeing a slight fall. It's both understandable and ◀ encouraging to see the congruence between digital marketing and ecommerce, with the industry able to attract some of the most tech savvy within the sector.

■ Andrea Snagg  
Vice President Marketing, Gcore  
CIM Greater London Chair

# Ecommerce/Online

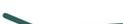
The Ecommerce/Online industry is one that you would intuitively expect to do well in the Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark. However, previous benchmarks have shown an industry that has actually been slightly below average due to its highly diverse makeup of organisations. This benchmark has seen great progress in all areas of competency except one. The most significant improvements have been in Social Media and Email, with just Content falling back slightly.

These changes have put the Ecommerce/Industry pretty much in line with average results. An area for concern is overconfidence across a number of

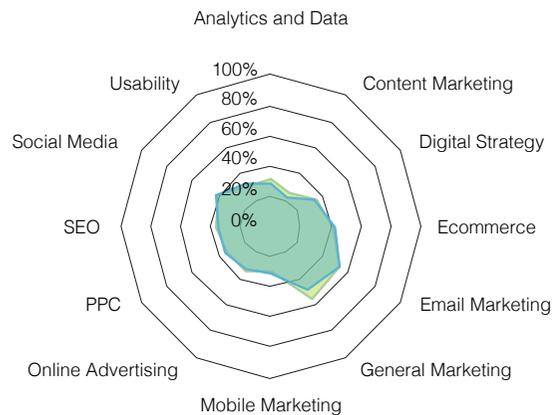
areas, particularly within Strategy, Analytics, Content, Usability and Social Media. This overconfidence is common across many industries but should be noted in an industry that is only just catching up with average scores.

Outliers within this sector show that those organisations that excel and score above average across the range of competencies tend to perform better, and therefore, there is a significant opportunity within the industry to improve benchmark results and organisational performance.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	29% +1 compared 2021		42%
 Content Marketing	22% -3 compared 2021		51%
 Digital Strategy	34% +6 compared 2021		50%
 Ecommerce	43% +8 compared 2021		43%
 Email Marketing	53% +12 compared 2021		46%
 General Marketing	48% +3 compared 2021		54%

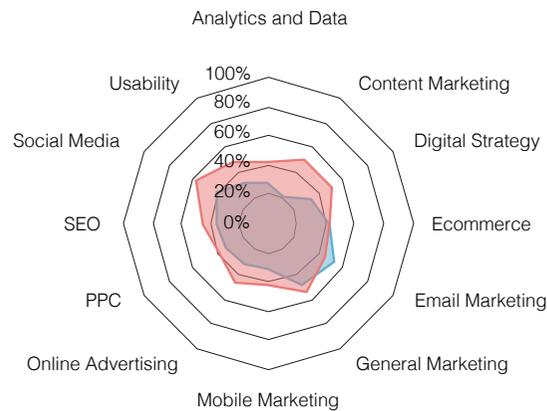
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	32% +8 compared 2021		43%
 Online Advertising	32% +2 compared 2021		47%
 PPC	34% +5 compared 2021		39%
 SEO	36% +3 compared 2021		45%
 Social Media	42% +16 compared 2021		59%
 Usability	32% +7 compared 2021		48%

Skills vs All industries



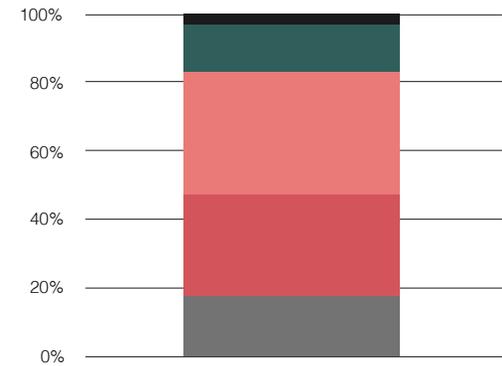
All industries Ecommerce/Online

Skills vs Confidence



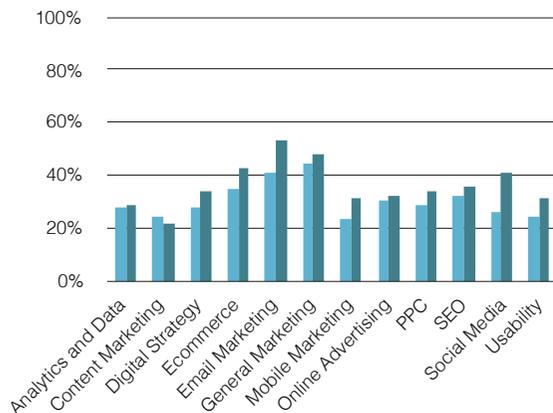
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



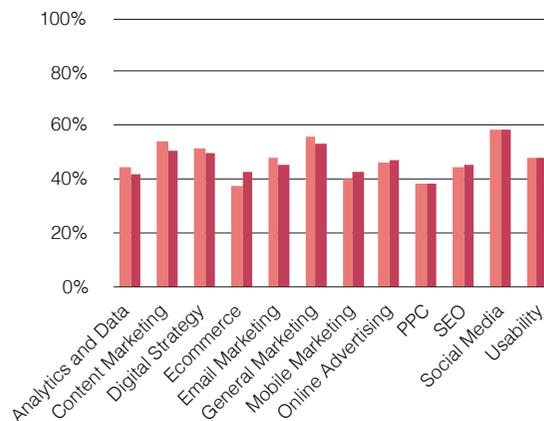
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Ecommerce/Online



EDUCATION

& TRAINING

The education sector has seen considerable uptick across the board, in a positive move for digital ■ skills. Previously, it was one of several sectors that scored well in traditional marketing techniques and email marketing but struggled in all other aspects of ▲ digital. While it remains strong in these areas, the onus is shifting, with considerable ● strides being made especially in SEO and ecommerce.

◀ Claire Pryke  
University of Bradford  
CIM Yorkshire Chair

# Education & Training

Education and Training has seen significant changes since the last benchmark, with improvements across all competency areas. The most significant improvements were in SEO, Core Marketing, Ecommerce, Strategy and Email. This is generally reflective of an industry that has been undergoing significant modernisation, with many new entrants scoring much higher than incumbents trying to modernise. However, it should be noted that many incumbents have improved significantly in recent years.

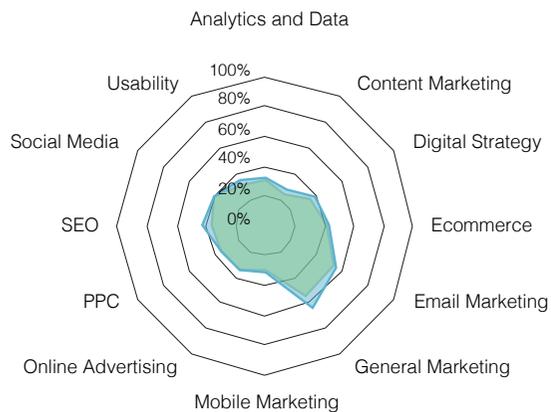
This has led to an industry that is generally slightly above average and has become increasingly competitive. However, there is also clear overconfidence in Strategy, Content, Analytics, Usability, Social Media, and Online Advertising.

These above-average results mean a focus on benchmarking, identifying skills gaps and trying to create above-average upskilling programmes will be needed for commercial success.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	33% +3 compared 2021		46%
 Content Marketing	28% +2 compared 2021		60%
 Digital Strategy	38% +8 compared 2021		54%
 Ecommerce	43% +9 compared 2021		37%
 Email Marketing	56% +8 compared 2021		54%
 General Marketing	64% +10 compared 2021		62%

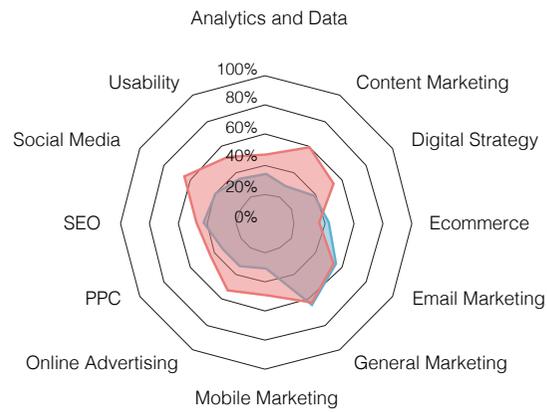
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	31% +4 compared 2021		49%
 Online Advertising	35% +6 compared 2021		54%
 PPC	34% +2 compared 2021		44%
 SEO	42% +11 compared 2021		47%
 Social Media	41% +5 compared 2021		64%
 Usability	36% +6 compared 2021		51%

Skills vs All industries



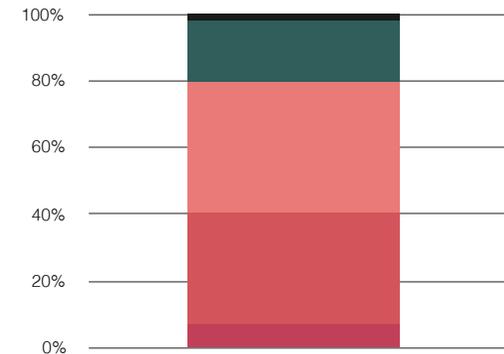
All industries Education & Training

Skills vs Confidence



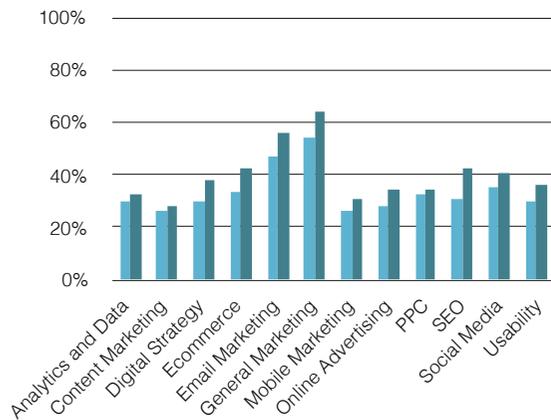
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



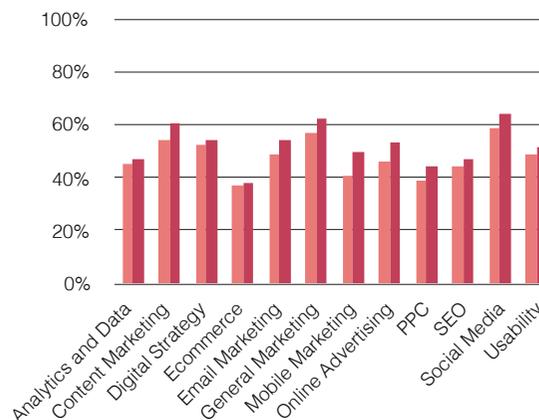
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Education & Training



# ELECTRONICS & ENGINEERING

The electronics and engineering industry is standing out as making significant improvement in most areas of digital marketing. It is exciting to see above average scoring coming through overall. Skills in SEO, ecommerce and e-mail marketing are growing strongly, with similar momentum in data analytics and usability. Our industry is well positioned to attract and nurture talent in all disciplines to best drive and inform winning digital marketing strategies.

▲ Alan Ifould  
Head of Business Development, Edwards Ltd.

# ◀ Electronics & Engineering

Electronics and Engineering, a particularly B2B focussed sector, has previously struggled in the Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark, scoring well below average scores. This benchmark, however, shows great progress across all but two areas of competency. The most significant improvements were in Analytics, Ecommerce, Email, SEO, and Usability. The only areas to fall back very slightly were Mobile and Paid Search.

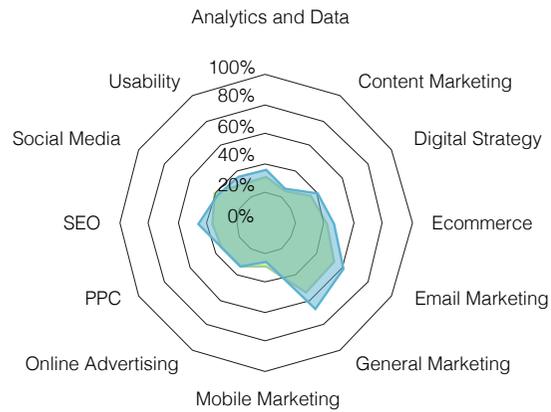
These improvements are reflective of a fast-modernising industry, but these fast-changing industries always also have outliers that are both struggling and excelling, as indicated by the breakdown of skills within individual organisations.

This has led to an industry that is scoring slightly above average in all areas except in Social Media and Mobile. This means that the focus on digital marketing skills will need to be increasingly focused in order to stand out from the competition, and any outliers falling behind will need to catch up quickly.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
▲ Analytics & Data	35% +11 compared 2021		49%
● Content Marketing	27% +3 compared 2021		49%
■ Digital Strategy	41% +8 compared 2021		48%
■ Ecommerce	47% +14 compared 2021		39%
■ Email Marketing	62% +14 compared 2021		51%
▶ General Marketing	68% +8 compared 2021		54%

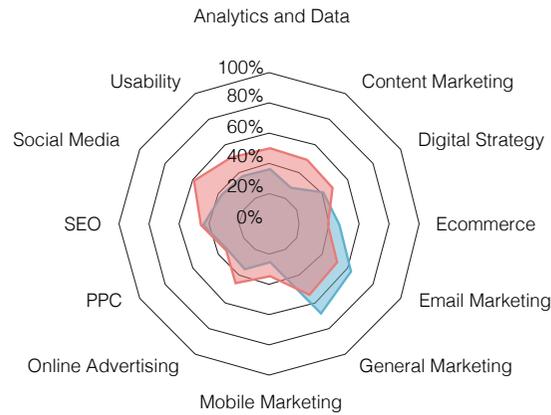
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
◀ Mobile Marketing	26% -3 compared 2021		43%
● Online Advertising	32% +2 compared 2021		35%
■ PPC	34% -1 compared 2021		34%
● SEO	45% +14 compared 2021		46%
▶ Social Media	38% +3 compared 2021		58%
■ Usability	36% +9 compared 2021		52%

Skills vs All industries



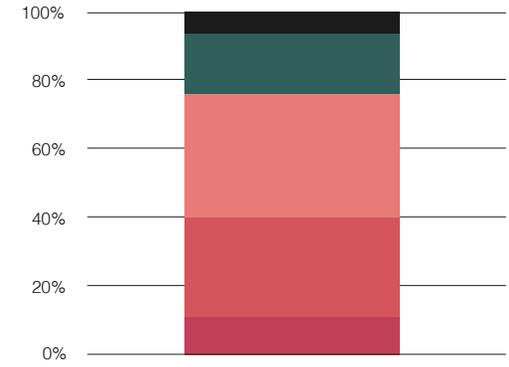
All industries    Electronics & Engineering

Skills vs Confidence



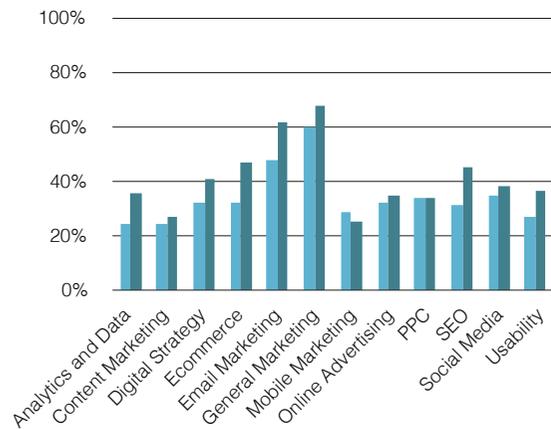
Skills    Confidence

Quintile Distribution



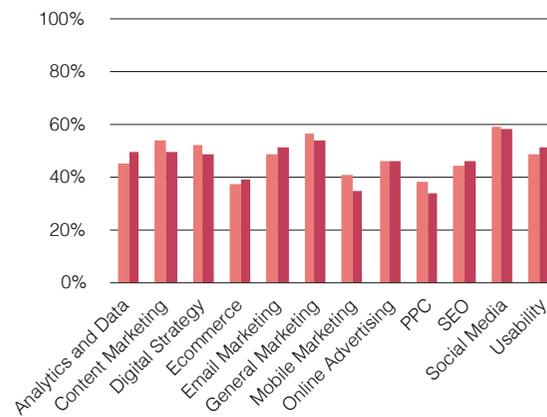
1st Q    2nd Q    3rd Q    4th Q    5th Q

21 vs 23



2021    2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries    Electronics & Engineering



EVENTS &  
CONFERENCING



# Events & Conferencing

The Events and Conferences industry was perhaps surprisingly below average in the majority of digital capability areas in previous benchmarks. The move toward digitally promoted and supported events, as well as hybrid and purely online events, has clearly accelerated the industry, and this benchmark saw improvements in the majority of capability areas. The greatest progress was in SEO, Social Media, Email, Strategy and Analytics. However, there was a small shift backwards for Core Marketing and Mobile.

These changes have led to an industry that has a mixed bag of results in comparison to average results. Social Media, SEO, Paid Search, Email, Core

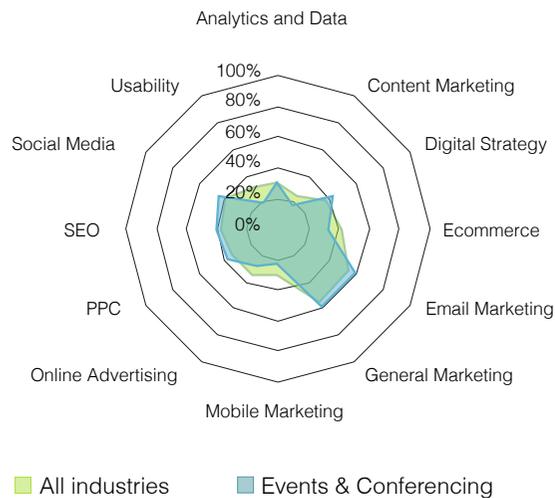
Marketing and Strategy all now fall very slightly above average, with Usability, Content, Ecommerce, Mobile, Advertising and Usability all slightly below average.

This mixed bag of results is reflective of an industry with a very broad range of capabilities, with lots of outliers and little consistency. These kinds of results are normally indicative of an industry in need of digital transformation and with lots of opportunities (and lots of risk for laggards in digital skills).

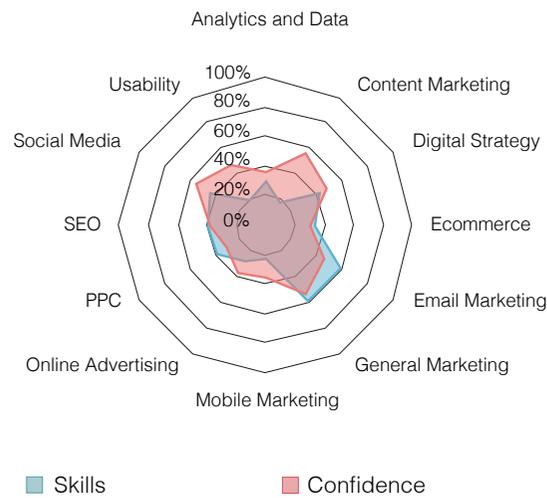
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Analytics & Data	30% +13 compared 2021		36%
Content Marketing	18% 0 compared 2021		55%
Digital Strategy	42% +14 compared 2021		48%
Ecommerce	33% +6 compared 2021		30%
Email Marketing	58% +15 compared 2021		45%
General Marketing	59% -5 compared 2021		54%

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Mobile Marketing	23% -3 compared 2021		35%
Online Advertising	29% 0 compared 2021		37%
PPC	38% 0 compared 2021		31%
SEO	40% +20 compared 2021		38%
Social Media	44% +16 compared 2021		55%
Usability	20% +8 compared 2021		46%

Skills vs All industries



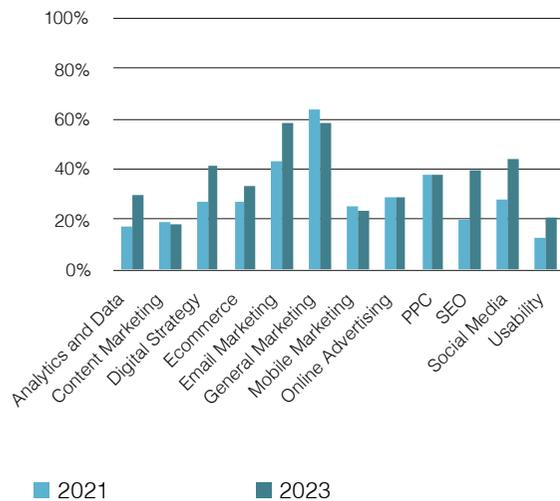
Skills vs Confidence



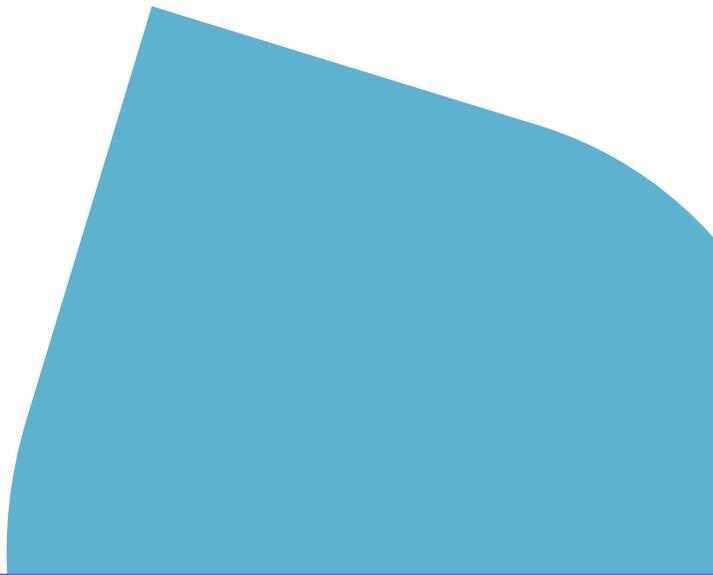
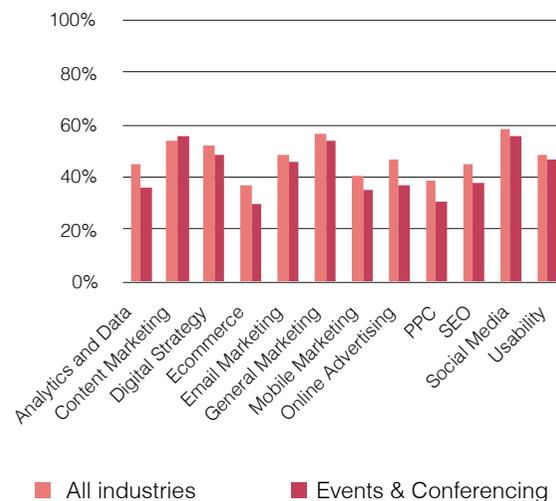
Quintile Distribution



21 vs 23



Confidence vs All industries





FASHION



# ▶ Fashion

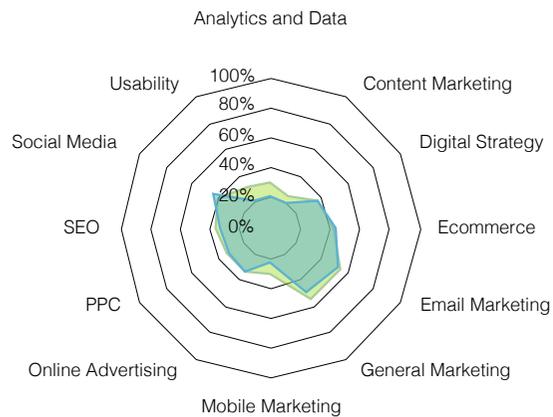
The fashion industry had scored very poorly on the Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark Previously, falling well below average scores. This year, there has been significant progress, but the industry still finds itself behind the curve in most capability areas, with the exception of Social Media. The largest areas of improvement were in Strategy, Social Media, Email and Advertising. Both Usability and Mobile Marketing have fallen back significantly, which should be of concern to an industry that finds itself in a fast-changing environment.

These changes are reflective of an industry that, in many cases, still relies on branding and retail channels but is fast moving toward a more digitally focused and, in some cases, direct-to-consumer approach. The industry is overconfident in both Content and Analytics, which again should be an area of concern. Overall, the Fashion industry has huge room for improvement in digital skills, and some outliers are already taking advantage of the opportunities available.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Analytics & Data	22% +3 compared 2021		41%
Content Marketing	20% +6 compared 2021		47%
Digital Strategy	37% +19 compared 2021		43%
Ecommerce	43% +6 compared 2021		39%
Email Marketing	52% +13 compared 2021		37%
General Marketing	49% +8 compared 2021		46%

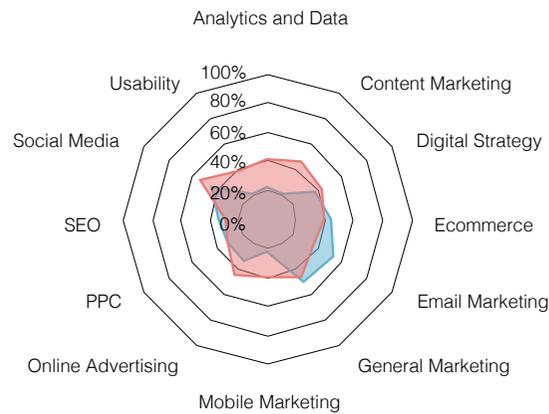
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Mobile Marketing	23% -9 compared 2021		40%
Online Advertising	33% +11 compared 2021		45%
PPC	32% +8 compared 2021		32%
SEO	34% +6 compared 2021		29%
Social Media	45% +18 compared 2021		54%
Usability	21% -11 compared 2021		39%

Skills vs All industries



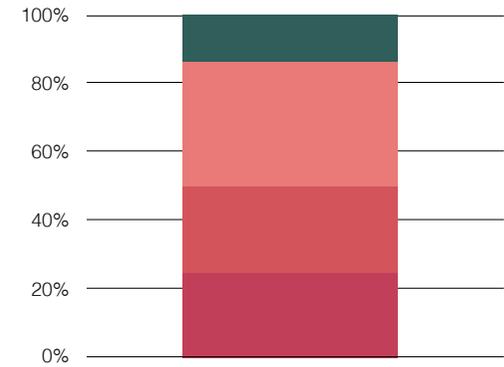
All industries Fashion

Skills vs Confidence



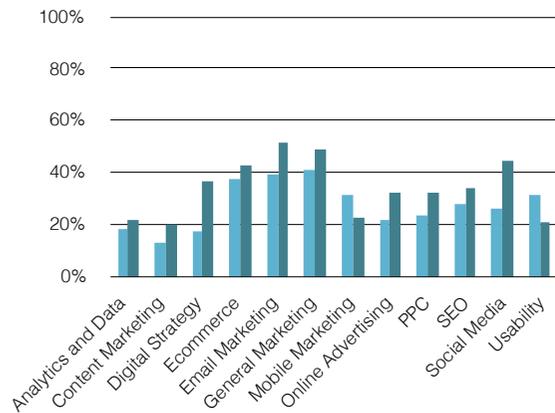
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



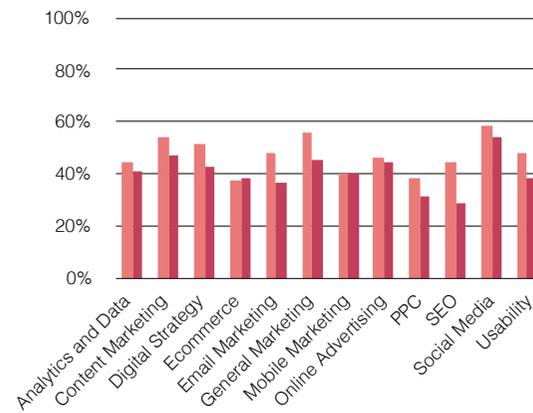
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Fashion

A woman with dark curly hair and glasses is sitting at a desk, looking at a laptop. She is wearing a light-colored top and a watch. There are papers and a small potted plant on the desk. The background is a blurred indoor setting with a window.

FINANCIAL

SERVICES

Financial services has made ▲ improvements in all disciplines compared to the previous year, with SEO and online advertising both seeing double digit ■ growth. As long as financial services marketers continue to make ▲ progress, the sector is on an upward digital trajectory.

● Jacob Howard  
Deutsche Bank  
CIM FS Chair

## ► Financial Services

As an industry that has statistically seen more digital transformation than most, it's reassuring to see progress in all areas of digital capability for the financial services industry. The biggest advances have been in SEO, Online Advertising, Social Media, Ecommerce and Email, but with good increases in Strategy and Usability where there were particular weaknesses before.

It's interesting to note that in previous benchmarks, the Financial Service industry was below average across all areas but now finds itself slightly above average in all but one area where it is very slightly below average (Content).

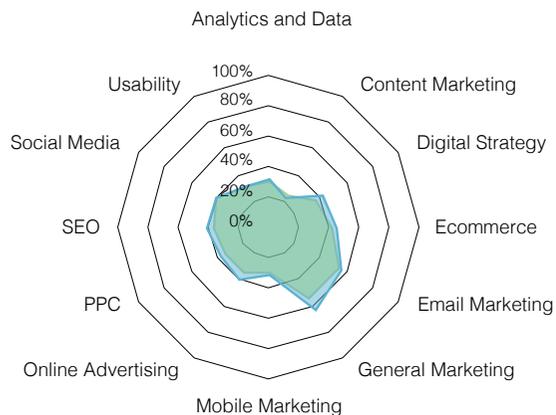
This shows how an industry and competition with that industry can drive knowledge development.

As with many industries, there is overconfidence across Content, Strategy, Analytics, Usability and Social Media. This needs to be tempered with skills gap analysis and appropriate upskilling if organisations want to stand out from the competition.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Analytics & Data	31% +7 compared 2021		45%
Content Marketing	23% +2 compared 2021		49%
Digital Strategy	41% +7 compared 2021		49%
Ecommerce	46% +9 compared 2021		33%
Email Marketing	56% +9 compared 2021		45%
General Marketing	64% +5 compared 2021		54%

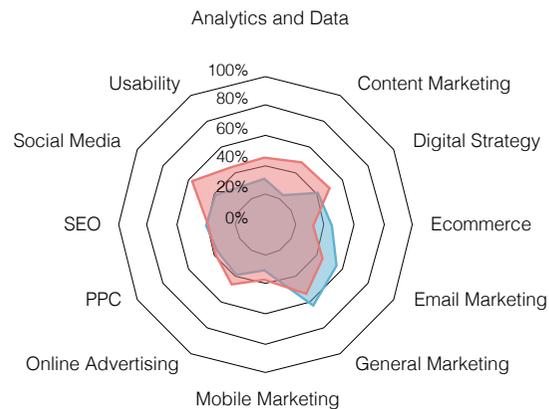
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Mobile Marketing	31% +5 compared 2021		37%
Online Advertising	40% +11 compared 2021		46%
PPC	37% +7 compared 2021		39%
SEO	41% +13 compared 2021		38%
Social Media	40% +9 compared 2021		58%
Usability	31% +6 compared 2021		45%

Skills vs All industries



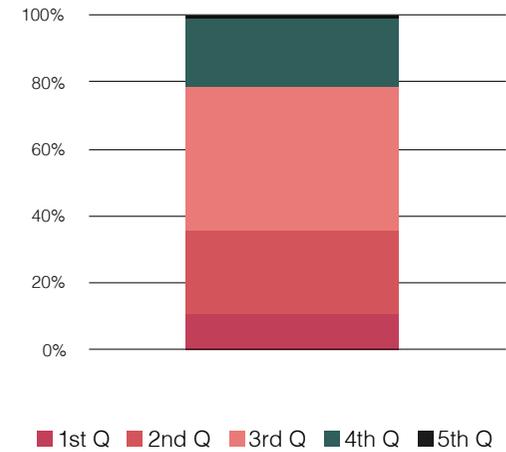
All industries Financial Services

Skills vs Confidence

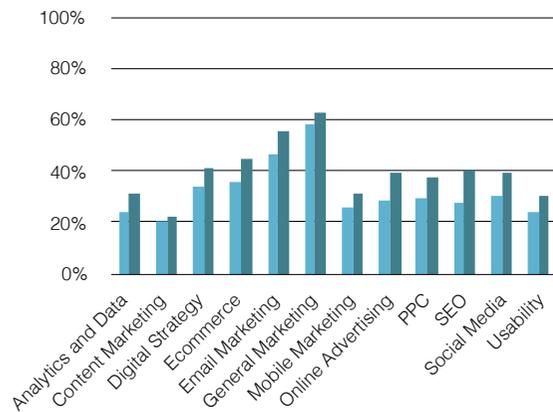


Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution

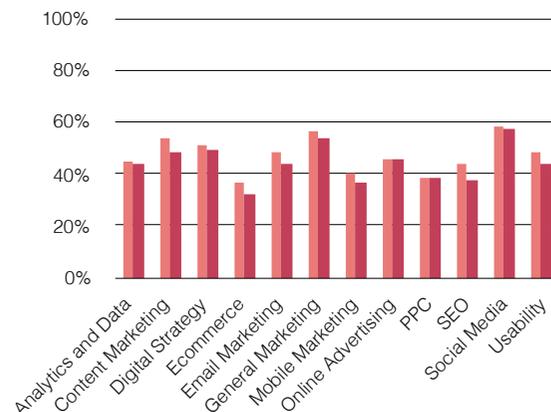


21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Financial Services





## FOOD & DRINK

A strong overall performance from food and drink is boosted by impressive ■ growth in the general marketing and social media categories. The industry will be slightly concerned by a ● lack of improvement in its digital strategy score, and more so by the ▲ regression in SEO and PPC capabilities. Marketers in the sector mustn't let those disciplines fall by the wayside.

▲ Mark Dodds  
Marketing Manager, Roy Thornes  
CIM Food Drink and Agriculture Chair

# Food & Drink

The Food and Drink industry had previously found itself below average across all areas of digital capability, and although there have been positive movements across the majority of disciplines, the industry is still struggling to catch up with average scores. Notable improvements came in Core Marketing, Social Media, Analytics and Content, but this still left the industry below average in all areas except Social Media and Mobile, where the average was matched.

Worryingly, this was combined with high levels of overconfidence in the majority of disciplines, with the biggest disparity in Content Marketing, where the gap

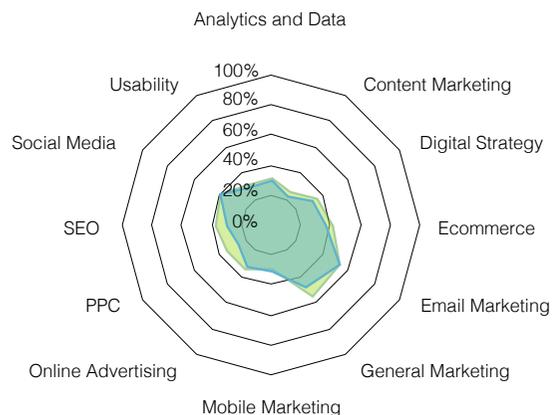
between ability and confidence was one of the highest seen across the entire benchmark.

Clearly, there is work to be done, but some outliers are already bucking the trend and using digital tactics to go direct to consumers or building brands via social media.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Analytics & Data	30% +8 compared 2021		45%
Content Marketing	22% +7 compared 2021		57%
Digital Strategy	32% 0 compared 2021		50%
Ecommerce	37% +6 compared 2021		40%
Email Marketing	53% +6 compared 2021		40%
General Marketing	48% +18 compared 2021		64%

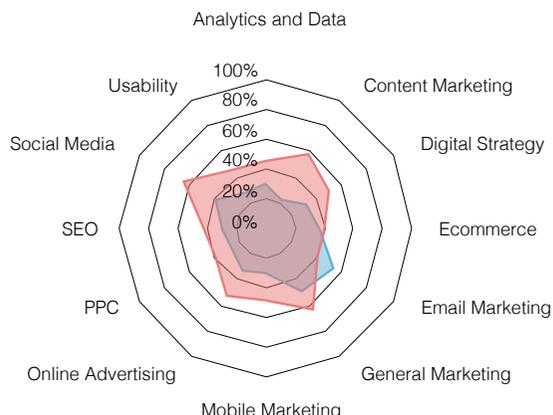
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Mobile Marketing	31% +5 compared 2021		48%
Online Advertising	32% +3 compared 2021		52%
PPC	26% -9 compared 2021		40%
SEO	30% -3 compared 2021		42%
Social Media	40% +13 compared 2021		65%
Usability	28% +1 compared 2021		46%

Skills vs All industries



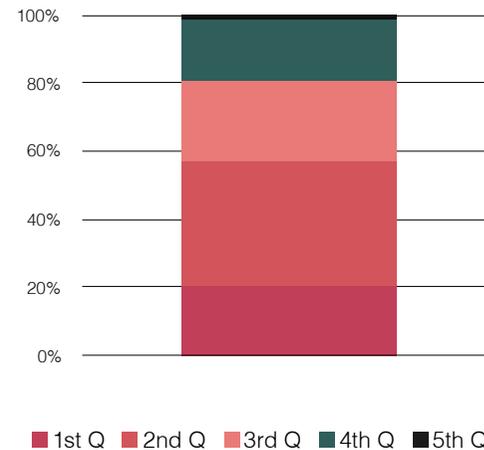
All industries Food & Drink

Skills vs Confidence

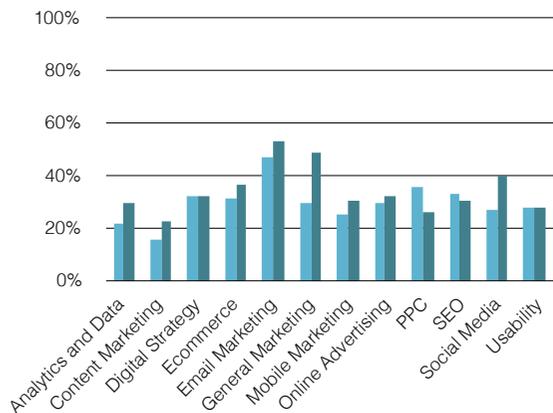


Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Food & Drink



# HEALTHCARE

Strong growth in social media, online advertising and general marketing are the ◀ headline results from a mixed year for healthcare marketing. Marketers in the sector should ▶ focus on improving PPC, SEO and in particular usability, which all saw slight ● decreases compared to the previous year, in order to turn average set of scores into a promising one.

■ Mark Harvie  
MedTech Consultant  
CIM Medical Marketing Chair

# Healthcare

The Healthcare industry is another that had previously found itself below average across all areas of digital capability, and although there have been positive movements across the majority of disciplines, the industry is still struggling to catch up with average scores. Notable improvements came in Advertising, Core Marketing, Social Media, Analytics and Mobile, but this still left the industry below average in all areas except Mobile, where the average was beaten slightly.

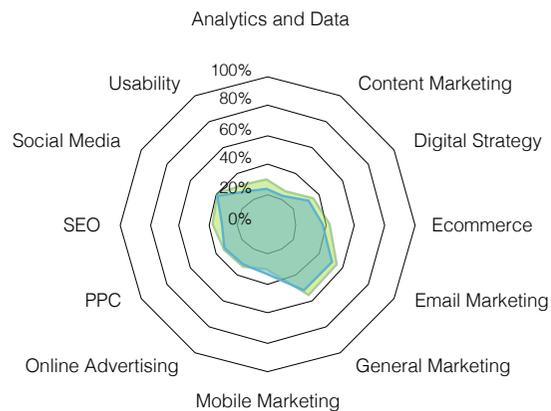
This was combined with high levels of overconfidence across Content, Analytics, Usability and Social Media, which is common across a wide range of industries.

The Healthcare industry is seeing a wide range of digital transformation efforts currently, and as such, there are a small number of outliers that are outperforming their competitors and using their digital skills to drive high-performance campaigns. This situation leaves it wide open for the majority of organisations to improve their digital skills and marketing efforts to drive business performance.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	24% 0 compared 2021		47%
 Content Marketing	23% +4 compared 2021		53%
 Digital Strategy	33% +2 compared 2021		55%
 Ecommerce	38% +5 compared 2021		33%
 Email Marketing	51% +4 compared 2021		50%
 General Marketing	51% +10 compared 2021		57%

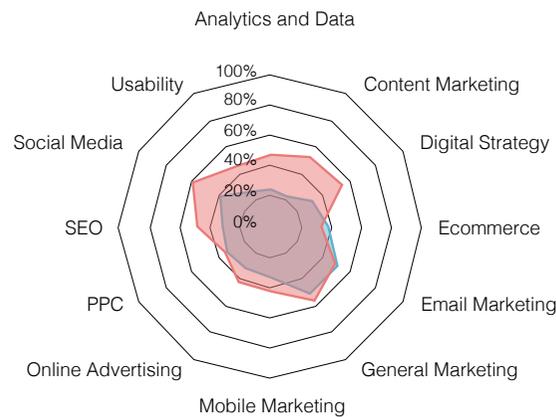
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	34% +8 compared 2021		32%
 Online Advertising	32% +12 compared 2021		43%
 PPC	33% -1 compared 2021		35%
 SEO	32% -3 compared 2021		48%
 Social Media	39% +11 compared 2021		59%
 Usability	27% -1 compared 2021		46%

Skills vs All industries



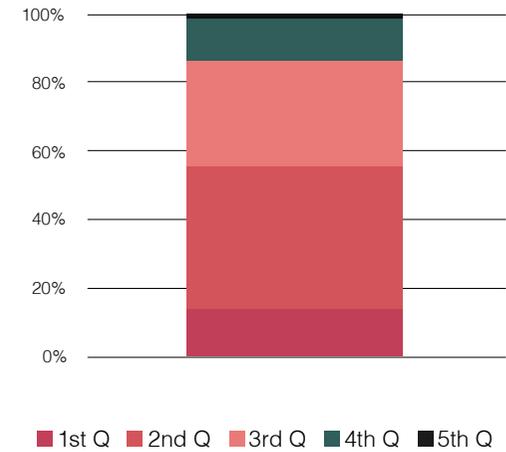
All industries Healthcare

Skills vs Confidence

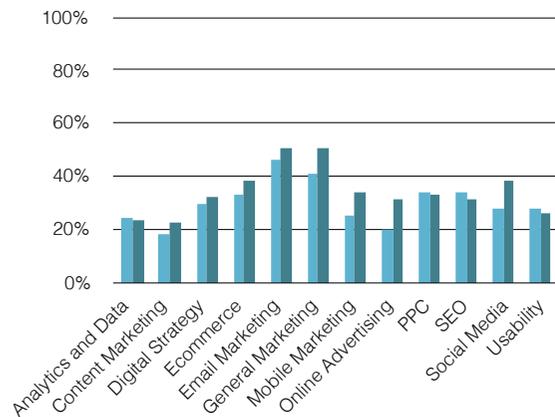


Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution

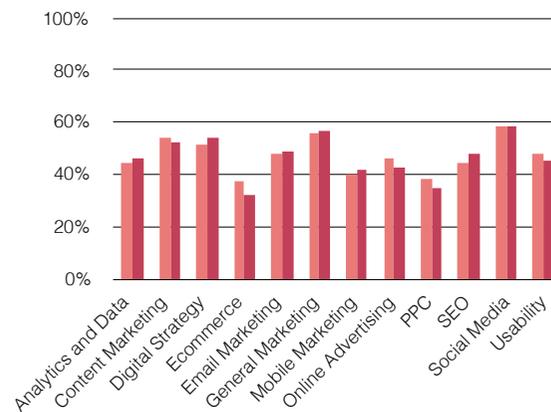


21 vs 23

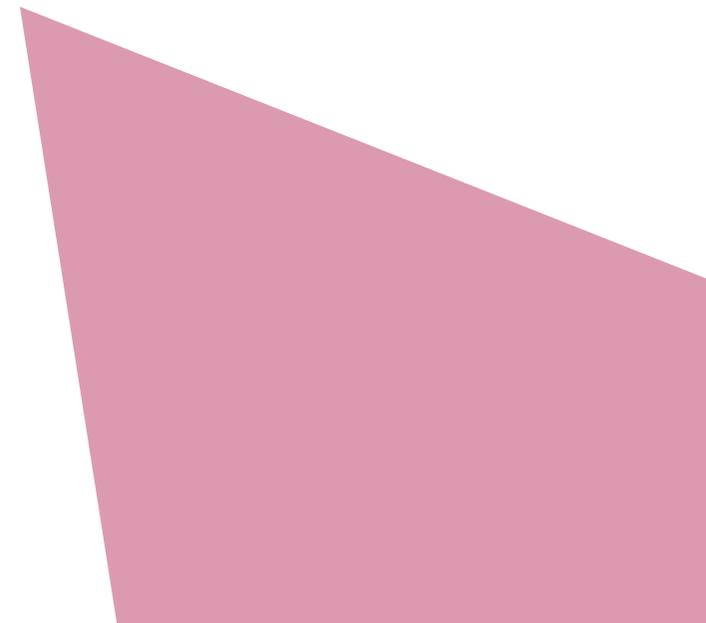


2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Healthcare



A woman with dark hair and glasses is seen from the side, sitting at a wooden table in a cafe. She is focused on her laptop, with her hands on the keyboard. A Starbucks coffee cup is on the table next to her. The background is softly blurred, showing other tables and chairs. A large blue shape is in the top left corner, and a green shape is on the right side of the image.

## INSURANCE

This year's results underline the effort that has gone in from marketers in the insurance industry to improve its capabilities. ■ Analytics & data and email marketing saw some of the greatest gains of any industry, with a number of other disciplines improving by double-digit percentages. ▲ A few minor hiccups with social media, mobile marketing and general marketing should be addressed next year, ● but overall this is a good performance. ▲

Piotr Pi ko , Insurance Practice Lead, Future Processing

# Insurance

The insurance industry saw an initial group of outliers in early benchmarks that embraced digital skills, but overall, the industry has lagged behind the overall average results. However, this year has shown significant changes in a wide range of disciplines. Most notable are very significant improvements in Analytics, Email, Ecommerce, SEO, and Strategy. Unfortunately, that was combined with a small fall back in social media, something common across multiple industries due to the recent fast-paced change in this area.

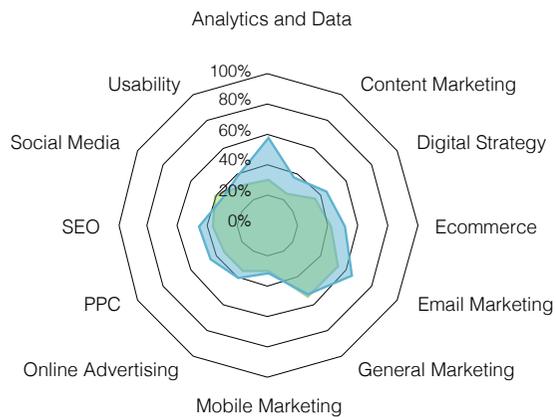
These improvements are combined with a low lack of disparity between confidence and ability, which is unusual for many industries.

Overall, the Insurance industry is in a strong position when compared to average results, except in the area of Social Media and Core Marketing. This generally indicates a more competitive marketing environment and the need for skills gap analysis and targeted digital marketing upskilling.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	58% +33 compared 2021		49%
 Content Marketing	36% +7 compared 2021		53%
 Digital Strategy	45% +10 compared 2021		55%
 Ecommerce	51% +18 compared 2021		37%
 Email Marketing	66% +24 compared 2021		52%
 General Marketing	52% -2 compared 2021		56%

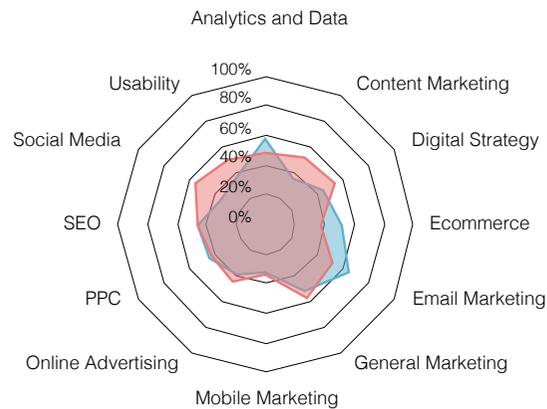
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	31% -2 compared 2021		34%
 Online Advertising	40% +6 compared 2021		45%
 PPC	44% +7 compared 2021		42%
 SEO	46% +11 compared 2021		47%
 Social Media	34% -4 compared 2021		55%
 Usability	38% +9 compared 2021		50%

Skills vs All industries



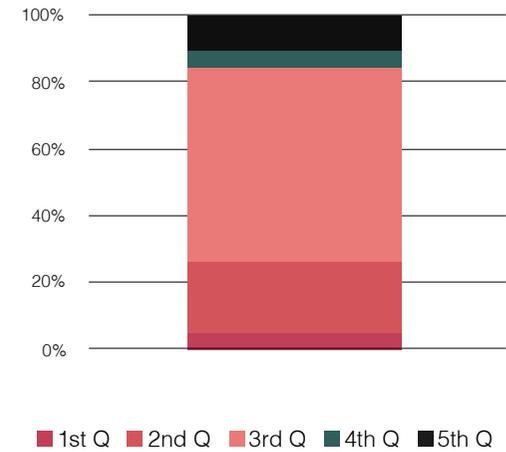
All industries Insurance

Skills vs Confidence

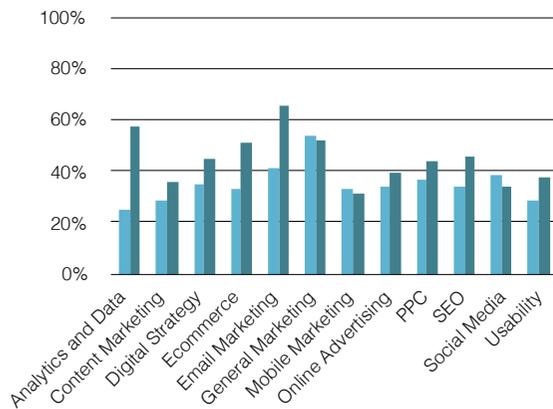


Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution

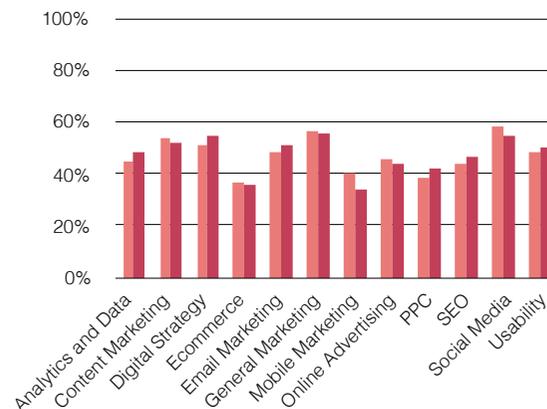


21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Insurance



IT/TECHNOLOGY

& TELECOMS

General marketing notwithstanding, this is hugely encouraging set of results from the industry for its marketing capabilities. Five disciplines saw double digit growth, with a number of others not far behind, providing an excellent platform for further development.

Marie Wilcox  
Panaseer  
CIM South East Chair

# IT/Technology/Telecoms

The IT/Technology/Telecoms industry had previously scored pretty much in line with overall averages. However, there has been excellent progress across all but one area of capability in this year's benchmark, taking the industry above or on par with averages across all disciplines. The most significant progress was made in Ecommerce, Social Media, Usability, Paid Search and Email Marketing, with good progress also in Content, Analytics and Advertising. The only area to fall back was Core Marketing.

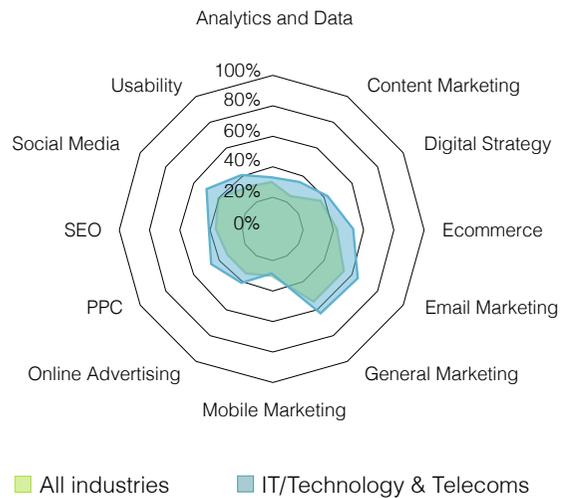
As well as bringing IT/Technology/Telecoms above average results, the disparity between confidence and ability was lower than in most industries, indicating a good level of self-awareness.

This sector includes a wide variety of organisations, with outliers at both ends of the skills spectrum, indicating both opportunities and challenges ahead.

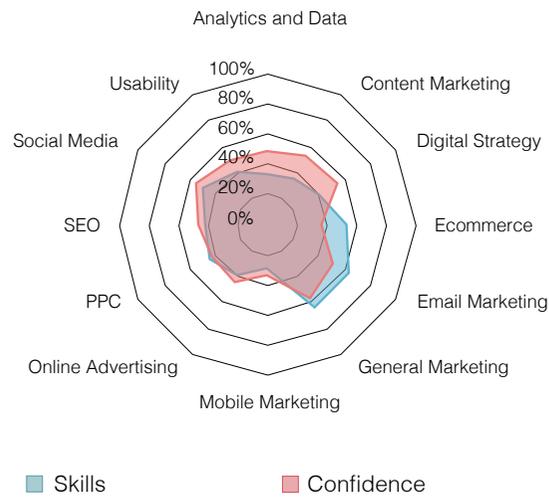
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	34% +5 compared 2021		49%
 Content Marketing	36% +9 compared 2021		53%
 Digital Strategy	41% +6 compared 2021		55%
 Ecommerce	54% +16 compared 2021		37%
 Email Marketing	64% +13 compared 2021		52%
 General Marketing	63% -5 compared 2021		56%

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	30% +3 compared 2021		34%
 Online Advertising	40% +5 compared 2021		45%
 PPC	46% +13 compared 2021		42%
 SEO	41% +4 compared 2021		47%
 Social Media	50% +14 compared 2021		55%
 Usability	41% +13 compared 2021		50%

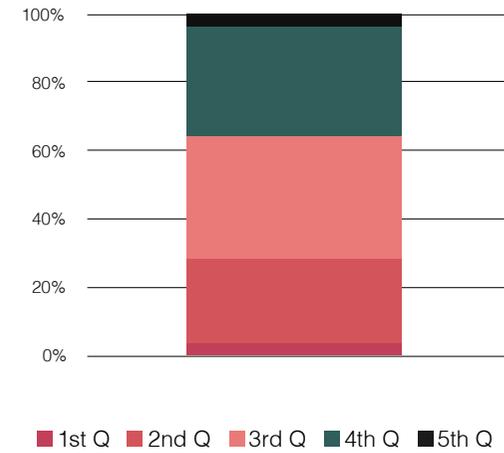
Skills vs All industries



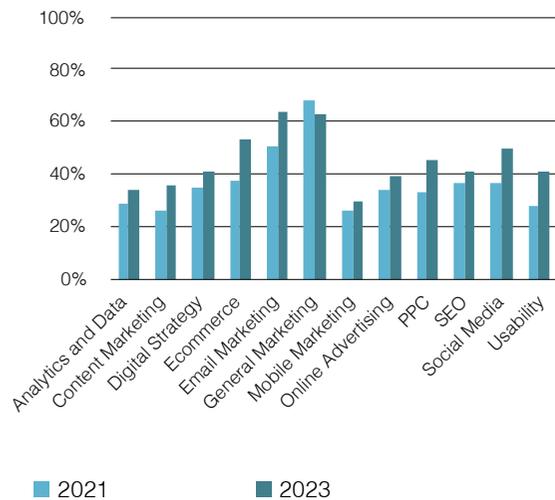
Skills vs Confidence



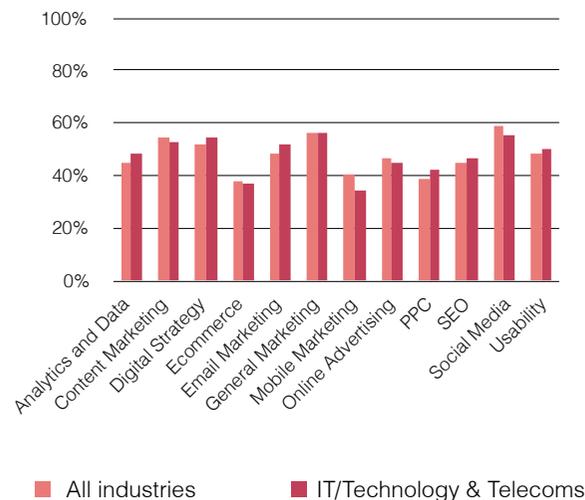
Quintile Distribution



21 vs 23



Confidence vs All industries





LEGAL &



ACCOUNTANCY

# Legal & Accountancy

As an industry, Legal and Accountancy was slow to adopt digital marketing and has struggled in previous benchmarks compared to overall averages. However, this year has seen solid progress across half of the digital disciplines tested. Good progress was seen in Paid Search, Analytics and Email, but there was a significant fall back in Strategy and, to a lesser extent, in Usability, SEO, and Advertising. This mixed picture is reflective of an industry with a wide variation in skills, as indicated by the quintile breakdown, but the lack of results in the top quintile shows an industry that is still developing.

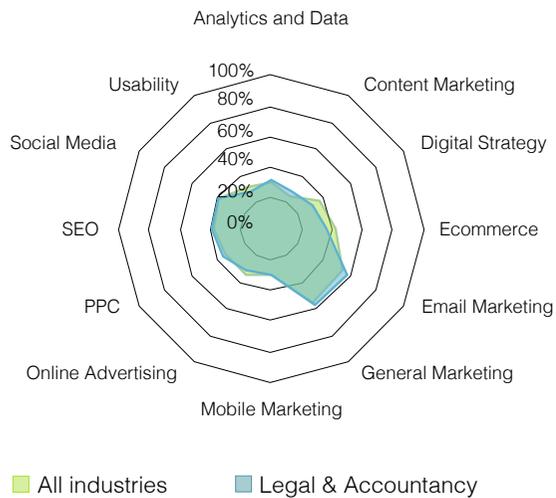
The confidence levels outstripped ability across Strategy, Content, Usability and Social Media, which is not uncommon but worth noting for an industry with mixed results.

Overall, this leaves the Legal and Accountancy industry roughly in line with averages, with a mix of slightly lower and very slightly high scores. This indicates an industry with lots of room for improvement and opportunities to stand out from the crowd with the right skills and focus.

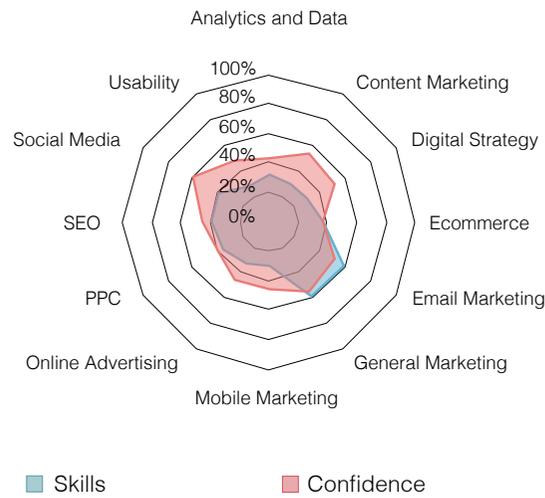
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	31% +8 compared 2021		43%
 Content Marketing	29% +5 compared 2021		54%
 Digital Strategy	31% -6 compared 2021		52%
 Ecommerce	36% +2 compared 2021		36%
 Email Marketing	58% +9 compared 2021		51%
 General Marketing	58% +7 compared 2021		55%

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	30% +1 compared 2021		45%
 Online Advertising	32% -1 compared 2021		46%
 PPC	37% +10 compared 2021		39%
 SEO	40% -1 compared 2021		45%
 Social Media	39% +4 compared 2021		61%
 Usability	27% -2 compared 2021		47%

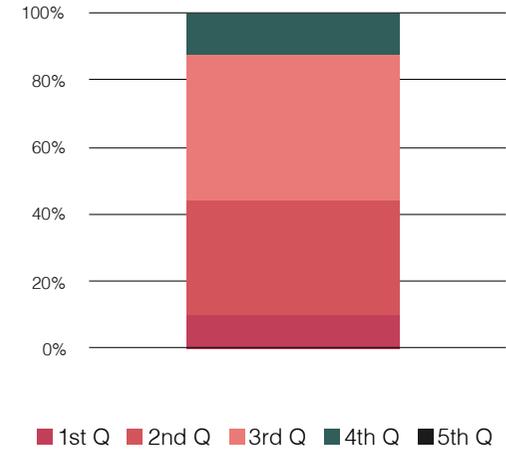
Skills vs All industries



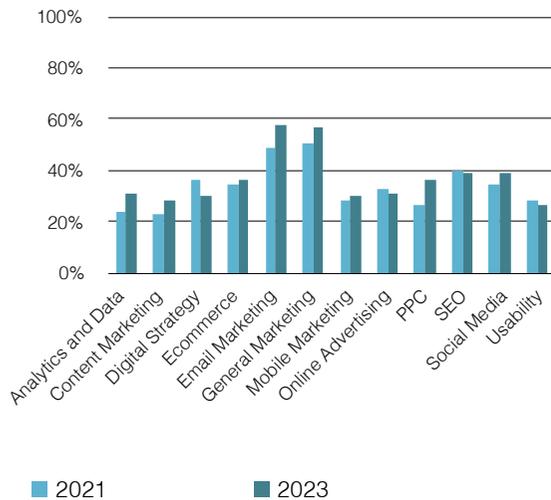
Skills vs Confidence



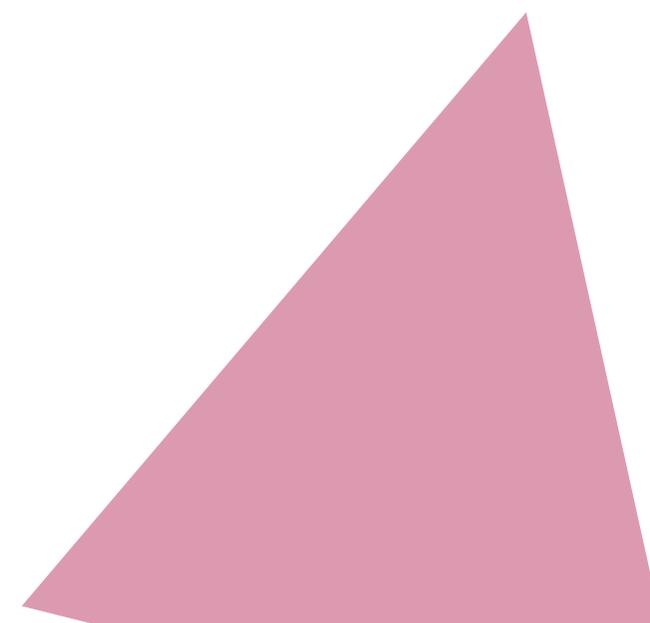
Quintile Distribution



21 vs 23



Confidence vs All industries





LEISURE/SPORT &

ENTERTAINMENT

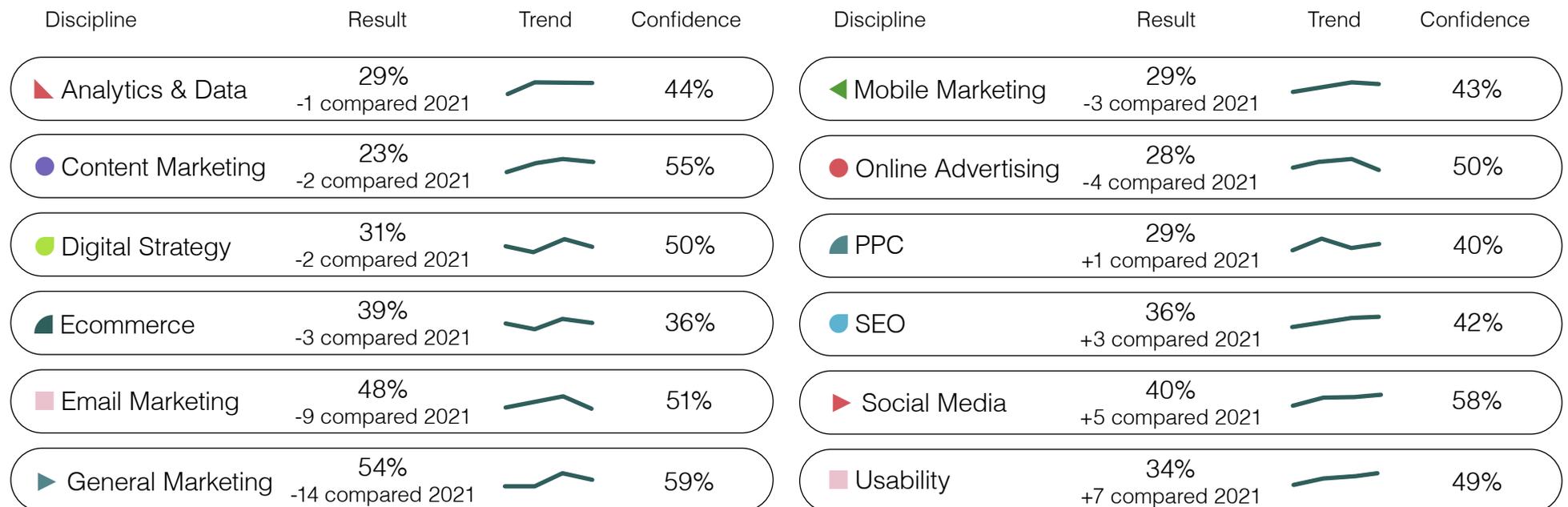
## ▶ Leisure/Sport/Entertainment

It hasn't been a great benchmark for the Leisure/Entertainment/Sport industries, which obviously encompasses a wide range of different business types. We saw a fall back in results across eight of the twelve disciplines benchmarked, with the greatest fall back in Core Marketing and Email. More encouragingly, there were some improvements in SEO, Social and Usability.

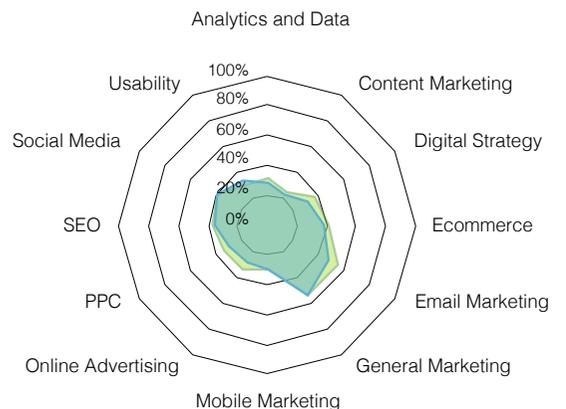
This mixed picture is backed up by a very spread-out quintile distribution, indicating a real disparity between skill levels.

Anecdotally, this category includes a range of industries that have recovered at very different rates from the pandemic, and we have seen outliers at both ends of the spectrum.

Industries with these kinds of results need to carry out skills gap analysis and targeted upskilling programmes, particularly when there is a discrepancy between confidence and skills, as we see here.

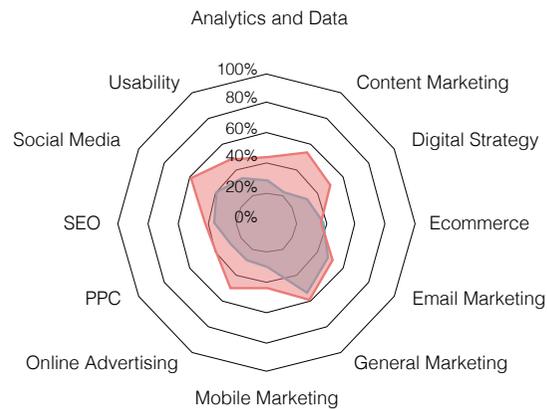


Skills vs All industries



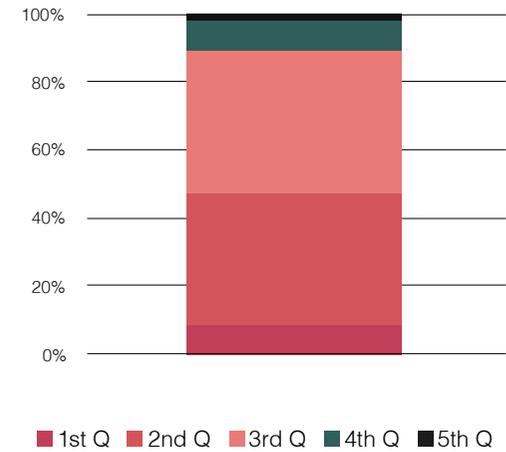
All industries Leisure/Sport & Entertainment

Skills vs Confidence



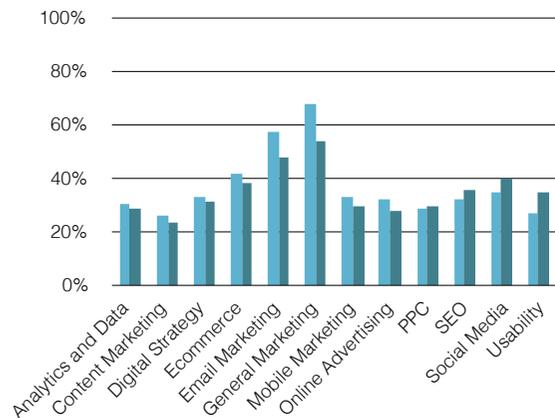
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



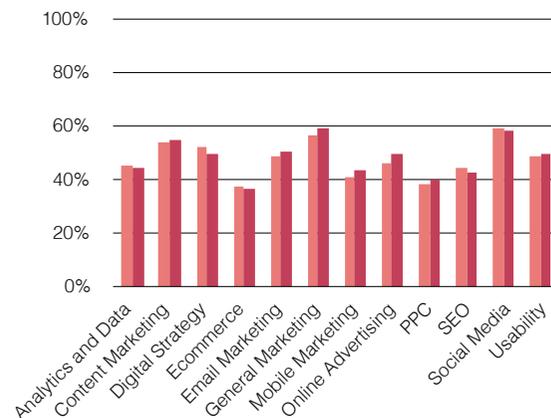
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23

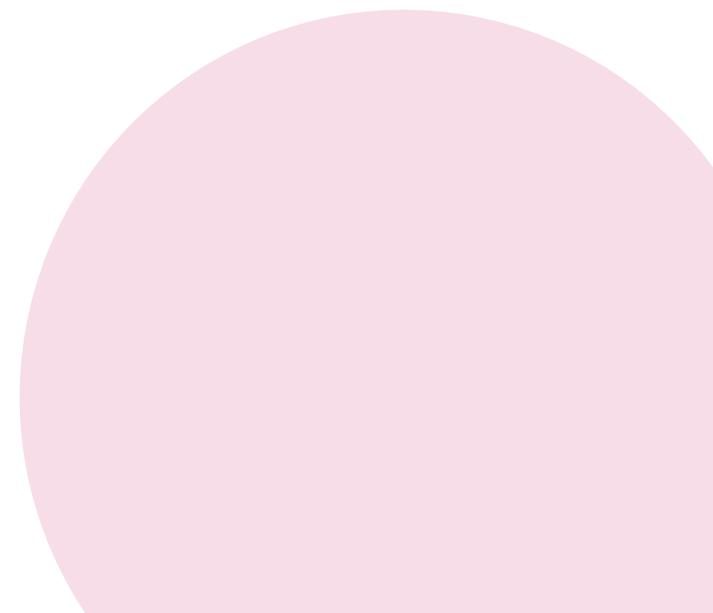


2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Leisure/Sport & Entertainment





# MANUFACTURING

Although slightly mixed, the overall results for manufacturing represent good ● progress for the industry. Social media is the obvious stand-out improvement since last year, but ecommerce and general marketing aren't far behind. The areas that need work haven't decreased by much, but it's ▲ vital that they're addressed before they become a more significant problem.

● Dr Gavin Davies  
Markes International Ltd.  
CIM Wales Chair

# Manufacturing

The manufacturing industry was slow to adopt digital marketing best practice and had previously scored poorly in the Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark, achieving below-average scores across the majority of disciplines. However, this year has seen improvements across the majority of disciplines. The most significant changes have been in Social Media, Core Marketing, Ecommerce and Email. There were slight fall backs in scores for Analytics and Mobile, but this is common in many industries due to the challenges of GA4 and Apple's privacy changes.

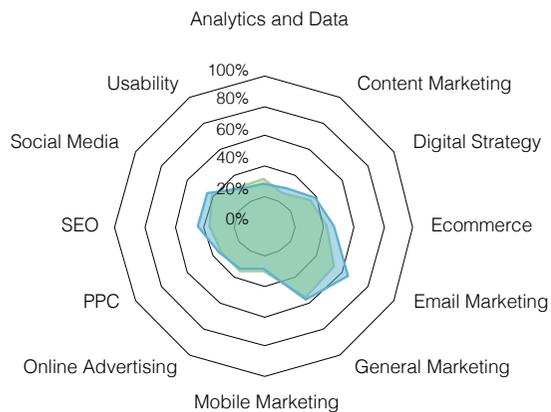
This leaves the manufacturing industry slightly above or on par with average scores across all digital disciplines, with the exception of analytics and Mobile. As with other industries, there is some overconfidence, but this is less pronounced than in many industries, with the main area for concern being around Content.

The broad spread of quintiles means that there are outliers at both ends of the skills spectrum, meaning some organisations are way ahead of others and are already forging ahead with their digital skills.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	28% -2 compared 2021		45%
 Content Marketing	30% +2 compared 2021		57%
 Digital Strategy	38% +2 compared 2021		48%
 Ecommerce	46% +9 compared 2021		39%
 Email Marketing	65% +8 compared 2021		50%
 General Marketing	57% +9 compared 2021		65%

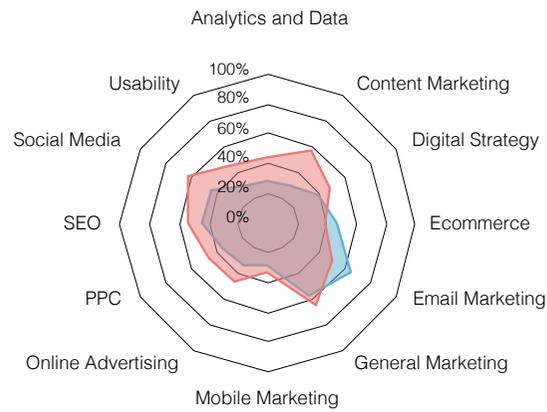
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	28% -2 compared 2021		33%
 Online Advertising	33% +7 compared 2021		46%
 PPC	35% +4 compared 2021		46%
 SEO	45% +8 compared 2021		55%
 Social Media	44% +12 compared 2021		62%
 Usability	30% 0 compared 2021		45%

Skills vs All industries



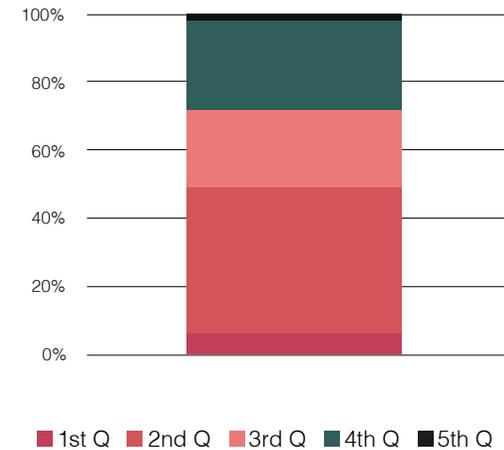
All industries Manufacturing

Skills vs Confidence

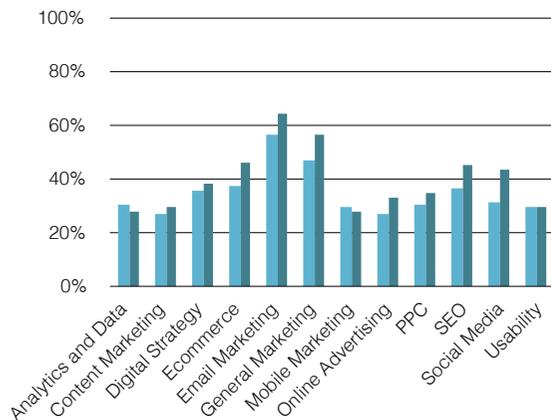


Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution

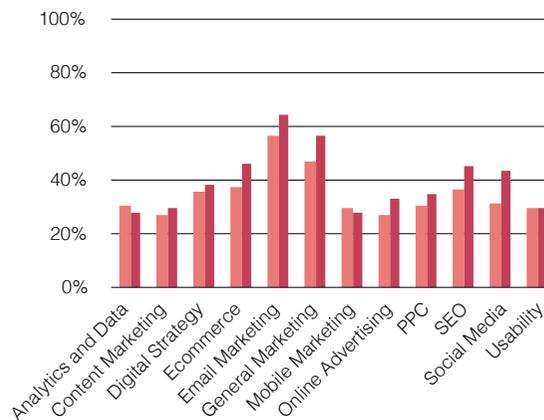


21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Manufacturing



MEDIA & PUBLISHING

## ► Media & Publishing

The Media and Publishing has historically done poorly versus average results in the Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark, reflecting an industry that was slow to adopt digital and that has been slow to go through the process of digital transformation. This benchmark's results show a mixed bag of changes, with seven areas of competency improving, four areas declining, and one area staying static. The most notable improvements were in Social Media, SEO, and Ecommerce. The major downward trend was in Core Marketing, which is unusual to see when there is also an improvement in Strategy.

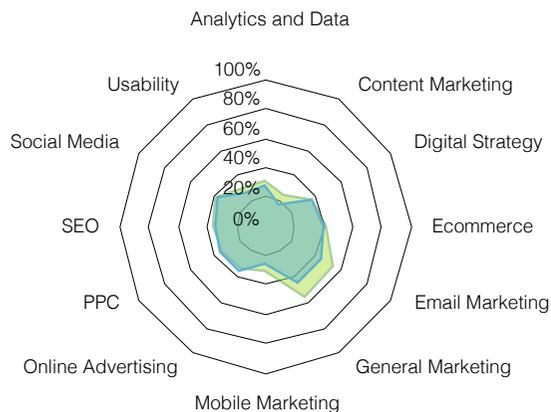
This mixed set of results indicates an industry undergoing lots of change, with different levels of digital adoption and skills with the organisations that have been benchmarked. This is further reflected in the quintile distribution of skills.

This leaves the Media and Publishing industry well below average results in the majority of areas, and combined with very high levels of overconfidence in Content and Social should lead to concern within the industry. Clearly, some organisations are doing very well, which should act as a 'burning platform' for those that are not as yet!

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Analytics & Data	29% -3 compared 2021		41%
Content Marketing	17% -4 compared 2021		59%
Digital Strategy	36% +6 compared 2021		48%
Ecommerce	39% +8 compared 2021		47%
Email Marketing	44% -6 compared 2021		54%
General Marketing	45% -20 compared 2021		55%

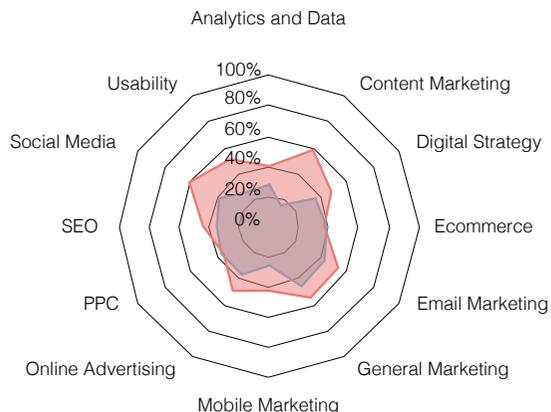
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Mobile Marketing	25% 0 compared 2021		42%
Online Advertising	36% +4 compared 2021		49%
PPC	36% +3 compared 2021		34%
SEO	34% +8 compared 2021		44%
Social Media	39% +9 compared 2021		60%
Usability	27% +1 compared 2021		51%

Skills vs All industries



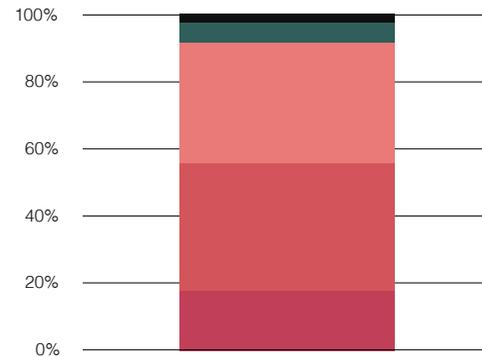
All industries Media & Publishing

Skills vs Confidence



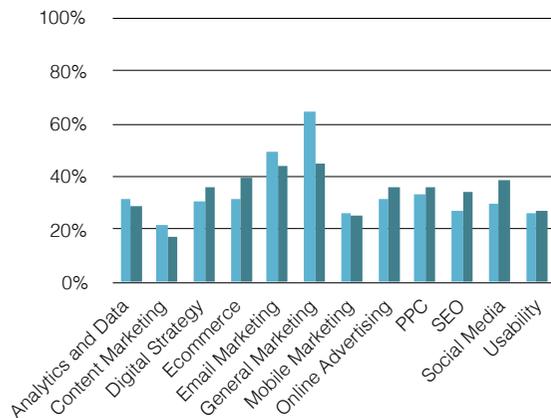
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



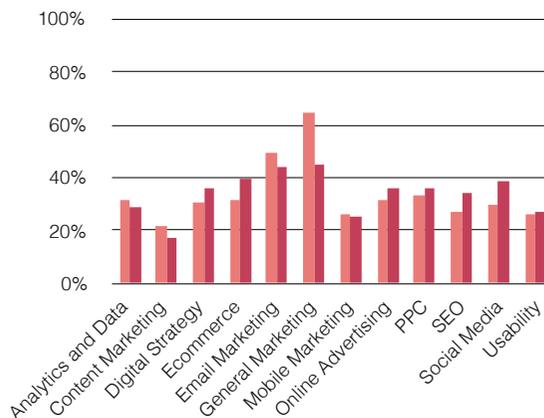
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Media & Publishing





PHARMACEUTICAL 



# Pharmaceutical

The Pharmaceutical industry had done poorly previously when benchmarked against overall averages and had seen a post-pandemic drop in scores, as with many industries in the last benchmark. The general trend in this benchmark is one of improvement, with eight areas of competency improving, one staying static, and three falling back slightly. The main areas of improvement were in Content, Mobile and Usability, with the scores dropping back being fairly minor except in Core Marketing.

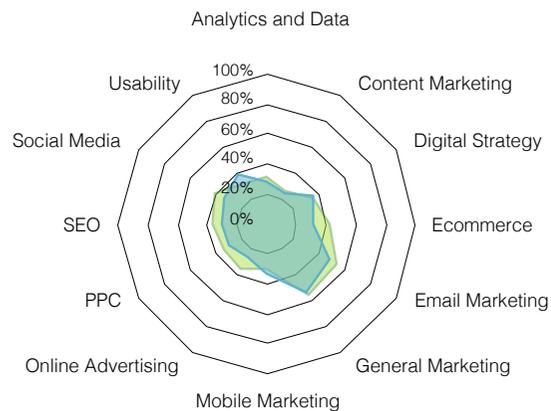
This reasonable progress is, however, accompanied by an overconfidence in Strategy, Content, Analytics and Social Media. The gap between confidence and ability in Content is most concerning and something that has been a challenging area for the industry for a long time due to regulatory concerns.

This leaves the industry with an overall below-average set of results against the all-industry average, leaving lots of opportunity for any Pharmaceutical industry organisation to really focus on skills and improving their digital marketing activity.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	29% -3 compared 2021		52%
 Content Marketing	24% +8 compared 2021		56%
 Digital Strategy	37% +2 compared 2021		59%
 Ecommerce	31% +2 compared 2021		37%
 Email Marketing	48% +2 compared 2021		57%
 General Marketing	52% -4 compared 2021		61%

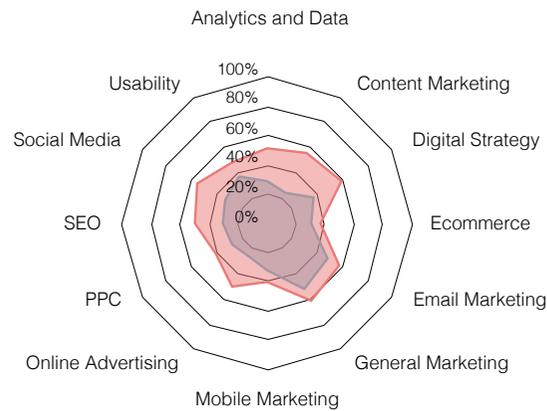
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	33% +8 compared 2021		41%
 Online Advertising	26% -2 compared 2021		49%
 PPC	29% +4 compared 2021		42%
 SEO	31% +4 compared 2021		51%
 Social Media	34% 0 compared 2021		56%
 Usability	38% +6 compared 2021		49%

Skills vs All industries



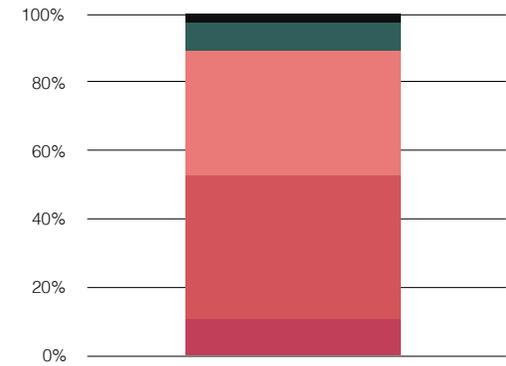
All industries Pharmaceutical

Skills vs Confidence



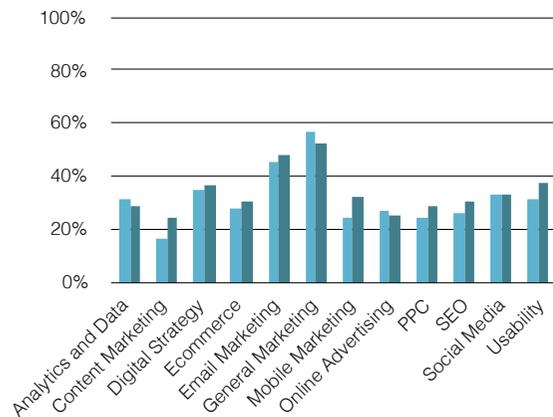
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



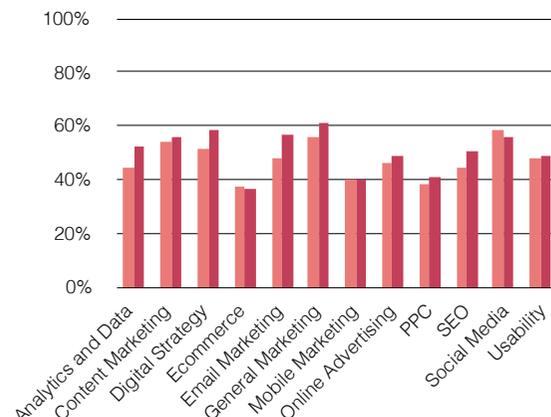
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Pharmaceutical



PROFESSIONAL

SERVICES

Marketing in the professional services industry has stagnated since 2021, with social media being the only discipline that ▼ improved more than 5%. Some small gains in online advertising and email marketing are ● encouraging too, but greater energy is required in mobile marketing and ecommerce.

● Lynzi Ashworth  
Global Marketing Director, Aon

# Professional Services

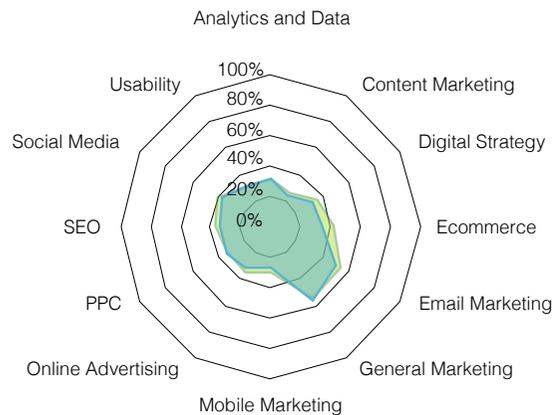
Over previous benchmarks, the Professional Services Industry had steadily improved its scores across the range of digital marketing disciplines, starting from a low base and bringing it in line with overall all industry average scores. Unfortunately, the sector has seen some mixed results in this benchmark, with six areas of capability falling back slightly and six improving slightly. The most notable improvement was in Social Media, and the most notable fall back was in Ecommerce.

These results were combined with some overconfidence in Content, Strategy and Social Media, and no respondents fell into the top quintile of results. This indicates an industry with a need to refocus on upskilling to regain potential, with overall results now falling below all industry averages.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	31% +2 compared 2021		43%
 Content Marketing	24% -3 compared 2021		56%
 Digital Strategy	32% -2 compared 2021		52%
 Ecommerce	34% -5 compared 2021		36%
 Email Marketing	51% +3 compared 2021		51%
 General Marketing	55% -1 compared 2021		57%

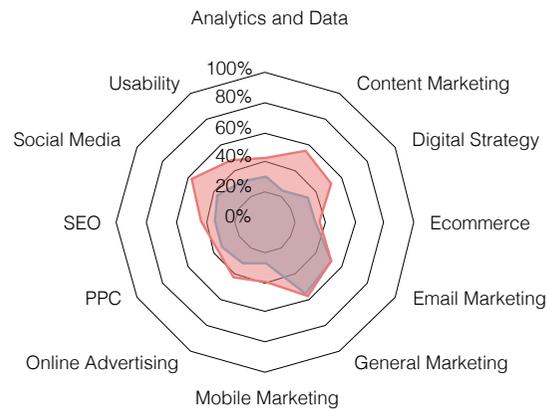
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	27% -3 compared 2021		40%
 Online Advertising	32% +4 compared 2021		43%
 PPC	34% +2 compared 2021		37%
 SEO	31% -1 compared 2021		43%
 Social Media	37% +6 compared 2021		58%
 Usability	31% +1 compared 2021		47%

Skills vs All industries



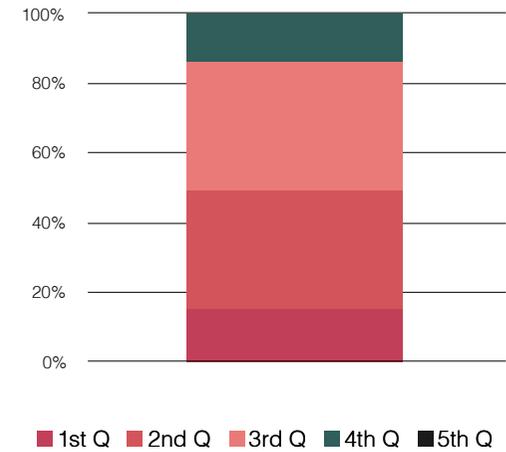
All industries Professional Services

Skills vs Confidence



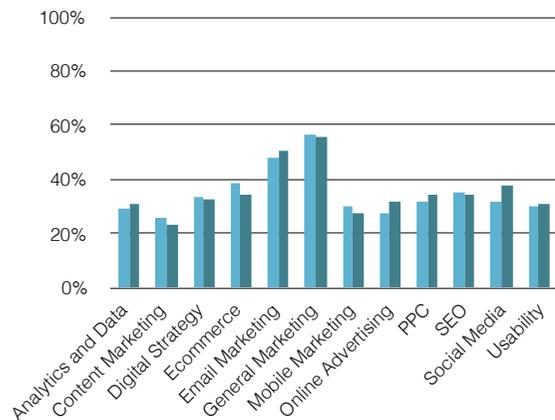
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



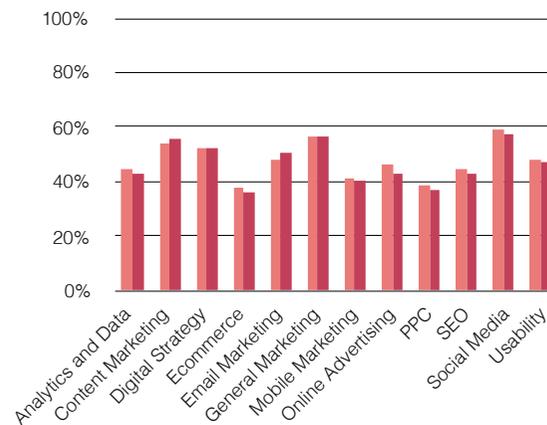
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23

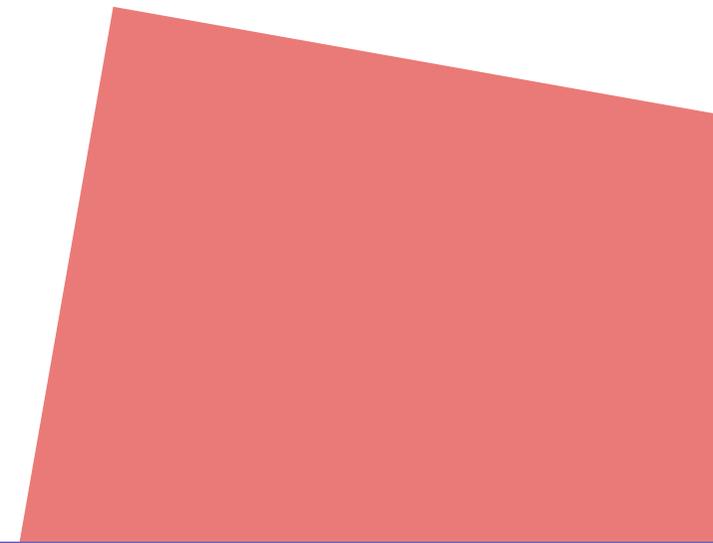


2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Professional Services





**PUBLIC SECTOR**



# Public Sector

The Public Sector has previously struggled with its benchmark results, initially scoring poorly in early benchmarks, and then seeing a mixed bag of movement forwards and backwards through each iteration of the report. This year again sees a mixed bag of results, generally moving in the wrong direction. Eight of the 12 areas of competency saw scores lowering, with four improving. The most significant improvement was in Core Marketing, seeing a fairly substantial improvement, but sadly, there were equally significant drops back in Analytics, Strategy, Email and SEO.

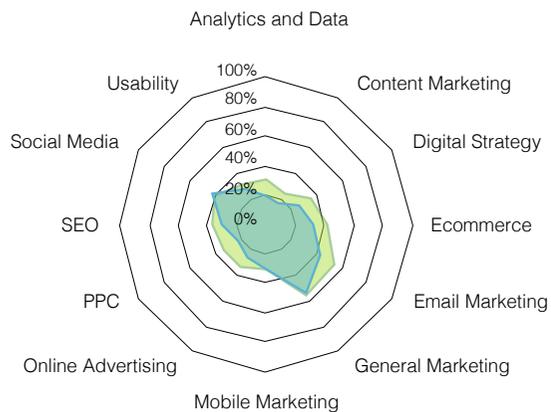
Confidence was also generally lower than in most industries, indicating a lack of investment in training and upskilling. This leaves the Public Sector in an overall position lower than the all-industry average in the majority of capability areas.

It is worth noting, however, that within the data, there were some outliers that scored well, indicating that some Public Sector organisations have bucked the trend and are embracing digital upskilling in a successful way.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Analytics & Data	20% -15 compared 2021		30%
Content Marketing	17% -3 compared 2021		49%
Digital Strategy	27% -13 compared 2021		37%
Ecommerce	32% -3 compared 2021		13%
Email Marketing	42% -12 compared 2021		30%
General Marketing	55% +17 compared 2021		43%

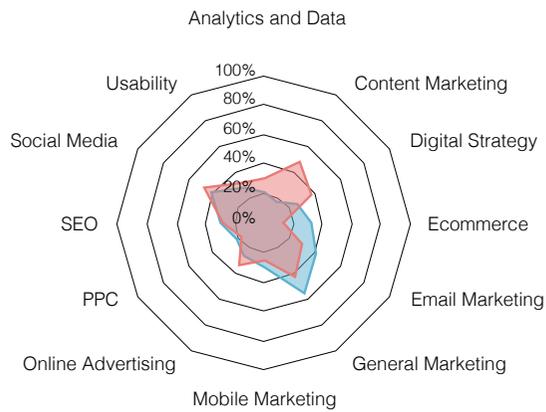
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Mobile Marketing	30% +5 compared 2021		26%
Online Advertising	26% -1 compared 2021		33%
PPC	21% -7 compared 2021		19%
SEO	30% -9 compared 2021		29%
Social Media	42% +4 compared 2021		47%
Usability	27% +2 compared 2021		31%

Skills vs All industries



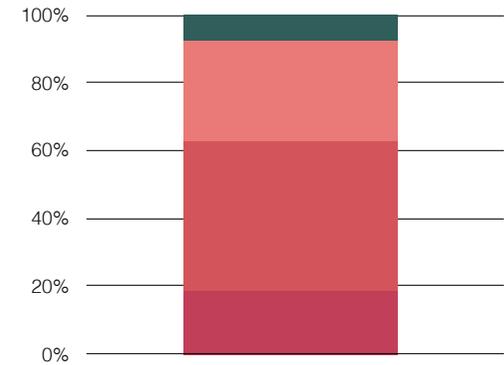
All industries Public Sector

Skills vs Confidence



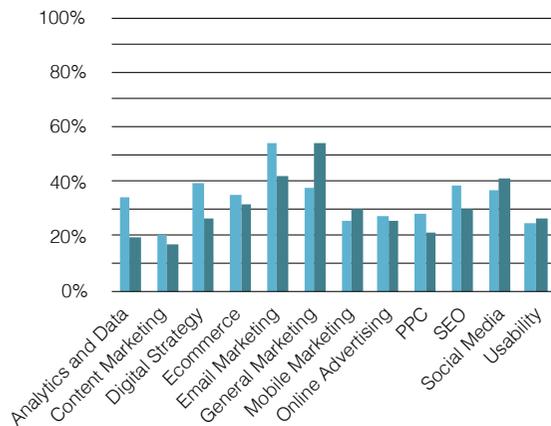
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



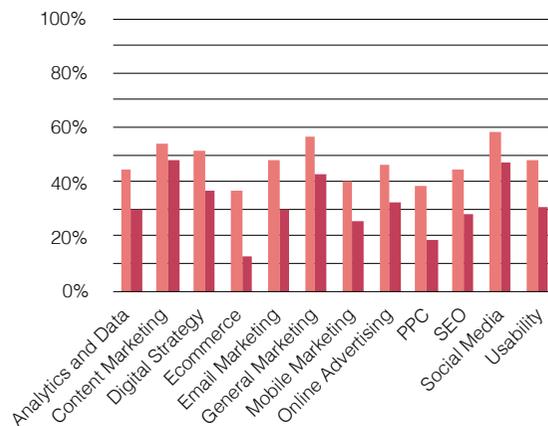
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Public Sector



# RETAIL

Retail is a dynamic and fast moving environment and its clear from this report that more needs to be done to raise the bar in this space as only half of the disciplines are seeing an ■ improvement. There is a huge ▲ opportunity for retail marketers to lead in the ● evolution of marketing best practise. Social media has improved the most for the industry, but other areas like mobile marketing and online advertising must be developed further too.

▲ Pete Markey  
CMO, Boots UK

# Retail

Retail was another industry that was slow to adapt to digital but then saw good improvements in their benchmark results, only for it to fall back again after the pandemic. Since then, the latest Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark results show a mixed bag, with improvements in six of the twelve areas of capability, with one static and five falling back. The most notable changes were in Core Marketing, which fell back, countered by a slightly greater improvement in Social Media. A smaller, but quite important, improvement was seen in Ecommerce.

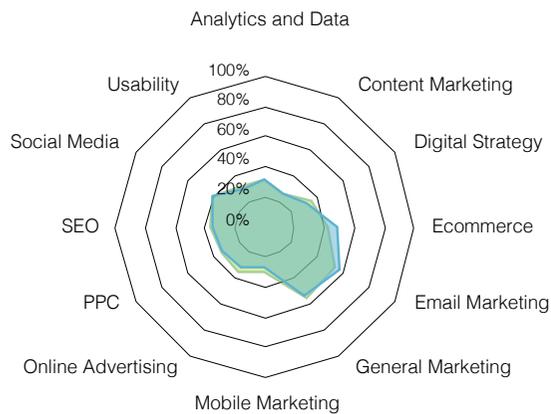
The disparity between confidence and ability was slightly less pronounced than in many industries, and this is often indicative of industries that are aware of their under-investment.

This leaves retail with averages that are aligned with all industry averages, with the exception of Ecommerce, whereas you would probably hope they are doing better. The Retail industry needs to consolidate the progress made over previous years and invest wisely in any upskilling efforts.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	31% +2 compared 2021		45%
 Content Marketing	25% -2 compared 2021		48%
 Digital Strategy	32% -6 compared 2021		49%
 Ecommerce	48% +3 compared 2021		48%
 Email Marketing	57% +2 compared 2021		43%
 General Marketing	53% +6 compared 2021		55%

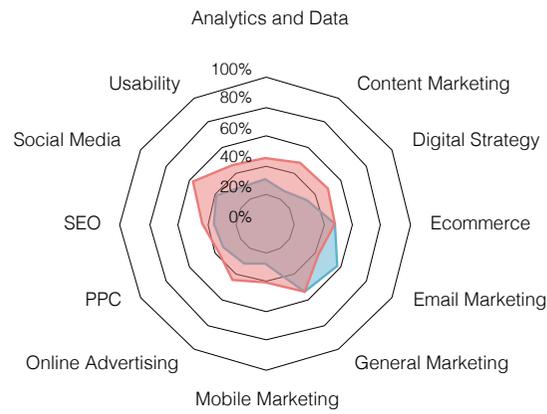
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	28% -2 compared 2021		41%
 Online Advertising	31% -6 compared 2021		45%
 PPC	33% +1 compared 2021		38%
 SEO	35% 0 compared 2021		44%
 Social Media	40% +9 compared 2021		58%
 Usability	29% -3 compared 2021		47%

Skills vs All industries



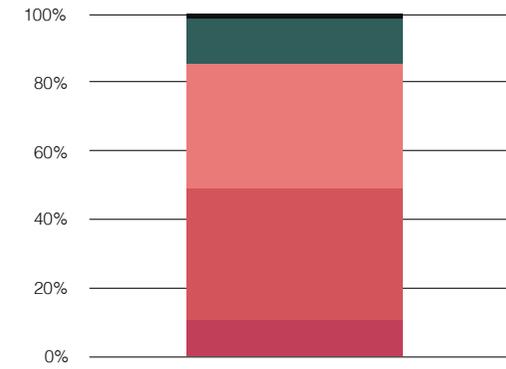
All industries Retail

Skills vs Confidence



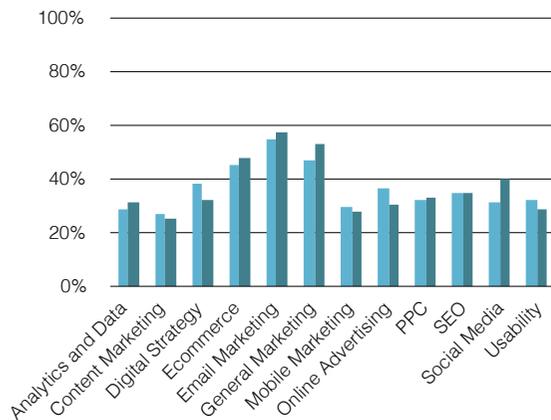
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution



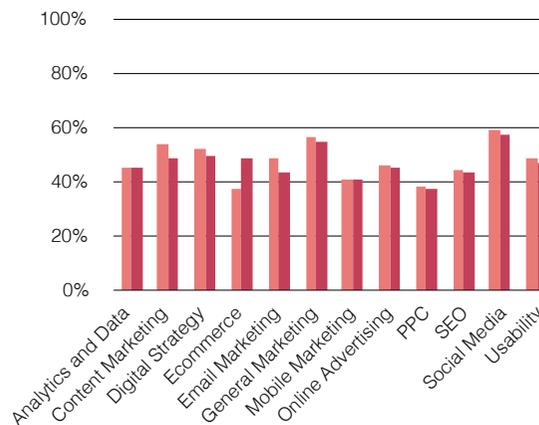
1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Retail





# TRANSPORT & LOGISTICS

● Compared to the other sectors analysed in this report, our industry is slightly below average in digital marketing ▲ capabilities. The average hides quite a large discrepancy at a micro-level too, with some excelling and others underperforming. A consistent ■ industry approach would be beneficial, and a more robust knowledge-sharing programme should be considered. ● Once those at the bottom can develop their basic skills, the ▼ industry should be in a good position for growth. ▶

Transport for Wales, Transport for Greater Manchester, Network Rail

# Transport & Logistics

The Transport and Logistics industry, much like many industries, were slow adopters of digital marketing, with a few outliers moving quickly and driving the rest of the industry to catch up. This is the first time that the Transport and Logistics industry has featured in the Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark and shows an industry that is performing slightly below the all industries average. Analytics and Data, Paid Search and Advertising are all areas of weakness, with most others aligning with all industry averages.

The greatest concern in the Transport and Logistics industry is a skewed level of overconfidence in some areas of capability, slightly different to the majority of other industries. This is most pronounced in Analytics, Usability, Social Media,

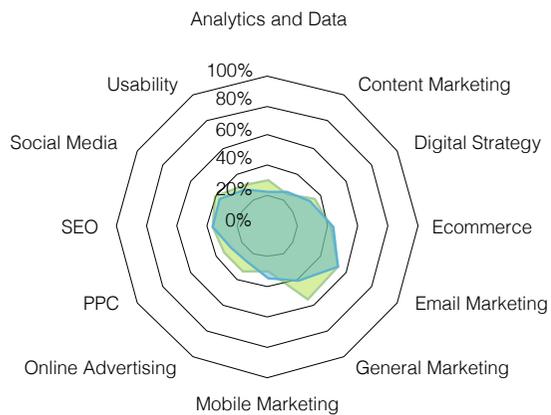
and Paid Search. Unusually, there wasn't much overconfidence in Content, and the industry even underestimated how good it was at Email. The sector also had one of the largest groups of individuals sitting in the lowest quintile and none in the top quintile, again showing an unusual spread of knowledge levels.

Overall, this signals an industry with elements of 'not knowing what It doesn't know', which generally requires the development of a common language and a baseline of knowledge across organisations. Some outlier organisations are also outperforming their competitors significantly, showing what can be achieved.

Discipline	Result	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	24%	50%
 Content Marketing	27%	42%
 Digital Strategy	32%	46%
 Ecommerce	44%	34%
 Email Marketing	54%	46%
 General Marketing	42%	56%

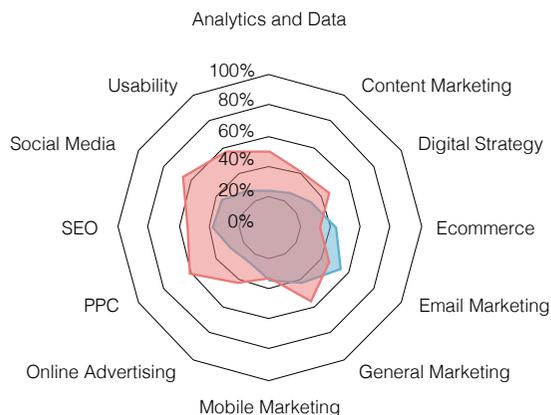
Discipline	Result	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	35%	34%
 Online Advertising	26%	42%
 PPC	29%	60%
 SEO	37%	54%
 Social Media	37%	66%
 Usability	28%	58%

Skills vs All industries



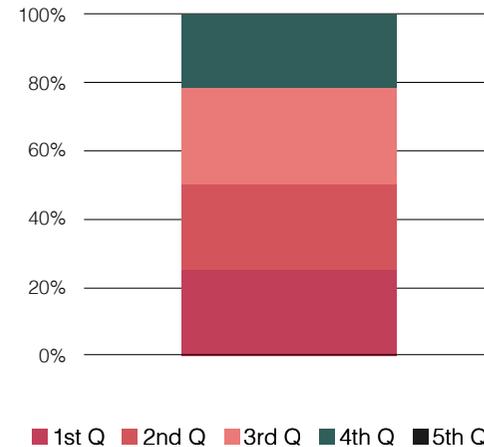
All industries    Transport & Logistics

Skills vs Confidence

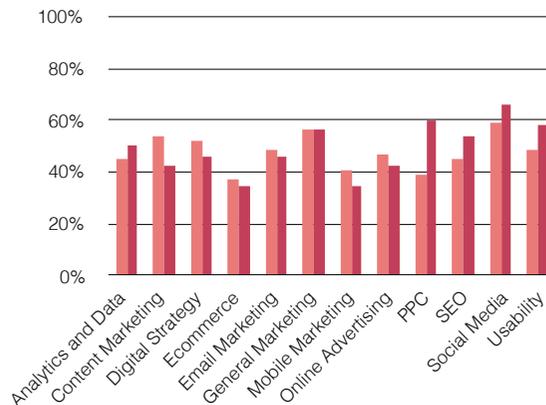


Skills    Confidence

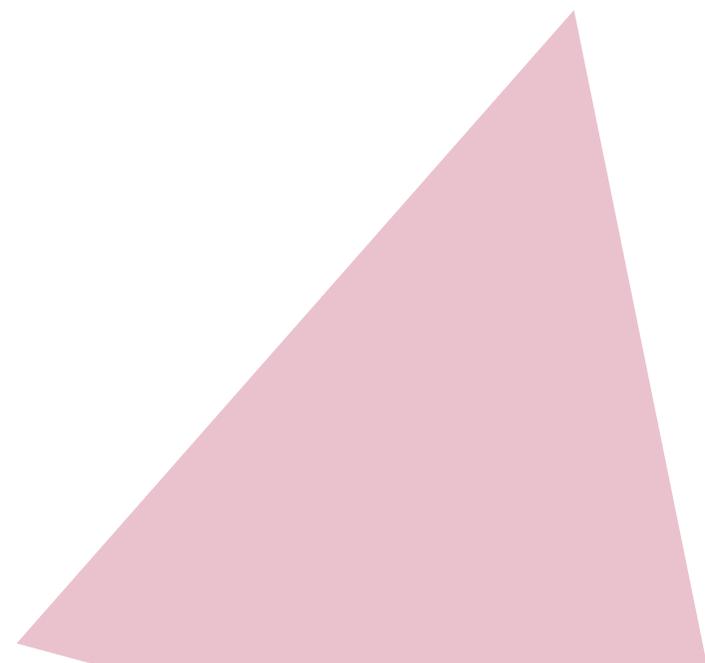
Quintile Distribution



Confidence vs All industries



All industries    Transport & Logistics





TRAVEL/TOURISM

& HOSPITALITY/

CATERING



Inconsistency is the name of the game for marketing in the travel and tourism industry. There were a couple of small declines in content marketing and digital strategy, with more concerning decreases in mobile marketing and usability. 🟢 On the plus side, ecommerce and PPC improved well, with SEO and general marketing not far behind. 🟡 If the sector can maintain that growth and address the declines, it'll be in a strong position in 2024.

■ Karol Ihring  
Chief Marketing Officer at AirHelp

# Travel/Tourism/Hospitality/Catering

The Travel/Tourism/Hospitality/Catering sector is another that saw fairly steady growth in previous benchmarks, growing from a low base, but that has seen a mixed bag of results in the latest benchmark results. There were significant improvements in six of the twelve areas of capability, with one staying static and some more minor fall back in scores in five areas. The most notable improvements were in Ecommerce, SEO, Paid Search and Cre Marketing, with scores falling back in Mobile, Usability and Online Advertising.

The gap between confidence and ability was most pronounced in Strategy and Content, but not to the extent that stands out when compared to other industries, so it is not of huge concern but should be noted.

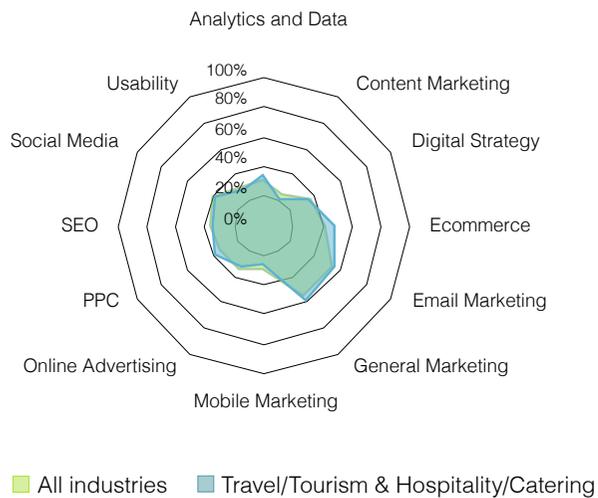
The lack of individuals scoring in the top quintile should be more worrying for the industry, meaning that many organisations lack internal expertise.

Overall scores land around all industry averages, but the mixed bag of results shows organisations with a broad range of different skill levels, and when compared to earlier progress, shows a need for focussed skills gap analysis and upskilling plans.

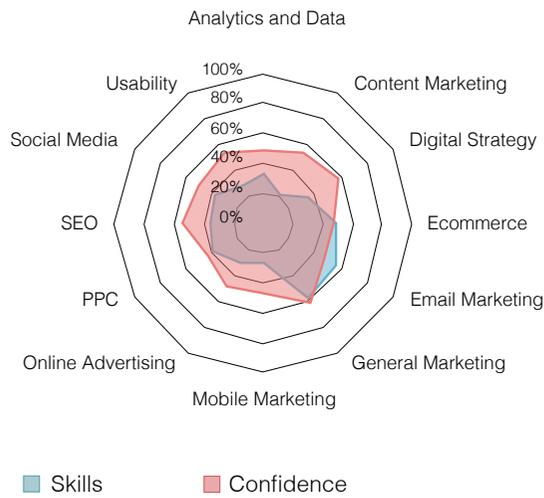
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Analytics & Data	33% 0 compared 2021		49%
Content Marketing	21% -3 compared 2021		54%
Digital Strategy	35% -2 compared 2021		58%
Ecommerce	48% +9 compared 2021		47%
Email Marketing	56% +3 compared 2021		47%
General Marketing	59% +5 compared 2021		62%

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Mobile Marketing	27% -5 compared 2021		47%
Online Advertising	31% -4 compared 2021		49%
PPC	39% +6 compared 2021		43%
SEO	35% +5 compared 2021		55%
Social Media	38% +4 compared 2021		50%
Usability	29% -4 compared 2021		54%

Skills vs All industries



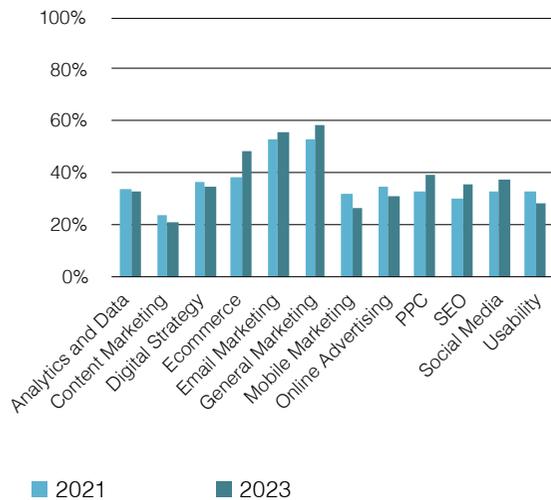
Skills vs Confidence



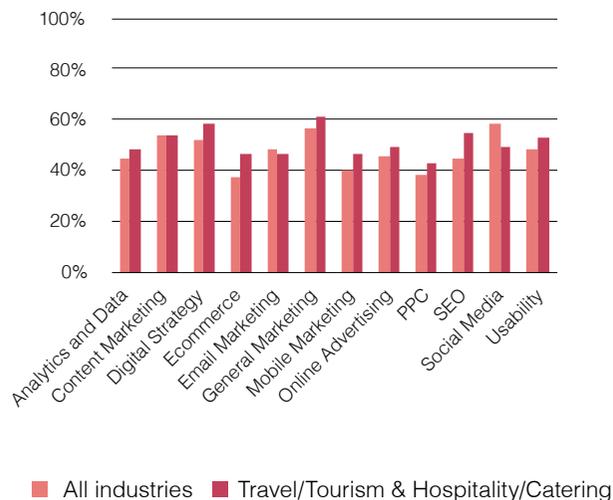
Quintile Distribution



21 vs 23



Confidence vs All industries





# UTILITIES

▲ Our sector's first inclusion in this report has provided some interesting results, with a ■ number of scores considerably above the average but others, such as social ● and analytics, well below. If we can make some progress on the ► basic skills across the industry's marketing professionals, we'll ▲ be able to improve those scores quite rapidly. ●

Thames Water

# Utilities

It is the first time we have had enough statistically significant data on the Utilities industry to feature it in the Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark, and the results make for interesting reading. As an industry not renowned for embracing digital marketing early, they have still scored well above all industry averages in Content, Strategy and Core Marketing. This aligns with an agenda of needing to build awareness rather than drive business in many cases. However, lower than all industry average scores in Social, Analytics, and SEO will be hampering the effectiveness of any content and branding efforts.

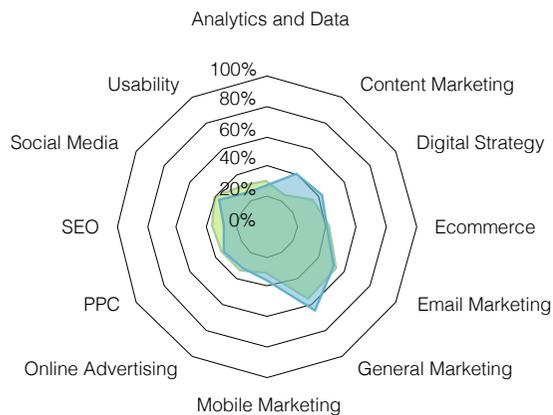
It's interesting to note the quintile distribution amongst individuals, showing no top or bottom scorers, which is unusual. Confidence outstripped ability in several areas, but this was most pronounced in Analytics and Data, potentially indicative of large parts of the industry not being able to measure business outcomes of their marketing efforts.

Overall, an industry still early in its development of digital marketing skills generally with lots of room for improvement and for the creative application of those skills.

Discipline	Result	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	28%	72%
 Content Marketing	41%	72%
 Digital Strategy	43%	66%
 Ecommerce	40%	46%
 Email Marketing	53%	58%
 General Marketing	64%	76%

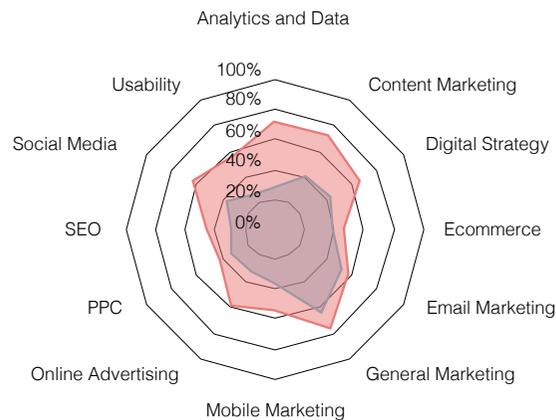
Discipline	Result	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	35%	54%
 Online Advertising	32%	58%
 PPC	34%	42%
 SEO	29%	46%
 Social Media	36%	64%
 Usability	27%	56%

Skills vs All industries



All industries Utilities

Skills vs Confidence



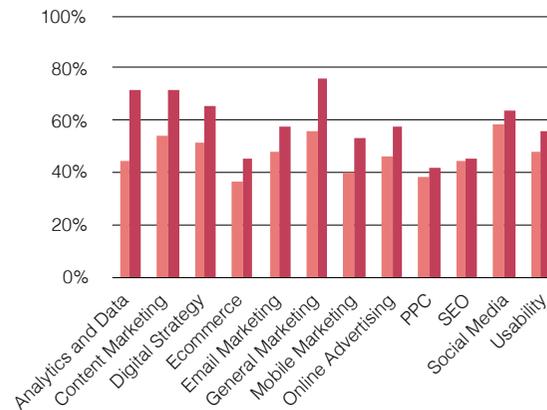
Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution

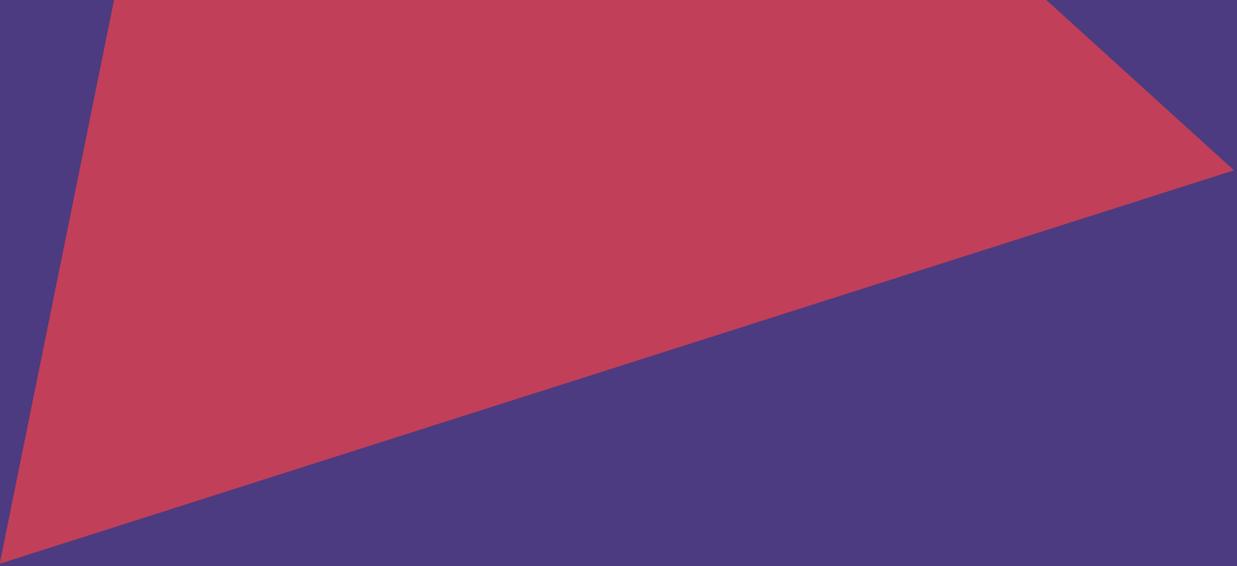


1st Q 2nd Q 3rd Q 4th Q 5th Q

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Utilities



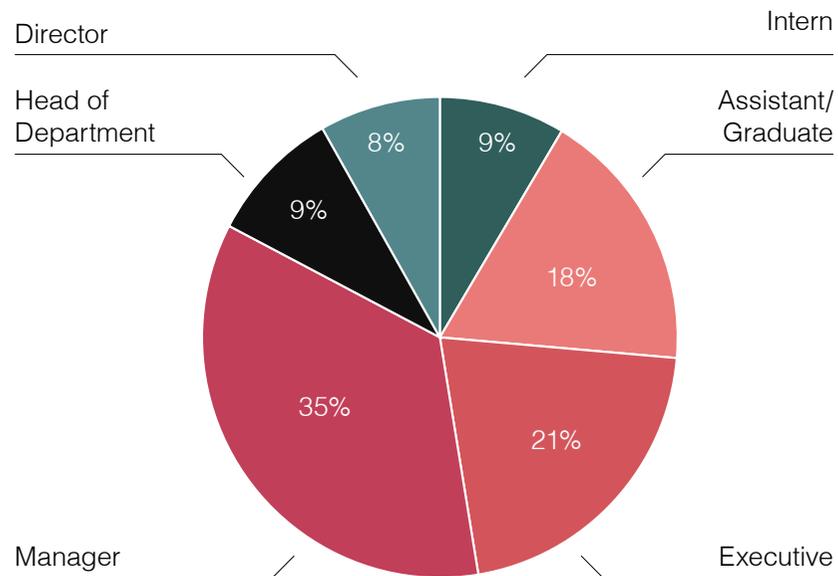
Seniority Breakdown



# Seniority Overview

It's great to again see marketers from every level of seniority engaging with and completing the benchmark. In this benchmark, we were really looking out for a few key questions to be answered. Has the increased pace of change, particularly across Social Media, Search, Analytics and Mobile, had an impact, and how is that reflected at different levels of seniority? What was the post-pandemic impact, and had skills returned to pre-pandemic levels after a dip in the last benchmark? Finally, would we continue to see the improvements we'd previously seen at junior levels and could directors also keep improving?

You can read each level of seniority in detail to get the answers to these questions and explore the data in more detail.



# Intern

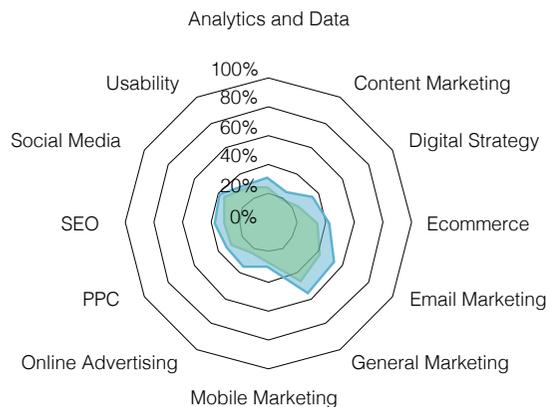
The previous dip we'd seen in Interns benchmark results has thankfully been reversed, and we've seen improvement across all areas of competency. The pandemic impacted Interns more than any other group due to the lack of effective face-to-face mentoring and experience-building. Results for this group still fall below all seniority averages, but this is to be expected, and the trend is clearly upward.

Confidence in Content and Social Media was higher than actual ability, whereas confidence in more traditional channels like Email and Core Marketing knowledge was lower than the measured knowledge. It's easy to make demographic assumptions, but it does seem that using social media and understanding how to use it effectively for a given marketing scenario are still far apart.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	26% +5 compared 2021		28%
 Content Marketing	20% 0 compared 2021		41%
 Digital Strategy	24% +1 compared 2021		35%
 Ecommerce	35% +10 compared 2021		30%
 Email Marketing	42% +7 compared 2021		33%
 General Marketing	47% +18 compared 2021		39%

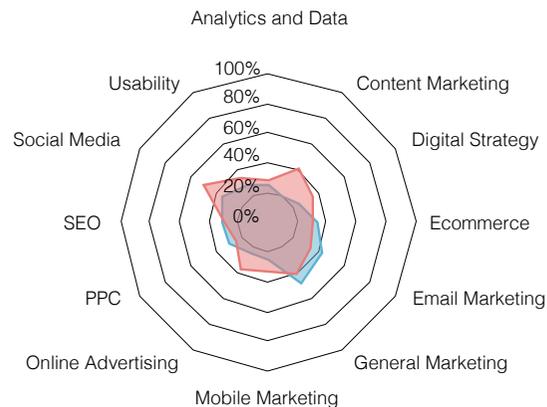
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	26% +4 compared 2021		34%
 Online Advertising	23% -1 compared 2021		37%
 PPC	30% +6 compared 2021		24%
 SEO	31% +4 compared 2021		30%
 Social Media	36% +7 compared 2021		50%
 Usability	28% +8 compared 2021		35%

Skills vs All industries



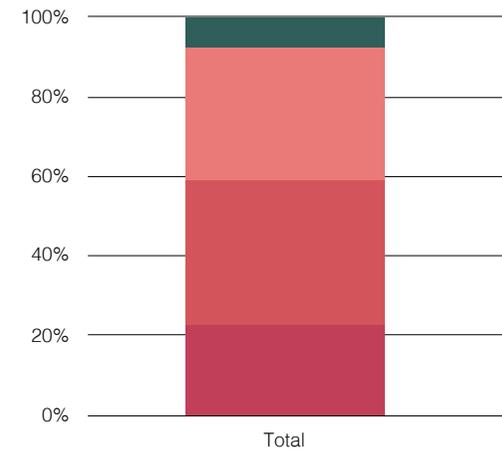
All industries Intern

Skills vs Confidence

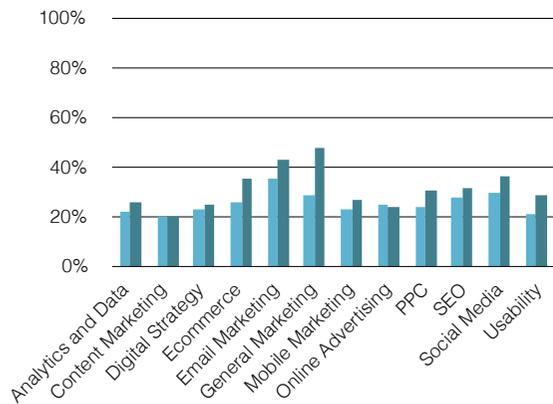


Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution

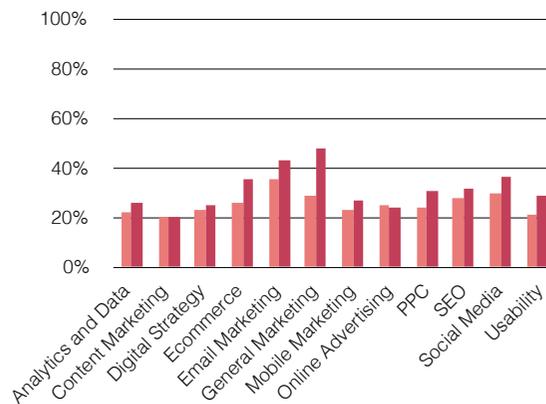


21 vs 23

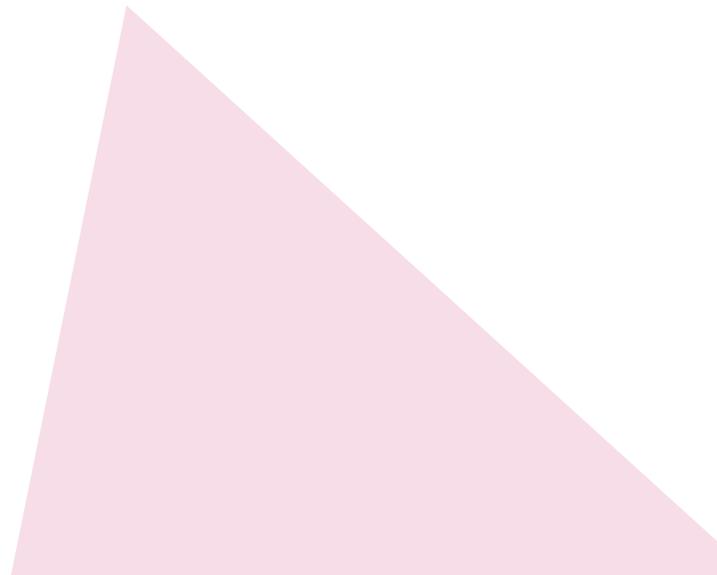


2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Intern



## ▶ Assistant/Graduate

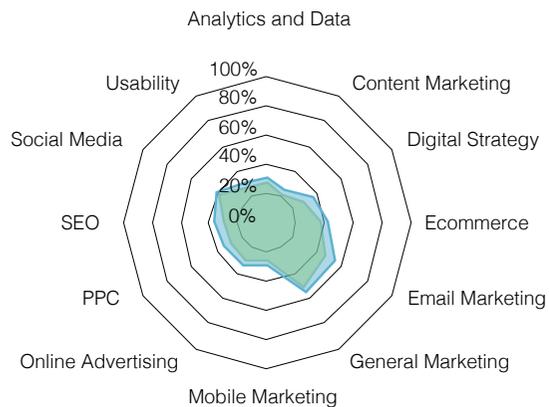
This group saw the least progress, and in fact, scores drifted back in four of twelve areas, with the only area of significant progress being Social Media. After further investigation, this lack of progress in the Graduate group is aligned with many courses struggling to stay up to date with the ever-increasing pace of change, although this group seem to be adapting to Social changes better than other groups.

Confidence in Content, Analytics and Social Media outstripped actual ability, but this was the case with many groups. The main difference was Analytics, meaning that this group may not be aware of some of the more complex aspects of Analytics and the recent GA4 changes.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
▶ Analytics & Data	27% -1 compared 2021		40%
● Content Marketing	22% +1 compared 2021		50%
■ Digital Strategy	29% +1 compared 2021		45%
■ Ecommerce	37% +4 compared 2021		32%
■ Email Marketing	47% +1 compared 2021		43%
▶ General Marketing	51% -4 compared 2021		52%

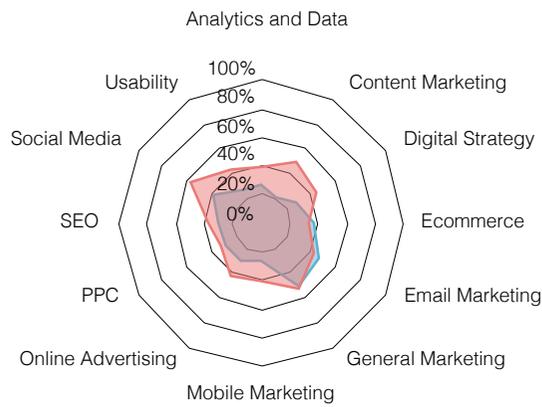
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
◀ Mobile Marketing	26% -1 compared 2021		40%
● Online Advertising	30% +5 compared 2021		42%
■ PPC	29% -1 compared 2021		42%
● SEO	31% +1 compared 2021		38%
▶ Social Media	39% +9 compared 2021		58%
■ Usability	27% +2 compared 2021		44%

Skills vs All industries



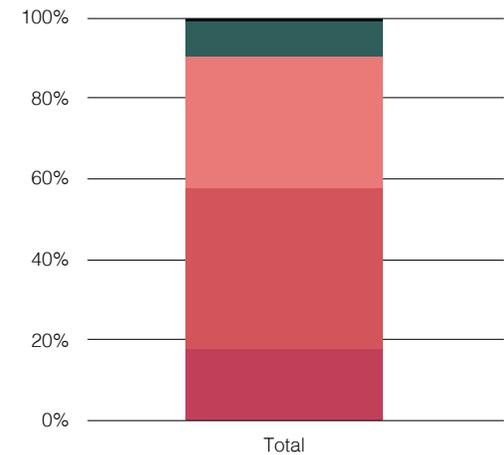
All industries Assistant/Graduate

Skills vs Confidence

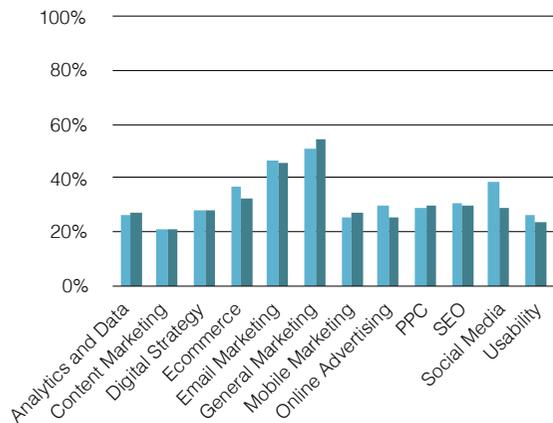


Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution

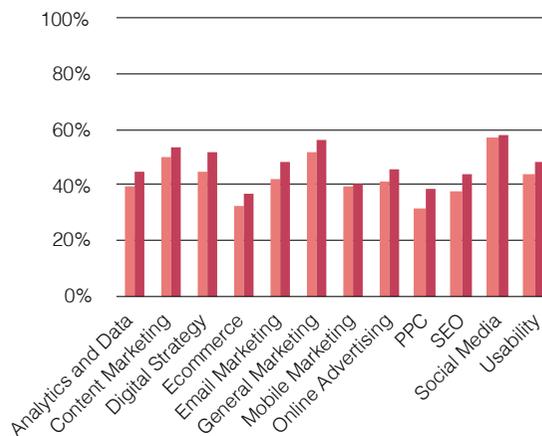


21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Assistant/Graduate

# Executive

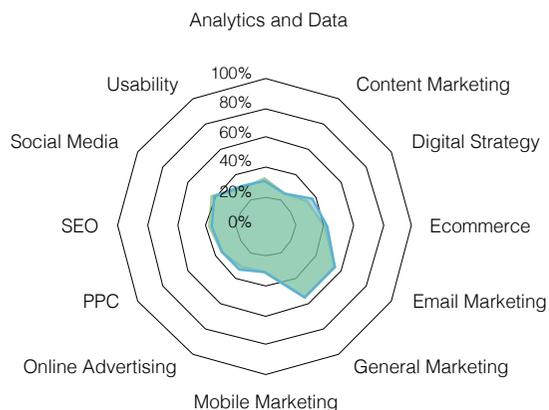
The group that identified themselves as Executives had a great benchmark, seeing slight improvements in all but two areas of the digital marketing competencies tested, with only one moving backwards slightly and one static. The greatest improvements were in Social Media, SEO, and Email. This indicates this group is focused on staying up to date, as throughout the benchmark, Social Media and SEO have been a struggle for many groups. This group aligns almost exactly with all seniority averages, which is impressive for a more junior group.

The gap between confidence and ability in this group was really only pronounced in Content Marketing, something that was common to most groups, and in Strategy, which is common in more junior groups without extensive experience. The quintile breakdown of this group also indicates a smaller group with high levels of expertise, obviously hungry for career progression.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Analytics & Data	32% +3 compared 2021		45%
Content Marketing	26% +1 compared 2021		54%
Digital Strategy	34% 0 compared 2021		52%
Ecommerce	41% +3 compared 2021		46%
Email Marketing	55% +4 compared 2021		52%
General Marketing	55% -2 compared 2021		57%

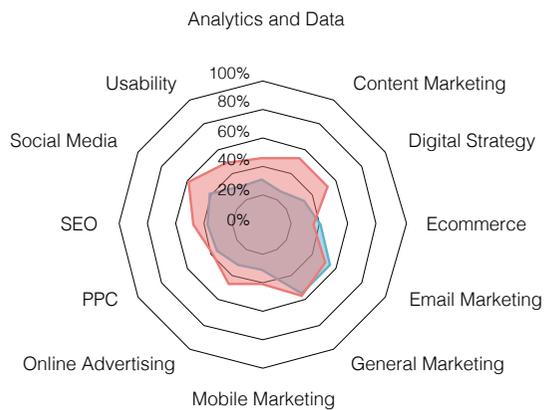
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
Mobile Marketing	31% +2 compared 2021		41%
Online Advertising	32% +2 compared 2021		47%
PPC	35% +2 compared 2021		39%
SEO	38% +4 compared 2021		48%
Social Media	41% +8 compared 2021		59%
Usability	31% +2 compared 2021		49%

Skills vs All industries



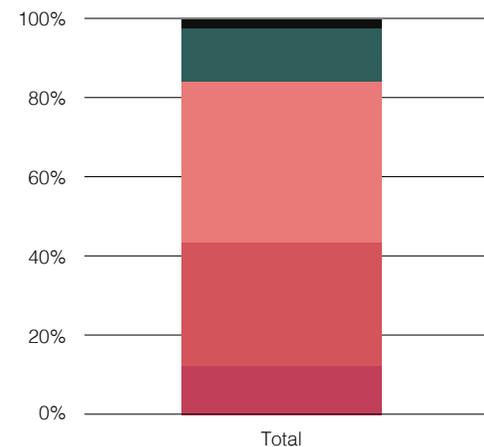
All industries Executive

Skills vs Confidence

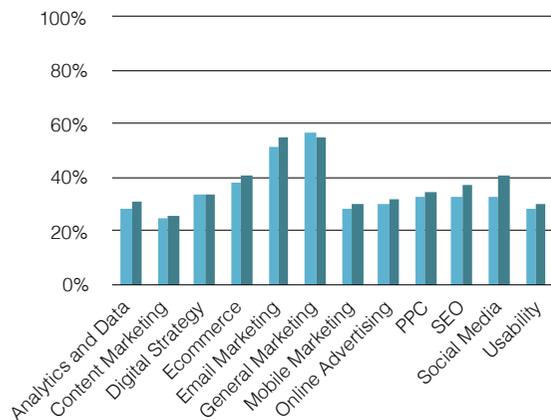


Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution

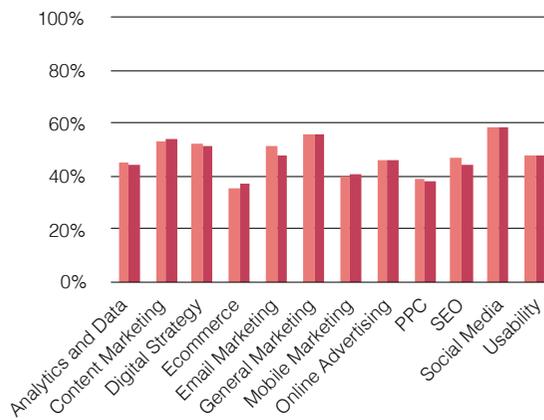


21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries

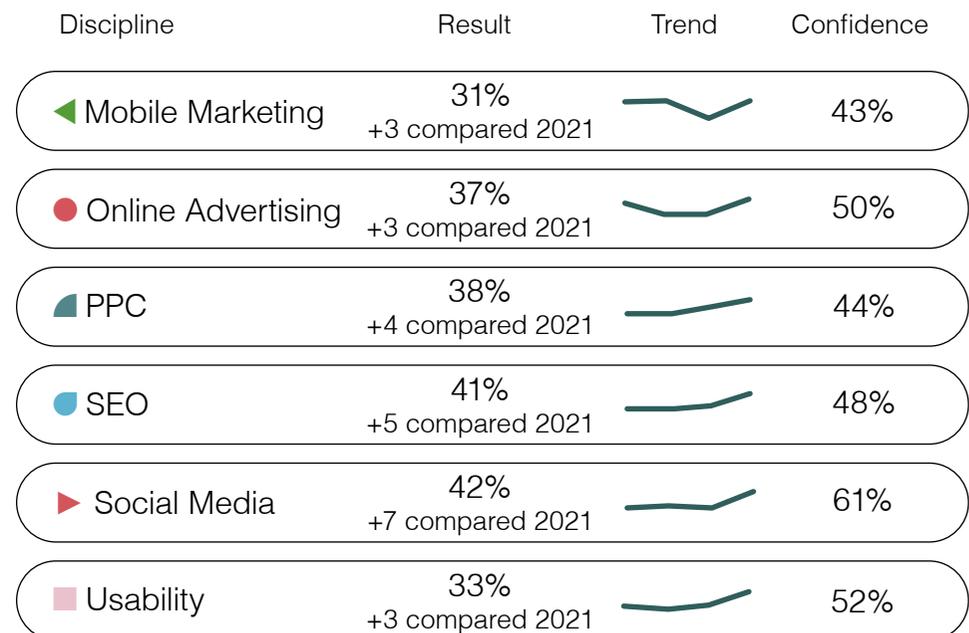
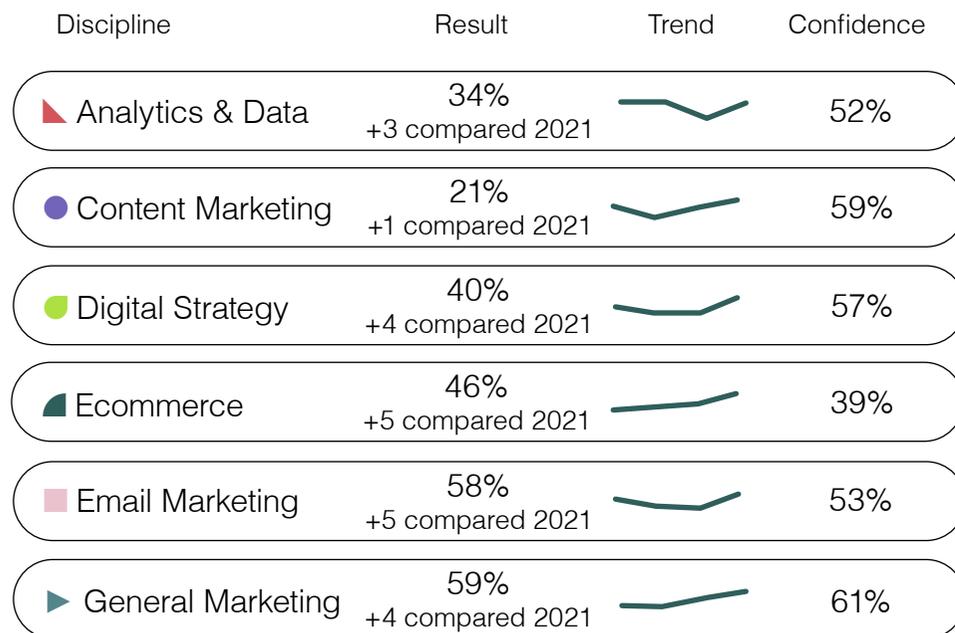


All industries Executive

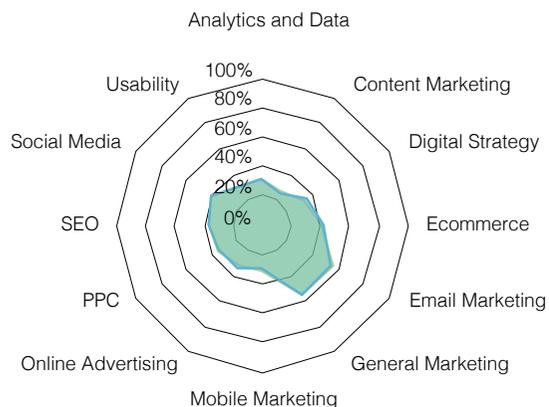
# ◀ Manager

The managers group have seen good progress since the last benchmark, with progress in every single area of digital marketing competency measured. However, in most cases, this only brings them in line with, or one percentage point away from, an all-seniority average. A debate needs to be had about whether managers should have higher levels of knowledge as they are very often responsible for the 'doing' and hands-on engagement with others who are carrying out tactical activities. Quite possibly, this should at least be showing with the tactical competencies such as SEO, Social Media, Paid Search, etc.

Again, the gap between confidence and ability was most noticeable in Strategy, Content and, surprisingly, Social Media. Anecdotally, this group struggles with upskilling due to time constraints and the tactical nature of their roles. It's clear there needs to be a focus on staying up to date with tactical changes and a culture of ongoing learning built and enabled by organisations for these individuals and teams.

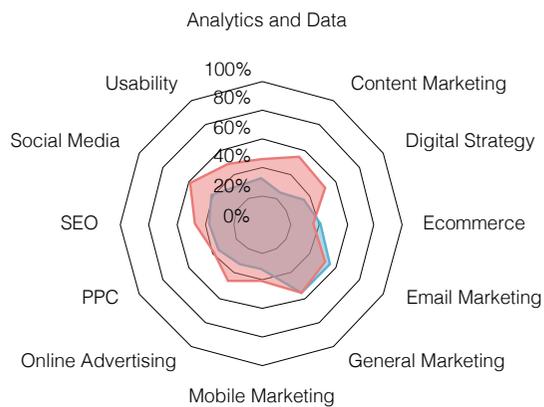


Skills vs All industries



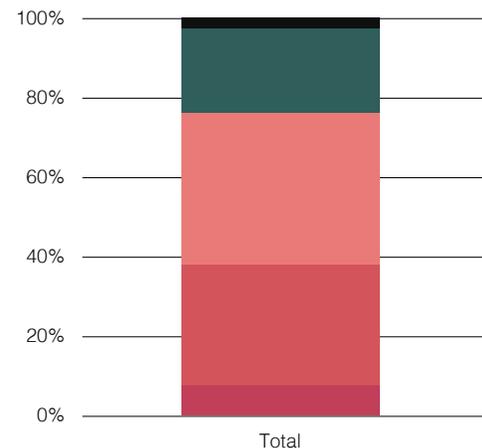
All industries Manager

Skills vs Confidence

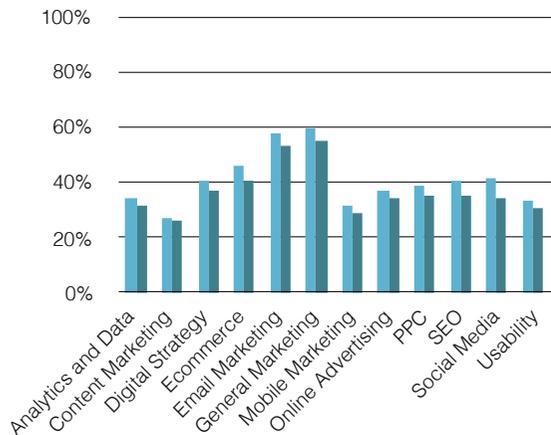


Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution

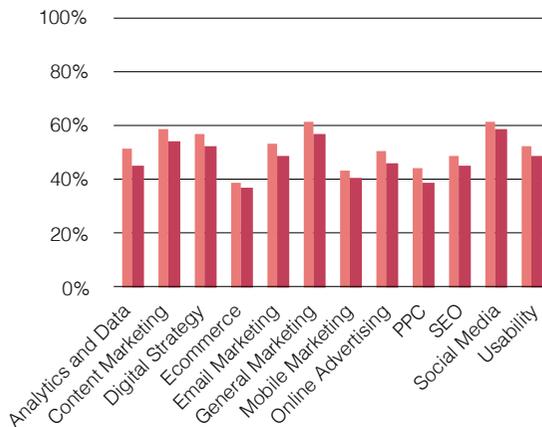


21 vs 23



2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Manager

# Head Of Department

In previous benchmarks, the Head of Department group's results had highlighted a key challenge within digital marketing teams. The people at the Head of Department level were no longer doing the 'doing', and instead were directing those people responsible for implementing tactical work. This means they were no longer up-skilling in many of the areas of competency that the benchmark tests, and some would argue that they don't need to. However, it quickly became clear they were, therefore, unable to ask the right questions or challenge any reports they were given. Thankfully, we've seen a real shift in capability for this group in the latest benchmark.

The Head of Department group has made progress in all areas of capability in the benchmark tests, with the exception of one that fell back just one per cent.

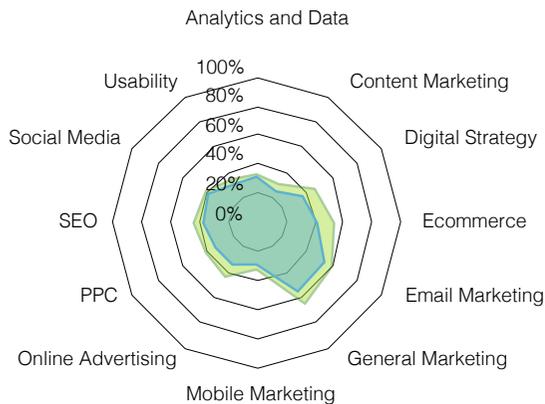
The biggest areas of improvement were Ecommerce, SEO, Online Advertising, Social Media, and Paid Search. This is pleasing to see as it includes areas that have been quickly changing, such as Social Media and SEO.

This leaves the group above average across the full range of digital marketing competencies when compared to all seniority averages. The gap between confidence and ability, however, still raises some challenges, as confidence in Content, Strategy, Analytics, and Usability is well above current ability levels. The overall picture is one of great progress but a situation that needs ongoing and well-focused attention on upskilling.

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	34% +4 compared 2021		52%
 Content Marketing	30% +2 compared 2021		59%
 Digital Strategy	47% +5 compared 2021		66%
 Ecommerce	53% +13 compared 2021		45%
 Email Marketing	60% +6 compared 2021		55%
 General Marketing	65% -1 compared 2021		64%

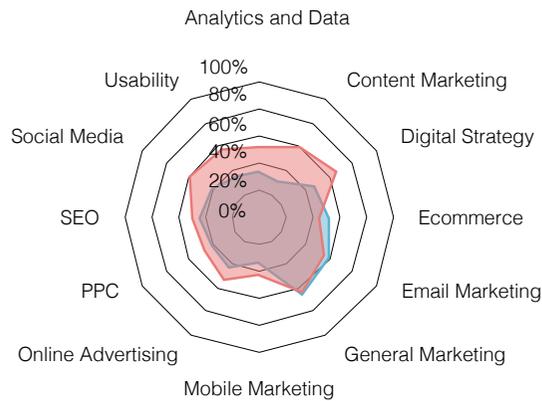
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	32% +3 compared 2021		43%
 Online Advertising	44% +8 compared 2021		53%
 PPC	41% +7 compared 2021		48%
 SEO	45% +8 compared 2021		50%
 Social Media	41% +7 compared 2021		60%
 Usability	34% +2 compared 2021		57%

Skills vs All industries



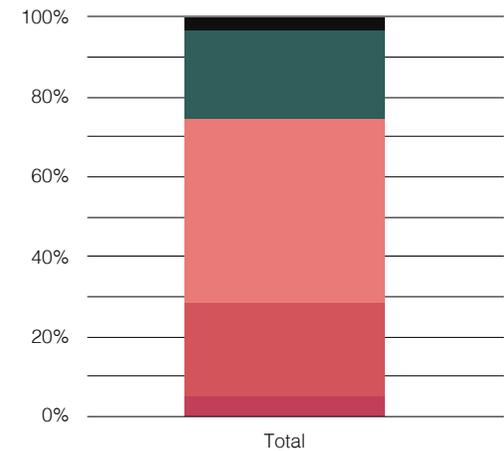
All industries Head of Department

Skills vs Confidence

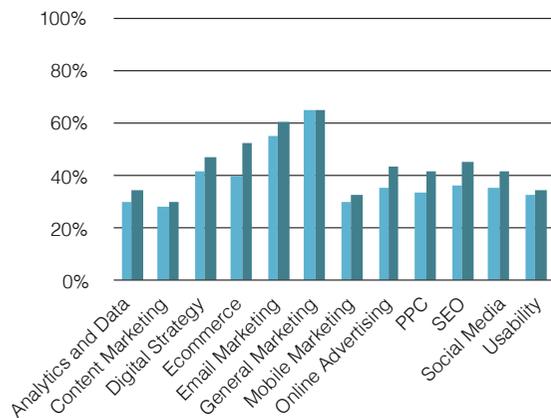


Skills Confidence

Quintile Distribution

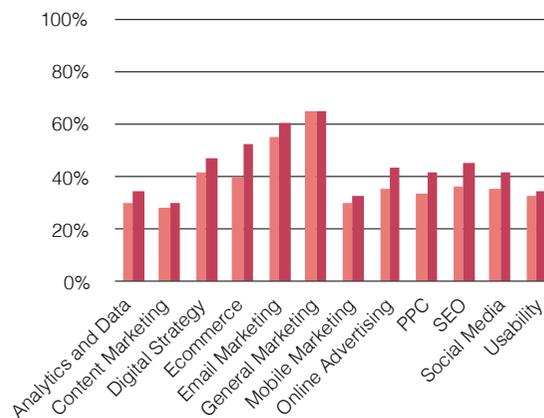


21 vs 23

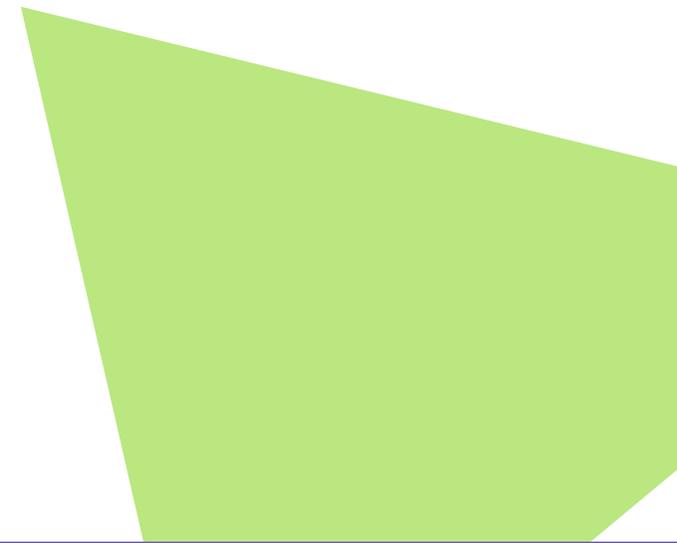


2021 2023

Confidence vs All industries



All industries Head of Department



# Director

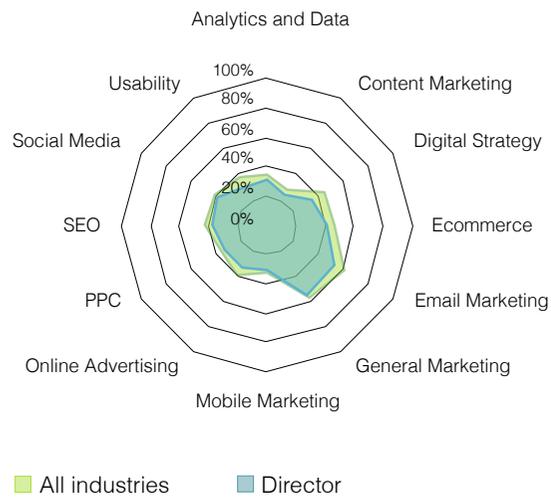
It has often been a challenge that those people at Director level aren't hands-on enough to know the tactical details they need to challenge or ask the right questions about. We'd seen good progress in this group's knowledge previously, but they were still behind the all seniority average. This year, there has been progress in all twelve areas of competency that the benchmark tests, taking the group in line with, or above, the all seniority average.

There was good progress in Strategy and Core Marketing as you'd hope for this group, but also in tactical areas like SEO and Social Media. Overall, this should leave the Director group better armed to ask the right questions and keep challenging their teams.

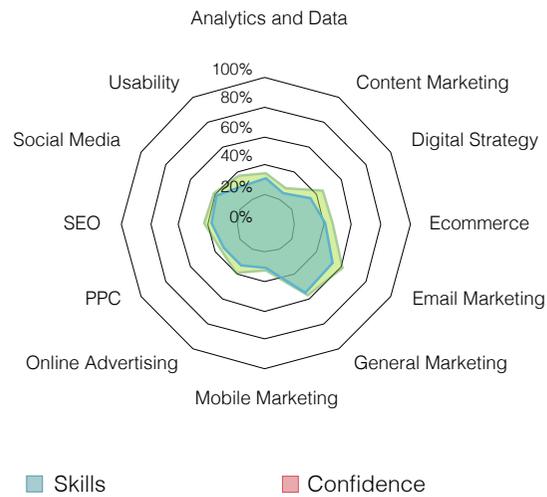
Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Analytics & Data	35% +4 compared 2021		48%
 Content Marketing	28% +1 compared 2021		54%
 Digital Strategy	45% +4 compared 2021		57%
 Ecommerce	46% +4 compared 2021		43%
 Email Marketing	62% +11 compared 2021		51%
 General Marketing	58% +2 compared 2021		59%

Discipline	Result	Trend	Confidence
 Mobile Marketing	32% +3 compared 2021		41%
 Online Advertising	40% +5 compared 2021		49%
 PPC	36% +2 compared 2021		44%
 SEO	43% +8 compared 2021		49%
 Social Media	40% +7 compared 2021		59%
 Usability	38% +3 compared 2021		49%

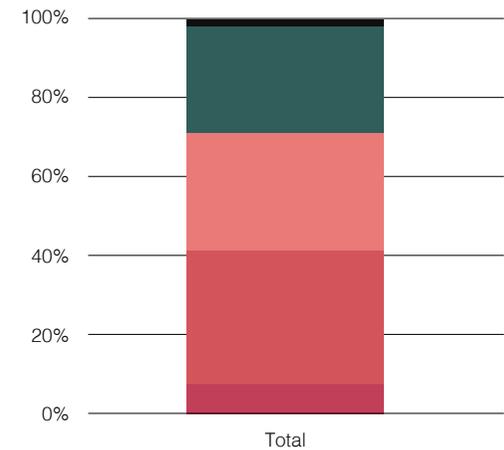
Skills vs All industries



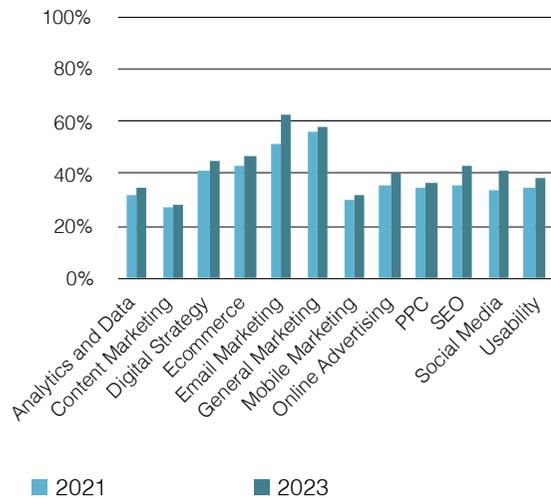
Skills vs Confidence



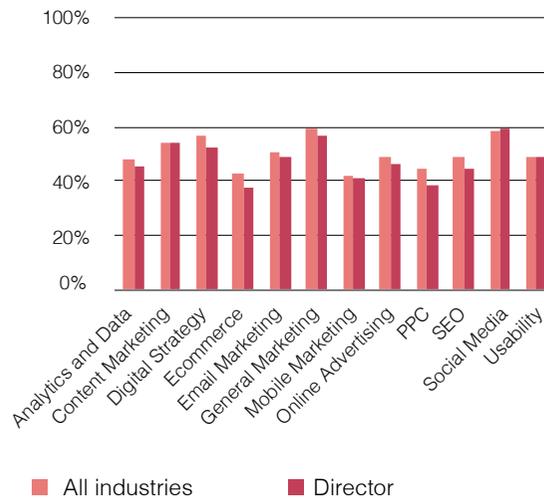
Quintile Distribution



21 vs 23



Confidence vs All industries



## Final thoughts ►

The digital marketing landscape is constantly evolving, and it is more important than ever for marketers to keep their skills up to date. Developments in AI and other martech tools are coming thick and fast, and showing little sign of abating.

In the past year, there have been additional contextual challenges that have impacted all of our lives, including the cost of living crisis and heightened interest rates. They've made it harder for businesses to invest in training and development, which has had a knock-on effect on digital skills.

Despite these challenges though, I'm pleased to confirm that the demand for digital marketers remains strong. In fact, recent findings revealed that XX% of businesses plan to increase their marketing budget in the next year. This is good news for marketers who are willing to invest in their skills and stay ahead of the curve.

The 2023 Digital Marketing Skills Benchmark Report provides a valuable snapshot of the current state of digital marketing skills. It reveals some interesting trends, including the increasing demand for social media and SEO skills. As social media platforms become more commercial, and as search engines become more sophisticated, these skills become even more essential for reaching and engaging with target audiences.

A slightly more worrying trend is the stagnation of marketing theory and content marketing skills. This may be due to the fact that these skills are not as essential for day-to-day marketing tasks. With additional pressures facing the industry, marketers have to prioritise their and find ways to free up their workloads.

However, the fact remains that a strong understanding of marketing theory underpins the development of effective marketing strategies. Similarly, content marketing remains a valuable way to reach and engage with target audiences, so creating high-quality content shouldn't be ignored.

It's hard to imagine a future where digital skills do not become more ingrained in daily activities, and therefore more integral to the development of the industry as a whole. I'm excited to see how marketers and their employers seize the opportunity to get a run on their competition.

● Chris Daly  
Chief Executive  
Chartered Institute of Marketing



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