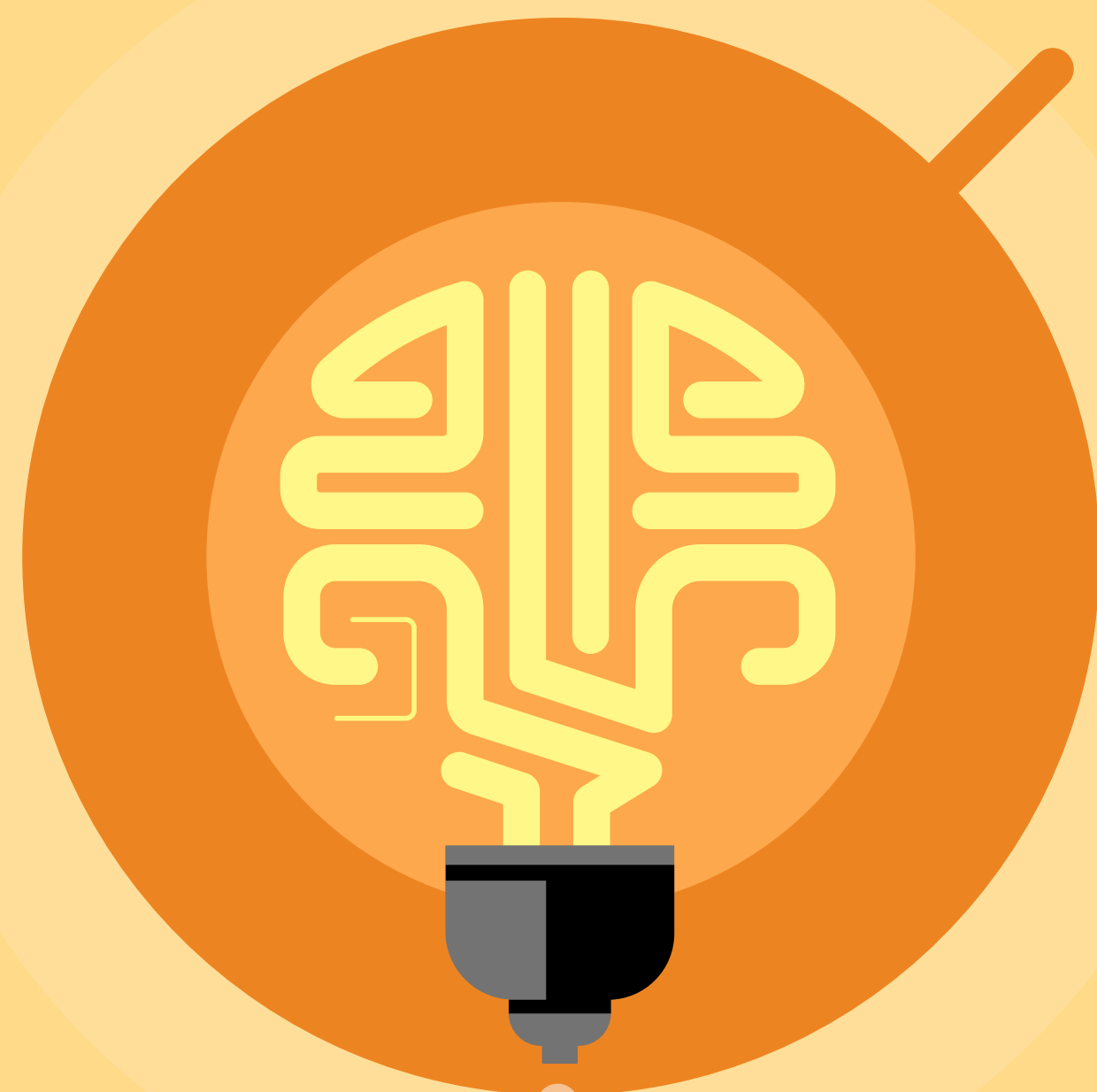# 7 ways AI can help improve decision making for marketers

No longer the stuff of science fiction, AI is quickly making its presence felt—especially in business

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to radically change just about every aspect of modern life, and business is certainly no exception. From automating simple, repetitive tasks to more complex feats like sifting through zetabytes of unstructured data to discover patterns and trends otherwise overlooked by human eyes, AI is fast emerging as one of the centerpieces of digital transformation, in large part because of its ability to assist with making critical business decisions. Below are seven ways that AI is helping to drive better decisions for marketers, and for businesses in general.

Make faster decisions

Even with all the relevant information, human beings take a long time to make important decisions. In contrast, AI is able to analyze myriad factors all at once and then quickly present data-driven recommendations. In today's competitive market where delayed decisions can cost money and marketshare, the advantages of AI are self evident: the faster data-driven business decisions can be made, the better your timing, and the greater your competitive advantage.

Improve marketing

Intelligent marketing decisions require both a knowledge of customer needs and the ability to align products and services to those needs. Additionally, it's important to have a pulse on consumer behavior and trends. AI can provide dependable insights into buyer behaviors and needs via sophisticated simulations, as well as support decisions using real-time marketing data combined with trend analysis and forecasting.

Achieve greater accuracy

AI can not only interpret data, but actually interpret how data is used. This means AI can be tailored to analyze data patterns in analytics to accurately predict the next best move for your business, rather than simply crunch numbers. The accuracy of AI helps minimize errors while using current data to generate even more data—for example, AI can use KPI data from previous marketing campaigns to help you identify if the next campaign will result in a higher ROI.
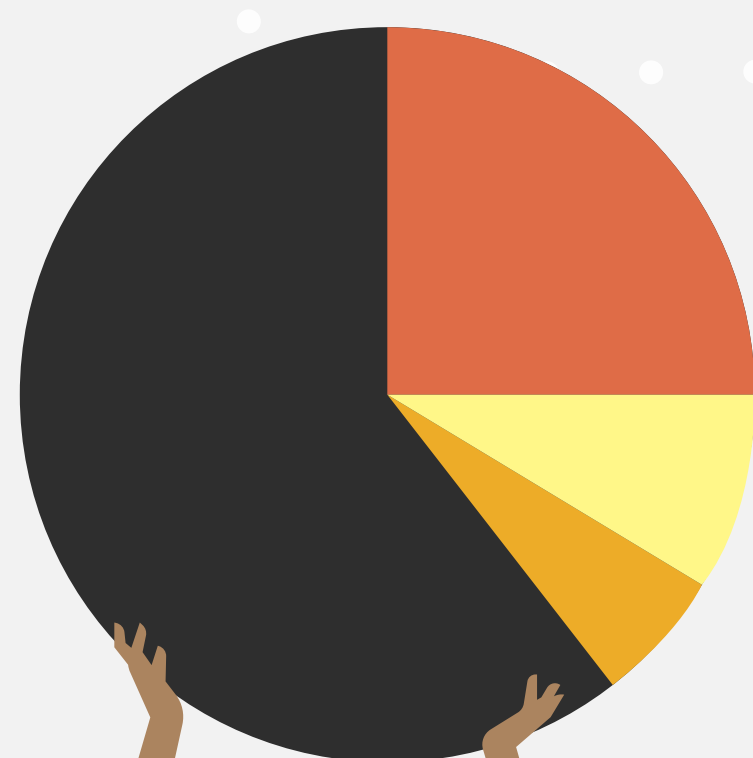
Reduce costs

In a recent rollout of robotic process automation for a global insurance company, the new AI-based systems were able to perform otherwise manual, repetitive tasks up to five times faster than their human counterparts, savings thousands of hours and hundreds of thousands of dollars in the first six months. While impressive for low-level tasks, the time and cost savings associated with AI can rise exponentially and have a cascading effect when AI is utilized to help support critical business decisions. Accurately predicting your next business move, for example, can be done in a very short amount of time, and all without sacrificing revenue.

Understand customers better

Data regarding social media sentiment, customer reviews, and other "soft" metrics can be collected and analyzed by AI to reveal what consumers are feeling, thinking, and saying in real time, enabling you to quickly adjust branding and messaging in the short term, and refine products and services over the mid term to tap into emerging trends and behaviors. With AI, understanding and reaching your customers in meaningful, impactful ways is both accelerated and greatly simplified.

Work more efficiently with search engines

Given the dynamic and ever-changing nature of search engine algorithms, search engine marketing (SEM) is inherently complex and rarely predictable—challenges which AI can help marketers overcome by utilizing high-end language to improve rankings, voice search, and user context, and ultimately help drive more effective SEM campaigns for your business.

Interpret data in new ways

According to IDC, 88 percent of data generated worldwide is unstructured data, making it all but inscrutable by human eyes. Where AI truly shines is in its ability to identify and learn new patterns in both structured and unstructured data, and thus surface trends and insights most likely undetectable by human analysts.

Microsoft