

January Roundtable

the team

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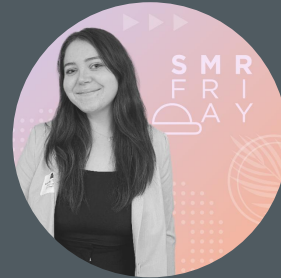
Patricia Sansone

Director,
Client Strategy



Kelsey Connors

Strategist



Rosemary Gleason

Strategy Intern



Special Guest

A time traveler!



in the know

volatility ahead in B2C marketing?



CMO confidence

64% of B2C CMOs expect 2026 to be more volatile than 2025



Price hikes?

Price hikes could cause up to **1/3** of consumers to switch brands



AI: Risk & opportunity

AI-driven data breaches are expected to increase class action lawsuits by **20%**

Only **37%** of employees feel confident adapting AI systems

strategic social up, purpose driven down

January Roundtable



the 2026 consumer: control, connection & escape

Escape culture

Younger generations escape stress via fandoms and collectibles like toys, as traditional milestones fade.

New socialization

63% spend time solo, but Gen Z are increasingly exploring hobby communities for new ways of socializing.

Going analog

Gen Z (45%) finds online life stressful, favoring "dumb" phones and analog aesthetics.

AI friends

AI shifting from a productivity tool to a "companion," even as people grow more skeptical of AI-made content.

expanded streaming measurement

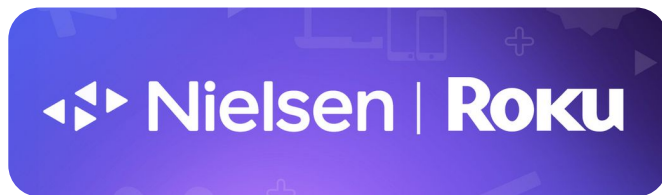
Nielsen and Roku expanded their multi-year data-sharing partnership.

Deeper Roku CTV data now feeds Niensens cross-platform TV & streaming measurement.

Why does this matter?

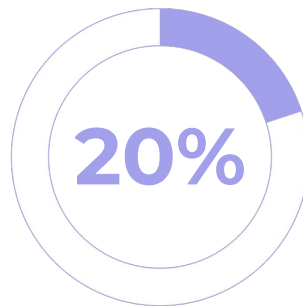
- Industry is moving closer to consistent, unified CTV measurement
- Reduces fragmentation between linear TV and streaming metrics

Source: * [Innovid](#) **[MarketingDive](#)



\$37b

Ad spend is expected to reach about **\$37 billion in 2026** (up roughly 14% year-over-year)*



Roku represents **20%+ of U.S. TV viewing****

AI pushback strategy

Almond Breeze partnered with the Jonas Brothers to mock low-quality, generic AI ads

1 in 3 consumers dislikes AI in ads

What does this tell us?

Brands can differentiate by being selective and skeptical about AI, while still recognizing its growing role in the marketing ecosystem.





roundtable discussion



our conversation today

January Roundtable

2 “mini” roundtable sessions (10 min each)

Fireside chat with our “futurist” guest (15 minutes)

Participation is encouraged! Let’s have fun.

setting it up

From 2026 to 2046: The choices shaping the future (and past) of marketing, technology, and more!

2026

2046

Decisions

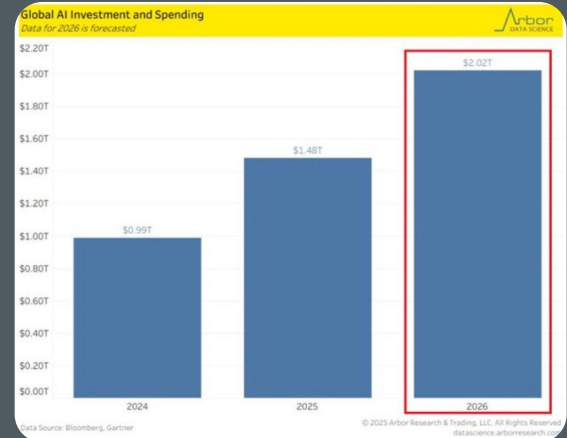


Outcomes

We're stepping back to reflect on the choices we're making **today**, and how they compound over the next 20 years.

This isn't about **predicting** the future of AI. It's about examining how today's marketing and brand decisions shape **what's possible tomorrow**.

Investment continues to soar



mini session 1:

~5-10 minutes

January Roundtable

how did AI evolve from a tool to a revolution?

Do you agree with this? Why or why not?

**& what did that shift change for brands,
marketers, and the audiences they serve?**

some “hot takes”

- Consumers feel empowered by AI today, but that balance may shift as platforms, policies, and incentives consolidate control.
- In 2026, we’re in an open testing phase now, but long-term AI tech advantage will be increasingly gated by cost, infrastructure, and access.
- AI creates the illusion of democratization, but the real advantage will concentrate among those who can afford data, talent, and scale.
- AI became a credibility signal before it became a capability.



Do you agree?

tactical takeaway

What we say when asked how we use AI and integrate it today



get clarity on ownership, not output

What should humans always own?

Direction
Judgment
Risk
Accountability

Where does AI add leverage?

Speed
Scale
Analysis/pattern
recognition
iteration

Where do partners fit?

Turning strategy into
systems
Operational rigor
Quality control

AI doesn't replace people, it forces clarity on roles that were previously fuzzy.

lead with business outcomes

Identify where in your workstream actually needs change/help:

Speed	Turnaround time Production cycles
Quality	Consistency Insight Depth Iteration
Scale	Volume of content Analysis Personalization
Cost efficiency	Output vs. effort

Pick one outcome per workstream to improve at a time, not everything at once.

don't automate chaos

1

Define the problem

(human led)

Goals, constraints,
success metrics, context

2

Accelerate the work

(AI-supported)

Analysis, iteration,
pattern-finding

3

Make the call

(human owned)

Review, judgment, final
decisions

Then, measure, iterate, and *evolve the system over time*....

session 2:

hype. adoption. waste.

& how to tell the difference

(10 min)



setting it up

Where are we today vs where we could be tomorrow?

Today (2026)

Fragmented tools · rapid experimentation · visible AI everywhere

Over time (→ 2046)

Fewer interfaces · embedded intelligence · systems that fade into the background

Today's landscape

ChatGPT
Microsoft CoPilot
Google gemini
Adobe Firefly
Salesforce Einstein

vs

Midjourney/Runaway/generative video tools
Jasper/Copy.ai/ AI copy platforms
Notion AI

How we'll frame this session:

Hype

What's loud, oversold, or misunderstood
(*Short-term attention*)

Adoption

What's actually changing behavior and workflows
(*Long-term impact*)

Waste

What we'll look back on as unnecessary, inefficient, or overbuilt
(*Energy we didn't need to spend*)

mini session 2:

~5-10 minutes

January Roundtable

What do you think is currently hyped?

What will stick?

What will be waste?

some “hot takes”

- AI content creation is overhyped
- Confidence is outpacing the truth when it comes to AI
- Much of the current AI/tech investment will never translate into lasting marketing value
- Real adoption will show up in how data informs experiences.
- The biggest waste isn't failed tech, it's premature scale without market clarity.
- Younger demographics will lean more into analog ways of communicating



Do you agree?

a fireside chat:

A look into the future - tech & marketing practices of 2046

Our time traveler:



Michael Cruz

*Traveled from 2046 for
this session!!*

thank you!

Upcoming:

February Lunch & Learn

Date: February 26th

Topic: Coming soon!

Locations: NYC, Chicago, and virtual via Zoom

