

potential to boost turnover by 20%. And better-focused decisions and operations (in areas like Big Data and automation) could be worth another 20%.

The consultancy, which made its name in exactly this type of big picture advice, is equally clear about what companies should prioritise. The first priority is continuing to transform the customer experience, consistently across all digital channels: not an entirely unexpected recommendation for a sector that has exploited traditional marketing methods so well, for so long. Second comes the need to innovate in terms of offer, with strong advice to make full use of areas like crowdsourcing (already successfully used by

Danone, which crowdsources ideas for new flavours for its Danette brand: both engaging consumers and cutting product development costs). Better exploitation of Big Data comes a close third, with an emphasis both on skills, and on making the considerable investments (a game heavily involving distributors too) in increasing companies' analytical capabilities.

So, in conclusion, will the digital gap close for France? As the apocalyptic economist might tell you, in an increasingly interdependent and still fragile global economy, it depends; a reality captured in Napoleon Bonaparte's maxim: "forethought we may undoubtedly have, but not foresight." Bon courage!



Market snapshot

FRANCE

High unemployment and a largely stagnant economy has led France to become seen by some as Europe's biggest problem. Debates about how to fix France have also been persistent and range from changing its notoriously inflexible labour laws, to having France rescind its membership of the EU. No one, however, seems to agree on the actual solution. France's minister for the economy, Emmanuel Macron, earlier this year launched 'En Marche!' (On the move!), a bipartisan political movement focused on finally finding answers to his country's enduring problems.

Macron's view is that France has severe self-confidence issues and is letting its tacit fears dictate the future. French consumers and businesses may have taken heed of Macron's clarion call for more poise and positivity. Recent Q1 figures show an unexpected increase in consumer spending as well as business investment - the strongest since 2004 and 2011 respectively - with overall GDP growth reaching 0.5%. Unemployment also experienced its biggest fall for over a decade. The French are hopeful this trend will continue for the remainder of the year.

Nigel Wright London office move

Nigel Wright's London office was officially launched in 2007 to help facilitate the national and international expansion of its consumer industry recruitment practice. >>



In the nine years since its inception, the team in London, as well Nigel Wright's reputation in the sector, has grown significantly.

As well as being home to teams focused on sourcing talent across the sales, marketing and operations disciplines, London is also the hub of Nigel Wright's global consumer search division, a dedicated team focused on national and international C-level assignments.

Following the addition of six new consultants to the London teams in 2015-16, earlier this year the decision was taken to relocate the business to new office near Monument, on St Dunstan's Hill. CEO Paul Wilson said about the move:

"The new office provides an excellent base for the teams to drive growth in our core markets as well as offering our clients and candidates professional locations to meet. The central and prestigious location - with fantastic views of HMS Belfast, Tower Bridge and the Shard - help to promote our premium image as well as attract high potential people, because of who we are and what we offer."

One of the people to join the London office in 2016 was experienced consumer industry recruiter Sarah-Jayne Bennell, who was appointed Director of Global Consumer Search. A former McKinsey e-strategy consultant, Sarah-Jayne has enjoyed a successful fifteen-year career in recruitment, specialising in executive search within the global consumer and retail industries.

Paul Wilson commented on the appointment: "Sarah-Jayne is a highly experienced search practitioner with a strong consumer industry specialisation. Her profile is a great complementary fit with our business and I'm delighted to have her on board. We're now seeking to significantly expand our London presence, with more appointments expected over the next twelve months."

