

Pricing & monetisation as drivers of value creation

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Insights from a roundtable discussion co-hosted by The Barton Partnership & Pricing Specialists, Pearson Ham Group.

On 20th November 2025, The Barton Partnership and Pearson Ham Group co-hosted a roundtable on Pricing & Monetisation as Drivers of Value Creation, bringing together leaders from across the B2C sector to discuss how pricing landscapes are shifting and where value is created - or lost - in practice.

#1 Changing consumer behaviour

- Consumer behaviour has become less predictable and more polarised. Participants noted clear splits between value-seeking customers trading down and those whose spending patterns remain largely unaffected. In several categories, the same consumer oscillates between premium choices for specific occasions and low-cost options elsewhere, complicating assumptions about willingness to pay.
- Geographical differences are widening too. Markets such as London behave differently from other parts of the UK; behaviour in Australia, Ireland and the US differs again. These shifts demand more granular pricing decisions, challenging the simplicity of traditional one-price-fits-all approaches.
- Price transparency, driven particularly by e-commerce, has intensified comparison behaviour. Even in high-ticket categories once thought relatively inelastic, minor price differences influence conversion. This visibility also exposes long-established regional price gaps that consumers increasingly question.

#2 Sector norms and pricing expectations

- Participants emphasised that pricing expectations are shaped by established sector norms. Sharp price swings are accepted in categories like airlines, but the same behaviour would prompt backlash elsewhere. As companies have become more sophisticated in pricing, consumers have become more aware and more sceptical, reacting quickly when pricing behaviour feels out of line with what they expect.
- This also surfaced in discussions about pack changes, size adjustments and ingredient shifts. Some consumers will pay more to maintain quality; others prefer prices to hold even if specifications change. Preferences vary widely, leaving no uniform rule for how customers will respond.

#3 The impact of tariffs and cross-border pricing

- Tariffs have become a significant pressure point for global businesses. Several participants described how sudden cost increases led to substantial price increases in certain markets, changes that customers often struggled to understand, even when duties and import costs were the primary drivers.
- The challenge is amplified in categories where the same product is sold globally. Long-standing regional price differences, once hidden, are now plainly visible as customers navigate between local sites. While all-inclusive pricing offers simplicity, it can obscure cost movements, prompting companies to explore more transparent price breakdowns or segmented display strategies.

#4 Execution: Where value is lost

- Across categories, participants agreed that pricing strategies often fail in execution rather than design. Internal discounting, promotions, inconsistent pack architecture and retailer negotiations frequently erode value. For some businesses, marketplace dynamics and third-party sellers compound the issue, limiting control over price realisation.
- Retailer data quality and availability were recurring themes. Inconsistent data sets, differing reporting standards and lags in information make performance analysis difficult. As one participant noted, even basic visibility of promotional effects can be challenging in some markets.

#5 Revenue management capabilities

- Many organisations are now moving towards integrated revenue-management models that bring together pricing, category management, promotions, and product architecture. However, building this capability remains difficult.
- Specialised talent is in short supply. Companies rely on individuals who can blend commercial judgement, analytical skill and cross-functional influence, profiles participants described as “unicorns.” Many come from finance or sales backgrounds, as few have spent full careers in revenue management, given its relatively recent emergence as a standalone discipline.
- Tooling and data infrastructure lag behind ambition in many cases. While there is widespread interest in predictive analytics, AI-enabled pricing and more dynamic levers, even foundational dashboards and harmonised data remain a challenge in several organisations.

#6 Organisational constraints and legacy models

- Participants observed that organisational design can slow progress. In some businesses, pricing, category, commercial and alliance teams operate in silos, making coordinated revenue decisions difficult. In others, particularly large, legacy organisations, bureaucracy and established ways of working hinder rapid experimentation or market-specific adjustments.
- The subscription sector offered a contrasting perspective: newer markets allow for faster testing; legacy markets with entrenched customer expectations offer less room to experiment without risking conversion or loyalty. The conversation illustrated how maturity, not just industry, shapes pricing flexibility.

#7 Talent, attraction and career pathways

- Hiring junior talent in pricing and revenue management remains a challenge. Participants noted that emerging professionals often view pricing as a narrow specialism rather than a strategic career path, despite its role in shaping commercial, financial and product decisions. Without a clear progression narrative, such as routes into CRO or broader commercial roles, attraction remains difficult.
- Retention is equally challenging given rising market demand and the relatively small pool of experienced candidates who can manage complex pricing environments.

Pricing and monetisation are becoming more central to value creation. Still, the roundtable made clear that progress depends as much on organisational alignment and execution as on the pricing strategy itself.

Consumer behaviour is shifting, transparency is rising, and expectations vary sharply by sector and region. Against this backdrop, stronger capability, better data and pragmatic experimentation will define which businesses realise the value they intend to capture.

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The Barton Partnership is a specialist strategic talent solutions provider, seamlessly bridging the gap between strategy and execution. We offer fully integrated consulting services, interim and independent consulting, and executive search solutions to our global client base.

Since 2007, we have partnered with FTSE-listed and Fortune 500 companies across all sectors and industries; SMEs, Strategic, Innovation & Management Consulting firms (large and boutique), Private Equity and their Portfolios, and Global Financial Services. We combine deep sector expertise with our specialist functional focus, at scale. Our Consulting Network is ranked in the Financial Times UK's Leading Management Consultant Report, and we were recently recognised by Forbes as one of the World's Best Management Consulting Firms for a third consecutive year.

We combine the precision of a boutique specialist with the reach and expertise of a global search firm. Our integrated approach uniquely aligns talent strategies with business goals, ensuring every placement — interim, permanent, or consulting — delivers measurable impact for our clients.

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