

demystifying the customer experience

moving from “I wish” to “I will”
with marketing automation



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in brief

- Spending on marketing automation is expected to grow by 14% annually through 2023 – and for good reason
- The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior, and marketers are sitting on a treasure trove of underleveraged data
- The best long-term personalization strategies let data do the driving

it's not magic, it's marketing

The marketing technology landscape is growing by the minute, especially when it comes to marketing automation (MA). Forrester, for instance, reports global spending on MA tools will exceed \$25 billion by 2023.

It can be easy to get lost in the excitement and possibility presented by MA – resigned to dream of some mix of cutting-edge technology and technical wizardry just beyond your grasp. For all the bells and whistles, it's important to recognize the foundation for what it is, for what it's always been: marketing.

It's critical to make the biggest impact with available resources. One such way is leveraging a MA platform like Marketo as a marketing hub that connects your customer's experience, the data signals they leave behind, and your internal teams and tools.

Using Marketo as a marketing hub, you can see the full landscape of an individual's experience – their digital footprints – and connect that with the data points and actions found in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tools.

This approach allows audience behavior to show us the way, providing the ability to rapidly prototype, test the right mix of marketing efforts, and optimize appropriately in all marketing channels – not wasting any resources along the way.

Imagine you're a marketing or recruitment leader at a university responsible for driving undergrad enrollment. A prospective student's parent just called to inquire about scholarship opportunities. After hanging up the phone, the admissions advisor who handled the phone call updates the prospects CRM record. The individual and their child are then included in paid social media campaigns that highlight your university's affordability – segmented by parent and child.

A critical message delivered at the ideal time. This is the power of a marketing hub.

If you're considering getting started with marketing automation or curious what the first steps to leveraging a marketing hub might be, consider the following tips.

diving in: two quick tips to get started (or go further) with marketing automation

1. Mine your database

Database mining is a powerful tool. After all, the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior, and most businesses have a wealth of data living in their CRM and systems. With your portfolio of successful outcomes – be they enrolled students, closed/won business, or alumni donations – you have a great idea of the types of prospects that are likely to work with your brand.

Leverage this data by common clusters of individuals. Do certain job titles make the final decision to purchase most often? Do individuals from different geographic areas convert at different times throughout the year? Are there industries that result in higher average deals than others?

This data will start to paint a picture that can inform your digital strategy, your traditional marketing tactics, and your approach to sales. As you're adopting a marketing automation platform, this will also help with opportunity prioritization.

2. Measure, then accelerate

Don't assume you need to start with customized messaging around every vertical in your business. Instead, use digital behavior combined with the data mined from your database to identify the top market segments that are craving your messaging.

Let the data lead the way. Even simple email reports, the kind that focus on vanity metrics like opens and clicks, can be extremely insightful when you look at them as a measure of how an audience is reacting to messaging. Test your value propositions, discover what is resonating with your leads, and optimize accordingly.

Imagine you're the CMO at a well-known manufacturing firm. The machines you offer are invaluable to the end user, but they're also expensive. As a result, the buying cycle often takes upwards of 6-months, sometimes longer. You have a robust database of past customers and lapsed leads who never ended up buying for one reason or another.

You decide to use your marketing hub to your advantage and test two distinct value propositions the sales team has said they've found success with: a. your company's commitment to travel and service the machines within 24 hours for five years, and b. your product is incredibly durable, proven to last two times longer than the closest competitor.

You launch dual email campaigns, each delivered to equal segments of your database, each leveraging one of the two value propositions as a focal point. Over time, you see the emails speaking to durability get opened 50% more often than the ones about the service commitment. Following up with sales, you learn prospective customers are bringing up the value proposition more and more often during phone calls, and those phone calls lead to business often.

You now have a clear path forward for both the marketing and sales teams. Use the claim of durability more often and begin to test the best way to bring forward that specific point. Success and strategy made possible by your marketing hub.

Combining the behavioral data in your marketing automation platform with the demographic data in your CRM can help you discover a customer segment you never knew you had, a need you didn't know you were filling, or even an opportunity for expansion

that you've never considered. It can correct faulty assumptions about your product or value proposition.

In short, being intentional with the data at your disposal can fundamentally change the direction of your marketing strategy.

in practice: achieving long-term success with marketing automation

Leveraging this proven approach to marketing automation presents a low-risk, high-reward method of testing new ways to inspire your audience – as well as a reliable idea of the return you should expect from future efforts.

Any marketing technology, while powerful on its own, still requires a savvy and analytical marketing mind to get the most out of it. As marketing evolves and you become even more accountable for revenue, remembering to focus on the audience's true needs will lead to more impactful marketing campaigns that produce meaningful outcomes faster.

Thoughtful testing plans built around marketing automation platforms are a passion of mine. Reach out if you're interested in seeing some concrete examples.

resources

[Forrester: Marketing Automation Spend by 2023](#)

This article is available in its entirety at:

fathomdelivers.com/perspectives/demystifying-the-customer-experience

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