Introduction:

The samples provided are samples of different types of content I produced.

I am far more likely to produce technical briefs or audit reports, which do not make for a great read (nor one I can share, unfortunately)

Sample 1 – Marketing automation blog post, June 2021
The agency migrated their blog a couple of times but I recovered the original images, or similar ones, as they are very functional to the desired tone of voice which is quite distinctively me.

Sample 2 – Movies I didn't like: Asteroid city, August 2023
It was a blog post, and perhaps a bit of a rant, as I REALLY did not like that movie.

Sample 3 – About section of a former ecommerce of mine, (somewhere in 2022)

I learnt to repair and restore some classic cameras, and for a while I ran a little woocommerce site for it, alongside an ebay store. It got a little time consuming for the benefits and now I am just very occasionally using ebay for it – this was however the "Who am I" section.

Marketing automation blog post

What do I talk about when I talk about marketing automation?

Marketing automation for Dummies.

It's a truth universally acknowledged that, upon being asked about their objectives, a client will invariably answer "more revenues".

Let's not despair: it's in the darkest hour that we are given the opportunity to rise and shine.

THE GENERAL PICTURE

I mentioned objectives because they are the starting point of any marketing automation project – in general, they should be the 'why' of most marketing campaigns (wouldn't that be nice?). Defining and getting an agreement on them should be your main priority because everything depends on how you define success.

But there's something before that: an initial framework, a gestalt you can rely upon to build your whole automation... thing.

Consider a couple of principles:

1. **Customers are different from each other.**
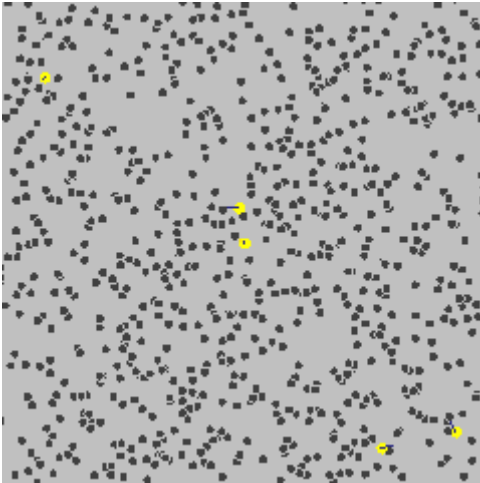
Totally accurate representation of customers trying to checkout.
Source: Wikipedia

Journeys are not linear. Customers may get to know your brand in a number of different ways and can consume your content, and lurk, for a long time before the impulse to complete a revenue-generating interaction takes over; and you can give yourself a pat on the back for a job well done.

This is not to say that there are no common denominators – if this was the case, why even bother building a checkout process – but the number of different paths that can be taken to get there can be daunting.

2. **You can nudge them toward completing your preferred action.**

Depending on the data available, you can push users toward the preferred action you want them to take at any given moment. To keep it simple, there are at the very least two kinds of information that are precious when designing a trigger: the action of the user (or lack thereof) you want to build on (e.g. "abandonment of the purchase process"), and the approximated profile of the user you are contacting (e.g. "returning customer in high RFM cluster"). This information governs What You Are Going To Say and How You Are Going To Say It.

Sheepdogs are professional nudgers. They also keep wolves at bay, I challenge you to do the same. Photo by POOYAN ESHTIAGHI on Unsplash.

This is the important bit: the more you build simple triggers in a similar fashion, the closer you get to have something akin to a whole system that is both fluid, since it works around what a user does at any given moment without making assumptions on his journey, and coherent because it is designed around objectives and takes into consideration a users' behaviour.

FLESH OUT THE OBJECTIVES

We left our client demanding us to bring in more revenues; it's on us now to translate this request into an actionable proposal.

There is no hard and fast rule here. Businesses can differ significantly on their sales processes and on the relative weight of each revenue-generating channel, but there is a set of actions you can use as a guideline to inform your next actions.

1. Interview stakeholders

We all would prefer to shoot ourselves in the knee rather than scheduling an extensive set of meetings (I do), but listening to stakeholders is a fundamental step.

People that should be commonly included comes from Marketing, Sales (more so in a B2B environment), and Customer Service. They all need to be involved in the process.

You should try to avoid having the three departments throwing things at each other, but instead aim to have them expose their individual objectives and the difficulties they encountered when pursuing them.

2. Exploratory analysis

Order logs, web analytics, and campaign reports (and access to the relevant systems) are enough to start with your plan. With this activity, you should aim to define benchmarks and highlight opportunities.

Analyse the transactions: dates, values, volumes, attribution, seasonality, [...] paying particular attention to items that can reveal important attributes of the transactor ("child discount", "limited number edition"). From here, you can elaborate benchmarks, get a sense of the order of magnitude you are working on, and get some ideas for data enrichment.

Analyse the transactors. You should merge the data you have on your clients using a reliable identifier, then find some top-level categorisations for your customer base – RFM clusters or any value-based classification you deem worth the scope of your project will do.

Finally, try to use the data to answer specific actionable questions – E.g. "How many users in this high-value segment can I actually contact for marketing" – or to prove a hypothesis, E.g. "Is it true that users with kids have a higher average order value\a longer lifetime"? Bonus points if you manage to do this while remaining serious and professional – nothing like "I want to see if there's anyone I know among the buyers of this oddly embarrassing product" or "Ah, that's a funny choice of email address!".

Analyse the non-transactors. You might want to see if they entertain behaviours that signal a closeness to the transaction, or attributes that make them similar to users in segments of purchasers you previously identified.

If your client needs a magnifying lens for your presentation, you did something wrong. Photo by Hanna Pad from Pexels

Analyse aggregated data. There is some information you cannot easily link to a customer, but that can still be useful to you. In this phase, I normally look for inefficiencies in the purchase processes, circular journeys… in general, problems that can reduce the efficiency of marketing automation activities.

At this point, you should be able to see where I am going. You have some numbers that hint at some opportunities, and these opportunities can be grouped into objectives you can detail: "Increase average order value", "recover disengaged top customers", etc… and you could call it a day and put it into a presentation – which Plato said is "the art of putting small numbers in smaller balloons and big numbers in bigger ones". But there's something else…

MAP OUT AND ANALYSE THE EVENTS

"Events" here are the little bits of data that represent a significant behaviour on which you can implant a marketing activity.

A registration is such an event. A purchase is another. The expected delivery day too. A repeated visit on a single product can be a fourth. A complaint filed to your customer service can be one, but a threatening message made with cut-out letters from a newspaper, likely, isn't.

Not the kind of behaviour we want to encourage. If you receive many, it's time to reconsider your activity.

Some of them will be immediately actionable. Some others might require additional tech investment, but that's fine: in time you will have enough data to create the business case for later development.

At this point you can analyse those events, to find out:

- What do these events signify? Are they reliable indicators of a real interest that has some business value?

- How many of these events do I register in a set timeframe, and how many for my contactable database?

- Who in my clusters is passing through these events? Is there space for segmentation?

These events will be the building blocks for your automations, and the questions above should allow you to define priority: higher volumes, higher intent, higher value of users tend to signify a more valuable opportunity.

At this point, you should have enough data to present your automation project: you have clearly defined objectives grouped into categories, you have a set of segments fit to serve those objectives, and you have both the events you want to use as starting blocks for your automations, and a first quantification of the potential impact.

If you'd like to discuss any of this with me or the team at [REDACTED] please [CTA Removed] – we'd love to hear from you.

Blog post

Movies I didn't like: Asteroid City

I have been thinking of writing about the movies I watch as a way of motivating myself to go to the cinema more often, so here we are.
Nice to start with a movie I *hated*.

I think this was the third time in my life I left the cinema before the end of the projection – something I don't like doing at all - the previous ones being Birdman (looks like I have strong opinions about what I find "*shallow and pretentious*") and an unnamed American horror movie of the "teens lost in the woods" type. *(Edit for the application to Geocodio: it was "The Hills Have Eyes")*

By the way – this is unfair to the random American horror movie as it probably did what it said on the tin.

Let me try to see if I can summarise what is wrong about Asteroid City by using quotes of the online reviews of people that liked it:

> **The voice of the fans**
>
> *The wit is great […] I loved when [character] came by and said "your kids are a little weird aren't they?" and all the parents nod and agree lol.*
>
> **Amy,** google reviewer
>
> *If you do watch this marvellous movie, think about it afterwards and take into consideration what I have said here.*
>
> **Mr. Mister,** Google Reviewer (Authors' note: sorry, I just loved this bit of the quote and decided to put it in like this).
>
> *Let me start by saying I am a massive fan of Wes Anderson*
>
> **Astrid,** Google Reviewers
>
> *What did you expect? This is so very Wes Anderson! It's so utterly quirky and delightful, just like all of his other films! Mind you, it's wildly bizarre, and unlike any other film you'll see in the theater but for heaven sakes it was fun!*
>
> **JackRJosie** IMDB reviewer

Reading those was fun, I should do this more often.

I don't usually like when people drop reviews without finishing the material to review (some concession can however be given when speaking of food reviews: you don't have to go through that bucketful of *Escargots*) and at some point I promise I will go back to it, but what a slog!

I am not a combative critic of Wes Anderson. I liked the Tenenbaums, I kind of enjoyed Royal Budapest Hotel – little do I remember of those – but this is a giant misstep. If you cannot pull out of the hat an interesting movie even with Tom Hanks and Scarlett Johansson, you're beyond redemption.

Take the reviews above – and I don't want to partake in mockery of random people as that is a hobby best enjoyed solo – but they represent a common thread alongside a wider corpus of reviews: they enjoy the "quirkiness", the taste of bizarre (more on that later) – or straightaway they like Wes - and no harm in that. I added Mr Mister excerpt because it was too great to be left out.

The author (and writer, I gather) seemed to have great pretences for this movie. The story (within a story within a story) attests to it – but I think that more of a device to create an interesting story, this is more telling of what audience Wes Anderson went out to please – his peers in the movie business. Birdman: does it ring a bell?

The quirkiness... is just same-y all over, it's so commonplace nowadays and popularised by so many tv shows: some mild out-of-placeness, usage of mildly outlandish or nerdy vocabulary – but it's never norm challenging. It's sanitised quirkiness to elicit a chuckle and keep you in for the next one.

Or at least I *think* some lines are meant to elicit a chuckle. Some tropes were historically used to elicit a specific emotion in the audience – in Asteroid city, I got the impression that *the old dog got lost in its own one trick*: an actor delivers a witty-ish line, slightly inappropriate within the context (imagine: commenting on the color of the curtains at a funeral), and with a physicality that deliberately – *oh very deliberately* - expresses lack of emotions. How are we even meant to feel as spectators in that moment? Nothing? Amused? Compassionate?) It is not clear, and here you see the loss of purpose that permeates a movie that enjoys looking at itself.

And of course, there are saturated colors. Those kind of clothes that I would say from the 50s but what-do-i-know (but those, the sandals, the short trousers, the skirts longer than the knee... those). People are tastefully arranged and move about in slightly funny yet orderly ways. Are you ok to go to the cinema for that? You call this genius?

It seems to me that, when a derivative such as the excellent ["Accidentally Wes Anderson"](#) account has more to give than the original it's derived from, perhaps it's time for a change.

Ecommerce "About" section

When the 31st camera entered our house it became clear I had a problem.

My passion for film photography - and the whole analog processing - went way back, but in fairly recent times, with the defiant installation of a darkroom where the "guest room" was located, it gained even more momentum.

With my personal collection growing at a steady place, it also became obvious that cameras built 40, 50, 70 (and counting) years ago were doomed to start seeing some faults.

Restoring them became a hobby, but I am first and foremost a user: aesthetical pleasantness must come alongside good working conditions, so I picked up some basis of camera repair, and that is a rabbit hole I have been all to eager to be drawn into. Said this, there is a limited range of repairs I feel comfortable yet.

But then, you have solid, well maintained cameras. Why not make them also prettier? I, for one, wanted (one of) my (several) spotmatic(s) to be truly unique and *feel* mine. Chances are that someone else might like that too. So alongside the other products, I decided to try offering a smaller line of painted cameras.

From here, [REDACTED]. Some bittersweet nostalgia for the golden age of film cameras, and the desire to maintain such cameras "alive and kicking" for the time being. The best way to do so is to provide good, functional tool to the experienced photographer and the newcomer alike.

And not last, the hope to fund my own addiction with this venture :).