[Headline]

**Mastering marketing automation**

**or**

**5 teething problems of marketing automation**

[Intro]

Marketing automation brings with it many advantages, but the technology is not without its challenges. Here, we look at 5 aspects of marketing automation that can take some getting used to. But once you do, there’s no telling where your marketing efforts will lead!

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The benefits of marketing automation are well-documented. It:

* automates processes.
* saves time.
* enables you to better **personalise<link to personalisation blog>** your leads.
* translates to more conversions (as a result of these more optimised leads).
* allows you to measure and report on everything.
* creates a central hub for monitoring all of your marketing activities.
* provides insights into which marketing campaigns are working so you can focus your efforts (and money!) there.

But reaping these rewards means understanding, adjusting to, and accepting some of the tricky fundamentals of marketing automation.

1. **It’s hungry.**

You need to feed your ‘marketing-automation machine’ with a steady stream of content. What’s more, you need to make sure this content is not only regular but also regularly refreshed. And it must target different customers at **different stages of the sales funnel<will link to other still-to-be-written-this-week marketing-automation blog>**. Alas, producing this content requires a lot of work, but it ultimately pays big dividends. High-quality content marketing engages and informs customers and potential customers and can position your organisation as a true market leader.

1. **It needs a *healthy* diet.**

This means you and your team need to feed your marketing-automation system properly, so that it’s regurgitating what you need it to be telling you. If the quality of your data or processes is lacking, you won’t accurately know when you have a genuine opportunity to move a prospect through the sales funnel or to convert a customer. This is true of your lead scoring as well. If the system is not properly recording data, your scoring will be faulty, and therefore your customers – at varying stages of the buying journey – will not receive the correct messaging, and you’ll just be wasting time, effort, and money.

1. **It needs you to keep up with it.**

Marketing automation is new to many and fast-paced for all. To stay up to speed, you may need to embrace a new mindset and learn new skills, such as the above-mentioned content marketing and other technologies, such as content-management systems (CMSs) and customer-relationship-management (CRM) systems.

1. **It costs (continuous) money.**

Marketing automation does come with an ongoing cost – it need not necessarily be expensive, but it *does* need to be consistent. If you stop paying for marketing automation, you’ll likely lose any progress you’ve made and momentum you’ve built up. Again, think of the time, effort, and money wasted.

1. **It’s daunting!**

All this data you’re collecting can be overwhelming. If you’re running a range of campaigns, the information is often convoluted, and there’s heaps of it! Even when your marketing automation software is operating smoothly, it’s a lot to manage. It’s important for you and your team to maintain thorough and ongoing documentation to track what you’re doing, so that your marketing endeavours can be consistent and seamless no matter who is working with your marketing-automation system.