Errol S. van Engelen

12 Smart Practices to Improve Marketing and Sales

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Errol S. van Engelen has a professional background in business and technology of more than 35 years. He is owner/director at Bizzmaxx, a marketing service provider specialised in improving your sales funnel. Bizzmaxx offers services and solutions such as Digital Marketing, Marketing Technology and Marketing & Sales Alignment.

Career Overview

At Bizzmaxx, Errol is responsible for general management, strategy, business development and growth. Prior to Bizzmaxx he worked 10 years as an interim manager and management consultant in Business Development and Outsourcing. Prior to working as an interim professional, he worked 1.5 years as a Corporate Sales Manager at Energis, now Vodafone. Prior to Energis, he worked 4.5 years as a Business Development and Sales Manager at Parity. He started his career as an IT Consultant at BSO, now Atos, where he was engaged in IT projects both in the Netherlands and abroad.

Core Skills

Most of his 20+ years commercial career, he has been working in New Business Development and Sales, where he enjoyed opening New Markets and Clients, launching New Products and Services and developing New Business Models. The last couple of years he has developed interest in the shift from traditional Marketing to modern Marketing. He started specialising in Digital Marketing, Lead Management, Social Media and Marketing & Sales Alignment and established Bizzmaxx in October 2011.

Both as an IT Consultant in the early years and as a Business Development Manager after that, he gained access to a variety of industries such as (from recent to past) Retail, Document Services, Local Authorities, Central Government, Telecom/Operators, Financial Institutions, Trading & Industry, Energy, Media and Transport.

Additional Information

His mother tongue is Dutch, and he speaks and writes English and Spanish fluently. The territories he covered professionally and commercially include Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the USA.

Errol lives in Rotterdam, the Netherlands with his Spanish wife. He has two sons who live nearby. He likes various Social Networks quite a lot and would like you to visit his One Page Social Networking Page and connect.

PREFACE

My Goal: Helping Small and Medium-Sized Businesses

I started writing this E-Book with the idea of helping marketing and sales managers in small and medium-sized companies. In twenty plus years of marketing and sales experience I've seen many marketing and sales departments working out of silos and working against each other. This is a waste of resources and causes enormous damage to companies everywhere. Some companies are not even aware that they have a problem.

Why is now the right time to offer help? You have probably heard the following phrase: "Changes in both Marketing and Sales have been higher in the past two years than the previous fifty years". These rapid changes leave many companies with anxiety about their own situation and ignorant about the new approach.

Many marketing and sales people ask themselves, "What must we do to get on the right track and start growing again?". In specific industries I have also noticed a reluctance to start working with online channels. "The use of social media does not lead to more sales".

Normally, large companies are in a position to make the transition from traditional to modern marketing and sales. There are plenty of vendors willing to help, and although budgets are tight, they can be allocated to projects. It is mainly small and medium-sized businesses with between 50 and 500 employees that do not have the budgets or the resources. So they are going to try it themselves. And that can lead to disappointment, because they lack guidance.

Book Layout

I have divided the book into two parts. Part 1 deals with subjects such as content management and lead management and provides an overview of relevant issues in these areas. The goal of content marketing is to supply the customer with relevant information so that he can at any time decide that he wants to do business with us. In lead management it is not only about generating as many leads as possible, but also nurturing those leads, so they don't fall by the wayside.

Part 2 deals with digital marketing and marketing technology. Digital marketing is the set of marketing activities in an online environment. Topics that are covered include: changing your marketing team, personalizing your story to your audience and the need for Marketing to work with Information Technology. In marketing technology, attention is paid to using smart data and big data, marketing automation to enhance productivity and insight and the connection between marketing automation and customer relationship management.

Acknowledgements

I want to thank everyone who helped in the creation of this E-Book. In marketing and sales projects, many in the role of client, employer or colleague helped me directly or indirectly to obtain the proper image of both traditional and modern marketing and sales.

I hope you enjoy reading while improving your knowledge with *12 Smart Practices to Improve Marketing and Sales*.

Rotterdam, November 2013
Errol S. van Engelen

FOREWORD

The Changing World of Marketing and Sales

Various challenges are emerging in the marketing and sales domain. Customers, both B2B (Business-to-Business) and B2C (Business-to-Consumer), are taking the lead in the commercial process. Challenges are both external and internal.

External challenges

Some challenges we find here:

- Sales and Marketing are dealing with big changes in the shift from traditional to digital channels
- There is more customer awareness due to abundant available information on the internet
- Customers use Social Media channels to evaluate companies, brands and products

Internal challenges

The most important challenges here are:

- Sales and Marketing have frequent conflicts and compete for resources
- Sales is notorious for claiming that leads produced by Marketing are useless
- Marketing is notorious for not understanding the individual customer
- In roughly 80% of companies Marketing and Sales work against each other

80% Of Companies: Traditional Sales and Marketing

The common traditional workflow between Marketing and Sales is as follows:

- Marketing drops unqualified leads from events and web visits on the desk of Sales
- In 80% of sales calls these leads appear to be just exploring and are not sales ready
- As a consequence, Sales doesn't trust leads coming from Marketing and starts its own lead generation programme which is mainly cold calling its target audience
- Collaboration between Marketing and Sales fails since they work out of different silo's

20% Of Companies: Modern Sales and Marketing

This approach improves collaboration between Marketing and Sales:

- On a strategic level, Marketing and Sales should develop common goals and results
- On a tactical level, Marketing and Sales should develop best online and offline channels and audience
- On an operational level, Marketing and Sales should develop lead definition and lead scoring
- Marketing should focus on the top (traffic, conversion) and middle (nurturing) of the triangle
- Sales should focus on the bottom of the funnel (visits, demonstration and closing)

SECTION I:
CONTENT MARKETING AND LEAD GENERATION

1 PRODUCE CONTENT THAT BOTH YOUR USERS AND SEARCH ENGINES WILL LOVE

Content marketing is focused not on selling, but on communicating with customs **and prospects. The idea is to inspire business and loyalty from buyers by delivering consistent, ongoing valuable information. The five main topics of** content marketing **are:**

- **Content:**
  Create targeted content which matches the basic issues and needs of your ideal customers (target group). Market and promote that content as widely as possible

- **Lifecycle Marketing:**
  Customers and potential customers go through different stages in the interaction with your business or your products or services. Enter the account and determine different marketing campaigns

- **Personalization and customisation:**
  Learn through lead management over time more about the specific needs of your leads and improve your conversion rates significantly through personalized and individualized online conversations and dialogues

- **Multi-channel and Integrated Online Communication:**
  Users decide through which online platforms or channels they want to interact with your company

- **Integration:**
  Manage all your content with a central online cockpit (digital marketing tool) that links all online channels, so that you are able to publish the right content at the right time at the right place (the online channel).
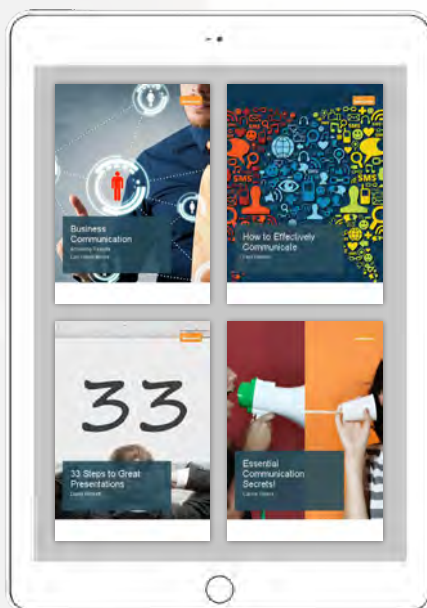
Sharing is caring and what is cared for is typically also shared.

Providing high quality, useful and relevant content for leads and customers is part of Lead Management **and the goal of content marketing.**
The whole idea is to develop content that will specifically address your ideal customers. Make sure your marketing content is able to attract exactly the right prospects for your company and products or services and make sure that one-off customers turn into returning customers.

In content marketing, it's more about publishing the right content at the right place (online marketing tool or channel) and the right time in order to create value and relevance for your leads and potential customers, so that content marketing helps you indirectly to build your positive image and turns leads into passionate promoters of your brand.

If you don't know what type of content you should publish at a certain stage of the customer's buying process, kindly read the article "Achieve greater success with Lead Nurturing".

2   IN TODAY'S CONTENT MARKETING WARFARE – HERE ARE 10 TIPS FOR WINNING

Content marketing's purpose is to attract and retain customers by consistently creating relevant and valuable content with the intention of changing or improving consumer behaviour. Every online marketer develops content marketing, or at least tries to. However, success depends on many factors and the proper course of action.

Randomly generated content without relevance and added value for the user will only cause you to miss your targets and disappoint your target group or will not even reach it. To avoid fatal errors and failures requires not only a well thought-out content marketing strategy but also willingness and resources in your enterprise. With my 10 tips I hope to provide you with a good foundation to win the content marketing battle.

1. **Content instead of Advertising**

   Content marketing is not about <u>direct advertising</u> messages, but providing relevant information or entertaining content. You should therefore address potential customers indirectly through engaging content such as tips & tricks, expertise, and so on. A good example is the attractive tutorial videos published by technology companies to instruct their users.

2. **Marketing Storytelling – Advertising with Stories**

   Stories create emotions, remain in our heads and build stronger relationships with customers and influencers. Digital storytelling is one of the most effective methods of making complex information understandable and spreading your message. The promotional effect happens indirectly, and the authenticity of your company or brand is respected.

3. **Share Expertise**

   Positioning as an expert in the field of technical skills is very important. Through the transfer of know-how, your brand can meet the information and consultancy needs of your users and at the same time generate a lot of traffic. I would recommend concentrating on your core competences.

4. **Communicate with People**

   Content marketing requires a different approach such as SEM (<u>Search Engine Marketing</u>) from modern marketing channels. Online you can communicate closely with your target group. Users have more than one need and want to be addressed accordingly. When finding a topic, it is a great advantage if you put yourself in the user's position.

5. **Offer Engagement for Viral Effects**

   Used selectively and measured carefully, you can strengthen your content marketing activities enormously by adding funny and entertaining content. Humorous content shares easily and can generate a very wide reach and thus strengthen awareness of your brand.

6. **Seeding – share content actively**

   You must actively create and share your content in your network to achieve the necessary coverage. In particular, social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, press releases and news aggregators offer extensive opportunities for the distribution of your content. For interesting content (Link baits) there's also the possibility that other sites and portals will refer to your content voluntarily.

7. **Seeding – share content passively**

   Your fans share your content through the integration of social plug-ins. The attractiveness of your content and the correct placement of social media buttons help to create a word-of-mouth distribution.

8. **Facilitate user-generated content by fans and followers**

   Involvement of your target group in your own content marketing efforts will not only strengthen your relationship with it, but will also provide user-generated, authentic content. Opinions, ideas or suggestions on specific topics by users are usually very well received and are shared accordingly.

9. **SEO Content**

   For Search Engine Optimization (SEO), content is becoming increasingly important. Content marketing, however, is not intended to fill the product pages with relevant and unique content. The search for solutions to problems, issues or experience reports is increasing; therefore you must supply users with the necessary information. Better Google rankings are the result. Never write for the search engines, but for the reader – so don't offer pure keyword texts.

10. **Create resources – teams and tools**

    Content marketing has tremendous benefits, but also requires great effort and great willingness in you'r company. The most important requirement for employees is that they are trained as online editors, Social and SEO managers who take care of the creation, optimisation and distribution of content. Furthermore, the team needs the appropriate tools for analysis, monitoring and research. Capturing and processing current themes and opinions are essential for success. Subsequent success monitoring of created content also provides important insights to guide the strategic and conceptual direction of content marketing activities.

Conclusion

Blogging and Content Marketing are very powerful weapons in the struggle for daily attention. The enormous reach and brand positioning as experts in your field, in addition to SEO, offer great benefits for your company.

3 YOUR CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY IS IN PLACE, BUT YOU LACK RESOURCES – NOW WHAT

As a B2B Marketer you've worked hard to develop your Content Marketing strategy. You're ready to start implementing that wonderful strategy, because you know that compelling content is the No. 1 driver of leads. Unfortunately you lack resources – budget and people. What can you do to encourage that traffic?

Look for existing content

You already have quite a lot of content that can be structured and distributed to the appropriate online channels. Where needed, improve what you have and share it out to the channels. After this, you need to find out what content is missing or what type of content will improve the conversion of your current website traffic.

Develop missing content

Content you need to add to your online channels minus content you already have is what you need to develop and share. If this turns out to be a great deal of work and you don't have the resources available, then you may be interested in buying or hiring content that improves the conversion of your website traffic.

Conversion improving content

Only if this type of content is compelling to your target audience will it generate improved conversion. You will have to search and find content providers who can boost your content and provide you with higher conversion and sales leads. There are two types of content providers that you need to watch.

1. **E-Book providers**
   My experience with E-Book providers is that they can provide compelling content for your website visitors, especially in the B2B market where management E-Books are very popular items.

2. **Video content providers**
   Since more people prefer video to books, this type of content will turn out to be the biggest traffic and conversion driver for your website. This markets has grown dramatically over the years and needs to be investigated thoroughly to provide the video content you want to share with your website visitors.

What is the value of these content providers for you?

- Your ROI is transparent: you increase the number of sales leads
- You provide a great extra service for your visitors
- You differentiate yourself from your competitors
- You combine great content with social media activities
- You increase your returning traffic

4   HOW TO GROW YOUR CUSTOMER BASE – FORGET THE SALES PITCH, OFFER VALUE

As a sales person passionate about your product or service, you are in a better position than salespeople who don't show that passion. Simply when you talk about the services you offer, you lead the customer to be intrigued by your service.

However, your high-pressure sales tactics may intimidate many customers, making them uncomfortable about a purchase. When you focus instead on merely showcasing your product, your hesitant customers learn about your product. Consider yourself a brand advocate, presenting your best features without trying to convince your customer to buy. Difficult for a sales person? Maybe not.

Value, Value, Value

Many salespeople, maybe you too, have been focusing too much on price levels. If you focus on a product's value instead of its price, your customer also focuses on the product itself, and less on the price. You may remember losing sales by setting the price levels on your products too low. Customers tend to perceive your product as less valuable because of its low cost. Ask yourself, if BMW were to start selling at 15,000 Euros instead of 50,000 Euros, would they sell more?

As a savvy salesperson you research your market and you predict customer objections up front. What concerns will your customers have before making a purchase? How can you overcome those? Include the uniqueness of your product in your marketing collateral and you can answer those questions for potential customers and possibly save the deal.

Empathy Instead of Overselling

Before savvy prospects meet with you for a sales presentation, they've already researched your competitors and determined market prices. Your goal should be to listen to each customer and address their specific needs. If you continuously broadcast your product's benefits, you will appear to be desperate. Instead, you can turn a visit into a sale by being empathetic.

Empathy shows that your customer's concerns have been heard; he feels as though he is receiving personal attention. Through listening, you can gain information about each customer which helps you with closing the deal.

Market Research Is Vital

Just as savvy customers are researching your company and products, you need to do the same before meeting with these customers. Know your target audience thoroughly, from their buying preferences to their career desires.

For every industry, the specific preferences that concern target groups are different. If you sell IT software, your client is concerned whether your product fits into their architecture. If you sell consulting and advice, your client is concerned whether your advice really helps them. If you are a start-up, your client is concerned about your track record.

Low prices don't always win customers. Most customers are interested in added value. Determine what your product offers your target audience today. Those values and benefits will probably engage more customers than offering lower prices.

Conclusion

Your customers are learning more and more about market offerings through abundant information on the web. Your best answer to this changed behaviour is to sell value instead of low prices. Empathy is a better quality today than high-pressure selling. It shows that you care about your customers' well-being. Savvy customers will research your company and products. I recommended you to do the same.

5 HOW TO IMPLEMENT AN EFFECTIVE LEAD SCORING SYSTEM

In this article I would like to focus on alignment and cooperation between Marketing and Sales, and the systems they share, such as a lead scoring **system. How are decisions made in your company? Which lead can you forward to Sales? And at what stage of the buying decision?**

Introduction to Lead Scoring

Of course, you can evaluate your prospects manually, which may even be useful with small numbers. But if your database has several thousands of contacts and leads, and you add new addresses on a weekly base, then it makes sense to automate this process according to predefined criteria. This improves your sales efficiency, especially because then the team only has to worry about those sales opportunities that have real potential. Marketing and Sales, however, have to define common rules and procedures because qualification and evaluation criteria vary from company to company and must be determined individually.

The most common two-dimensional lead scoring model maps both a lead's profile information (explicit scoring) and his interest (implicit scoring).

A lead scoring system is also a prerequisite for good lead nurturing, because you base the individual prospective approach on the scoring values, which leads to utilising the different stages in the buying process.

When does it become necessary?

Six points that indicate that you should consider a lead scoring system:

- You have many questions in your system and you don't know how to rank them
- Your sales processes are very complex, so you want to reduce the workload and increase efficiency
- You have a CRM system in use
- You have a Marketing Automation system in use
- Sales and Marketing are willing to cooperate
- You can count on experienced implementation support
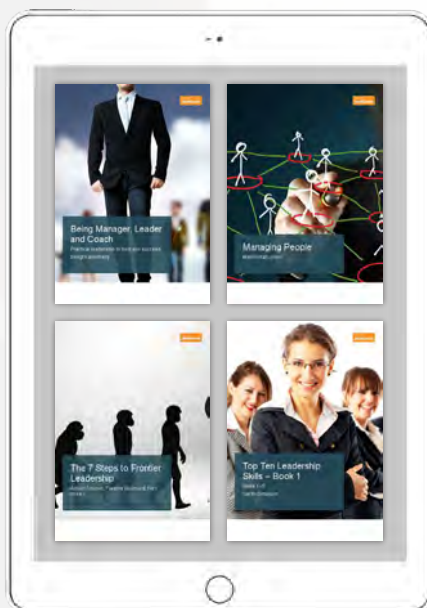
If most of this applies to you, or you plan to implement lead scoring, here are the four most important rules.

- **You must define** cooperation **between Marketing and Sales**

  - What is your ideal customer profile?
  - What is your target group?
  - What are the personas you turn to?
  - What content matches with what interests?
  - What content brings a lead what points?
  - What profile information is most relevant to your business?

- Criteria **for explicit scoring**

  - Is a lead a manager and decision maker, a head of department or an employee?
  - Which industry sector does his company belong to?
  - What's the size of the company?
  - What is the expected revenue potential?
  - And so on

- Criteria **for implicit scoring**

  - Does he react to your emails?
  - Does he download your documents?
  - Does he take part in your webinars?
  - Does he visit your website on a regular basis?

You then assess and rank the various activities and content interactions by giving points. As an example you can give 5 points for visiting your website, 15 points for downloading a document and even 30 points for watching a video. In addition, you can rank the CEO of a company with an "A", the department manager with a "B", and so on. The explicit ranking of course depends on your ideal audience or persona.

If you combine these two dimensions, you get a lead score indicating both qualification level and interest level, which exactly indicates in what phase of a purchasing decision a lead finds itself. As an example, a D100 lead shows a lot of interest, but is not suitable due to its lower profile information. A lead ranked as B5 however would, based on his profile, certainly fit your ideal customer profile, but is nevertheless not interesting because he doesn't seem to be interested in your offer.

After defining all processes and rules for implicit and explicit scoring, it is now important to decide together which leads at what stage of the buying process are managed by what team.

- **Connect** Marketing Automation **and** CRM systems
  Because the combination of the two systems is a prerequisite for a well-functioning Lead Scoring system. It's the only way to make sure that sales and marketing are working with the same information. The Marketing Automation platform "speaks" permanently to the CRM system and synchronizes all relevant information, especially the scoring values and of course the activities of the leads that were recorded.

Other things to consider:

- Implementation of a Lead Scoring process will not immediately show its effects. Only after a few months will you get measurable results because it takes time for a significant number of leads to obtain a score
- Lead Scoring is not like "Set it, and forget it." You need to check or adjust your defined criteria and procedures regularly. Are the qualification criteria still relevant? Is your target audience still the same?
- Marketing Automation doesn't just allow you to assess your leads, but also to measure success or actual status. How many A, B, C, or D leads do you have in your database? How effective is your scoring? This information is the basis for a reporting system that documents the effectiveness of your marketing activities.

Summary

Marketers see the benefits of developing and implementing a Lead Scoring system. You simply can't afford to give each lead the same time and attention. Effective Lead Scoring includes ensuring Marketing and Sales cooperation, defining criteria for explicit and implicit scoring and connecting your Marketing Automation and CRM systems.

6   ACHIEVE GREATER SUCCESS WITH LEAD NURTURING

Content plays a crucial role at every stage of the buying process: from the awakening of interest in your company and your products or services up to converting leads into customers. But for every phase you need different content. Therefore, you should ensure from the outset that you also have the appropriate content available. This is the concept of Lead Nurturing. Use Lead Nurturing to find the right content for the different purchasing processes.

Let's look more closely at the four phases of a typical buying process:

- **Awareness:** The lead learns about your company or brand, noting that he might need your product or service
- **Research:** The lead now has a specific problem or need and researches possible solutions, thereby also your product or service
- **Evaluation:** The lead compares the options and begins to restrict his selection
- **Purchase:** The lead has now become a prospect who decides to buy a product or service

Lead Nurturing determines what content is to be used at what stage in the buying process.

Next, you should now review the different types of content and communication channels, and for what stage in the purchase process these are best suited:

- **Awareness:** Blog posts, social media updates, comments at forums and groups
- **Research:** E-Books, webinars, technical articles, checklists
- **Evaluation:** Case studies, demo versions, customer reviews
- **Purchase:** Industry studies, product data sheets

Your prospects will of course visit specific online channels, such as blogs on certain topics, throughout the buying process, or he may be observing how your brand is doing in social media. Marketing studies have however shown that specific content types play a special role in every stage of the purchase process. The best thing to do is to check with your leads and prospects on a regular basis what content they prefer or what type of information they think is still missing.

Lead Nurturing through relevant content

In any case, you should have relevant content available for each phase of the buying process; otherwise you run the risk of losing prospects during the buying cycle. Marketing experts nowadays talk about Lead Nurturing with the aim of supporting these contacts in their buying cycle by repeatedly feeding them with information relevant to them. Note that you should not provide promotional information.

The ultimate goal of these lead nurturing activities is obviously to turn these leads and prospects eventually into paying customers. Web 2.0 and social media today offer a variety of ways to execute Lead Nurturing programmes. However, success depends on what content is communicated through these online channels.

SECTION II:
DIGITAL MARKETING AND
MARKETING TECHNOLOGY

7   CHANGING TO MODERN MARKETING? HIRE A MARKETING A-TEAM

In this article I would like to outline the organizational impact of deploying marketing technology. Five staff roles are essential for marketing A-Teams. How do you find new talent and develop their skills to achieve success in a rapidly changing industry?

When the Industrial Revolution emerged around 1800, an interplay of forces caused the pattern of work to change. Before the big industry became manifest, workers provided raw material and artisans processed the raw material into products. However, when the steam engine appeared, which triggered the Industrial Revolution, a company was able to accelerate in both areas, the extraction of raw materials and manufacturing and distribution of products, which in turn led to an increased demand for raw materials. But enough history, let's get started.

Marketing Automation has a similar effect on how we manage our data, create and deliver our programmes, refine and automate our content. Those who use their data properly have many advantages, but for the right usage you will need some experience. What skills do you need as a personnel manager for your team, and how do you contribute to its development?

- **Data Administrators**

  The task of your Data Steward is to ensure that every name and every list that you get is imported, modified and deleted according to agreed standards. Incorrect data are regularly deleted from the databases to obtain reliable figures for Sales. This professional should also manage sales made on the address list.

  For the selection of your staff you have a number of options: full-time or part-time employees. You will have to look for a great way to develop young people's skills and to make your marketing more successful.

  Outsourcing: If you don't have the budget for an employee or haven't found the right person for that position, then outsourcing is a perfect way to start. You get professional advice, you get support in your projects, and upcoming work will be carried out quickly. With continued outsourcing, however, you need to plan well. Make sure that your data is not becoming obsolete.

  Tip: Make a personal plan, especially if you are dealing with young professionals. They could soon find the work boring. Think about offering CRM training or training for marketing automation.

- **CRM administrator** In B2B marketing, the CRM Administrator is increasingly responsible for marketing reporting should use a common master database. The CRM administrator has an internal function. However, programming and integration work can be outsourced relatively easily.

  Tip: If in your company you are not working with an end-to-end reporting solution, enabling you to track requirements and objectives up to the delivery, then ask your current administrator to assist you with your marketing efforts. Pay attention to the questions he's asking. You will easily discover whether your administrator has a flair for marketing. The right sense is necessary to ask the right questions. If your administrator hasn't got this sense, then you may need to search for another person.

- **Webmaster**

  In general, there are three basic areas to be covered: design, code and analysis. Remember that for a good analysis you not only need correct numbers, but also the ability to interpret the data and to recommend and implement a plan. If the visitor traffic on your website is, for example, 20%, an assessment must be made as to whether this value is good or bad and what steps are necessary to be taken.

  Tip: If you find a good webmaster who can cover two of your three essential tasks well, offer him a position and outsource the third task.

- **Content Manager**

  You may have a good copywriter, but a Content Manager must focus on the big picture from a helicopter view. This begins at the structured content creation, to support purchasing decisions and customer loyalty. The communication must be well tuned for marketing automation and needs a common voice.

  Tip: Employ a content manager who is up to date with the latest research and techniques in the field. Jointly run discussions with the marketing automation team, so that it is clear how your programmes run. Involve the Content Manager in analysis and testing, so that he understands that not everything that is creative also works.

- **Marketing Automation Specialist**

  This position requires a whole series of sought-after skills. You need a technical person who thinks like a marketer or a marketer with technical affinity. Required experience includes skills in the areas of the internet, CRM, data, e-mail, and content – in addition to experience in your specific Marketing Automation system. Such candidates are hard to find.

  Search in LinkedIn for the word "marketing" and you get 17 million hits. Looking for Marketing Automation will give you 35,400 results. Look for any of the specific products: Aprimo, Eloqua, Marketo, Neolane or Silverpop and there are 26,000 results. These results will show you that you need to look for these candidates by providing the right work environment and a good salary.

  Tip: Don't wait too long in your search for talent. If you can't find suitable candidates for a permanent position, then you should outsource the work. Initially this will cost a little more, but your freelancer can help you later to incorporate your permanent staff.

Takeaway

In Digital Marketing your marketing team is much more diverse than in traditional marketing. Digital Marketing systems give you the opportunity to develop a conversation with your target market. Systems can work properly only with the right people on board. We have indicated five skills necessary to support your Digital Marketing programmes. Experienced professionals such as a Data Administrator, CRM Administrator, Webmaster, Content Manager and Marketing Automation Specialist can help you achieve success in Digital Marketing.

8 PERSONALITY MARKETING: SMART DATA INSTEAD OF BIG DATA IN RETAIL

Big Data: The data collection mania – not just in marketing – has broadly acquired absurd characteristics. Who bought when, where, how, what discount did they get, on what action did they buy, what bonus system has been applied, did they search on the internet, what credit card was used, did they consult forums first, what accessories are they missing, what is the buyer's age, height, sex?

What marketers who are using rich data ultimately want to find out is "what else can we offer these customers?". That's why so many questions are being asked here. But these are often the wrong ones. The important questions are "why?" and "how?". Then all you need is: Small Data!

The important questions have to do with the client's personality. Consider the motives for purchases or choices, and then think of the communication: How do I address my message to you, the Customer, so that you are not annoyed, surprised but not bored, convinced but not persuaded? In short: so that you feel understood. And respected.

Small Data in Personality Marketing: address customer need types

Whether your customers are businesses (B2B) or people (B2C), they have a personality structure. This is reflected in the corporate culture or in their personal, individual preferences. This structure is based on the inner values, personality traits and behaviours of people. In Human Resources, diagnostic tools such as Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®) profiles have been widely used and tend to make it easier to recognize a personality structure.

Most of these profiles organize personality types initially in different colours (red, yellow, blue, green) or categories (introvert, thinker type) for ease of understanding. This makes it possible to decide which employees really fit the corporate culture, or how effectively and smoothly teams can be put together more easily. Because what would happen in a team which consisted only of "red people power"? It would wipe out the competition. A team of nothing but inspiring "yellow" visionaries would certainly have great ideas, but perhaps not the skills to implement the ideas successfully.

Just like that, your clients also have individual personality structures. Each individual one is a bit different – but there are groups of personality profiles that show significant similarities: they share similar motives, similar values, similar attitudes, similar communication behaviour, similar work patterns, similar criteria for purchase decision.

Marketing that respects a customer's personality

Therefore, of course, a supplier's communication and marketing to the customer are particularly effective if he is able to assess his customer's personality profile and address him respectfully on this basis. A small but growing number of companies and sales staff use tools for personality diagnosis. Smart Data!

The question now is how do you get this smart data. How do you find out how a customer or a potential new customer ticks? Let's take a furniture chain as a concrete example.

About their customers they know from previous purchasing behaviour – and this has nothing to do with Big Data collection – the following buyer types. The person who bought the luxury giant sofa combination in the Bauhaus style, the design classic side tables or the big desk in piano finish has a certain representation need. He is an example of a "red" director type, an extroverted person. "My home is a castle!" The light wood combination for the large kitchen appeals to the social "green" customer: "My home is my castle!". He would also take a few cuddly cushions for the corner seat. The "blue" analytical customer uses a checklist in which he exactly sums up the pros and cons of each bedroom cabinet. And brings along a dozen drawings of his future bedroom to match the right one. Finally, the "yellow" inspirer, the "creative connoisseur", has decided on sofas in magenta – quite stylish and avant-garde – which he guarantees will be replaced by a new design style in two years.

Different colours, images and speech patterns for different customer types in Personality Marketing

The example of the furniture chain is about small data. But they are sufficient to continue supplying these customers with the information they really want. Information that addresses their needs. That matches their needs.

Why is that? Since for each of these personality types, specific products and design lines of the furniture store fit not only their needs, but also their image. Certain colours. Certain communication forms. Certain language patterns. The one who knows these patterns knows how to address these personality types respectfully so that they feel understood. That they see their wishes respected. And are willing to receive irresistible offers.

Address potential new customers in a smart way

But how do you address potential new customers so eloquently and respectfully? Next is a business case of a large clothing store in Germany that also has an online shop. Experience shows that a large number of the people interested in fashion, both returning visitors ("do they have something that fits my taste?") and local first time visitors, investigate offers on the website. The fashion house in this example had integrated an attractively laid-out survey on the home page of the online store, in which prospects and customers could simply put their preferred looks together with much less data.

The test results – along with product offerings and matching special deals – were shipped in a personal report to the specified email address. If the prospect agreed, then he would receive deals based on his personality type in future mailings. The report also provided a voucher that could be used for the first purchase in a local branch of the fashion house – and not in the online shop. Customers even took their reports to the shop to show the sellers on the spot what they liked and what suited them. This approach improves the quality of advice and customer satisfaction with the sellers. Not to mention the number of purchases.

Marketing without manipulation – face-to-face communication with the customer

We don't talk about manipulation here, but rather customers recognizing the correct personality type in our offering. Honestly, one has to admit surely that any form of marketing communication has a certain goal. There is no non-manipulative communication, because each person (and each company) in fact has a certain intention for every communication expression. But Personality Marketing aims to communicate face-to-face with customers: a communication that indicates that customers are taken seriously with their values and their attitudes. That they should not be talked into something that simply does not fit into their world.

Experience shows that Personality Marketing-based assessment tools are significantly more successful: mailings with a personality type-based layout get more attention, flyers with type-based colour are read more in detail, texts with type-based wording generate more response. Sellers with a type-based sales approach are more empathic, friendly and helpful.

But you don't need Big Data! You just need Smart Data – and respect for your clients' personality.

9 HOW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUCCESSFULLY ADDS VALUE TO MARKETING

Now, let's look at IT and Marketing working together for best results. Theoretically, in the Internet age the obvious and easy thing to do is to personalize and optimise the customer dialogue. But only if you're able to integrate the different marketing systems can you deploy every possibility here.

The intelligent use of data becomes more relevant in online dialogue marketing. The focus is on approaching the individual customer who increasingly expects a dialogue. At the same time, dialogues are a relevant means of increasing sales. However, how can data be transformed into a fine-tuned marketing communication based on the behaviour and interests of customers? And what data driven solutions do you need to link to achieve the personal approach and to increase the Return on Relationship? I discuss five examples of how to use data through integrating individual marketing systems for concrete actions.

- **Personalized website for improved customer customisation**
  Today's multi-channel landscape requires a consistently high level of customisation – most of all relevant touch points. An often neglected contact point is your company's website. Often, we develop the internet site in such a way that every visitor sees the same content. We ignore existing customer relationships or interaction history in other channels.

  We eliminate this nuisance within the customer experience by integrating a Content Management System (CMS) with a Digital Marketing platform that allows for individual behaviour profiles. In order to be able to show personalized web content to the website visitor, you must show text, images or offers of similar customers' history and requirements in your CMS. As a result, we present website visitors with content tailored to their interests and offers.

- **Hidden sales potential in your shopping cart**
  Interruptions in the online purchasing process are not uncommon. Reasons for this are complex, but the result is always the same: the goods stay in the basket. The broken-down transaction hides sales turnover which can easily be generated. Personalized follow-up messages with the right content and offers can help to finish off the interrupted purchasing process. Solve this by integrating a Web Analytics or E-Commerce platform with a Digital Marketing platform. As a result, we can speedily send a trigger message with proper content to the affected customer one or more times.

  The income generated by personalized memories is often large. In particular messages containing product name, description plus photo and product reviews are very useful. Sometimes your sales can end up much higher as a result of personalized follow-up messages.

- **Sales and marketing data together lead to optimised lead management**
  In order to lead interested consumers effectively through the buying process, it helps to know who they are and what stage of the purchasing decision they're in. It's about getting a total picture of your client. It has proved to be useful to synchronize your CRM system with your Digital Marketing platform and thus merge the data between the two systems. For best practice, use a bi-directional real-time data exchange. Based on contact data, you can do lead reviews, segmentation or targeting more accurately. Integrating both systems also facilitates transparency between sales and marketing departments and makes valuable information for both sides visible.

- **Integrated product reviews in e-mails**

  Recent studies show that consumers expect companies to approach them with personal and individualized services. This is partly also to align recommendations on product, service, and supply with customers' interests. In addition, online reviews increasingly influence buying decisions. By directly integrating these reviews in the e-mail communication, you are able to offer your customer a perspective on product and service which goes beyond the traditional business core messages. This is made possible by integrating a Digital Marketing platform with an Evaluation platform.

  Use of e-mail marketing

  Nearly half of European industrial companies already use e-mail marketing, ten percent plan to use it in the near future. This means that more than half of companies use email-based direct marketing. With an 18 percent share in the overall economy, this is already a high average. However, compared to industries such as retail and media, the share is still relatively small.

- **Looking into the crystal ball for increased campaign success**

  Marketers today have access to more customer information than ever before. On top of that, due to mobile technologies the line between online and offline behaviour becomes weaker. Therefore, it is crucial to register data from all channels and devices. Integration of a Business Intelligence (BI) or Predictive Analytics solution with your Digital Marketing platform helps to convert in-depth data-based knowledge about customers and prospects into campaigns that increase engagement and sales.

  By using the BI platform, you can predict a series of results, based on measured values, assumptions and data inputs. The solution works in the background and shows how different market segments have responded and will respond to different marketing actions. Marketers can use this knowledge to decide about campaign budgets and define target audiences. But they can also decide how to differentiate between offers or how to contact customers as part of the campaign.

System integration increases Return on Relationship

In order to offer personalized relevant content that customers expect today, you should use all solutions within the Marketing Tool Box and supply them to the other departments. The intelligent integration of stand-alone systems makes it possible to use existing and new data in a meaningful way. System integration increases the possibilities of data recovery, which eventually leads to a higher return on relationship, because you can address each person in the database individually based on their personal interests.

Summary

Many marketers want to personalize and optimise the customer dialogue. However, in most system environments there's a variety of stand-alone marketing systems. With the help of your IT department you can reach your goal. The keyword here is system integration. I have discussed five examples of improving your customer dialogue. A personalized website, personalized messages if your transaction breaks down, merging sales and marketing data, aligning product reviews with customers' interests and integrating BI and Analytics with your Digital Marketing platform.

10 VARIOUS BIG DATA OPPORTUNITIES IN PRODUCT MANAGEMENT

In one of my previous articles about Personality Marketing I mentioned using Smart Data instead of Big Data in Retail. However, in other industries Big Data may be the only option. How can you use the high data volumes of mostly unsystematic existing customer data today? What benefits arise for development and marketing **communication? Learn more about the opportunities for customer-oriented product management.**

On a daily basis the tide of customer information and the chance to meet the customer precisely in his customer journey is growing. Customers give their opinions, their moods and their personal information in different media and share them with their friends and families. They share emails, videos, Facebook posts, blogs, Twitter tweets, free online databases, e-commerce websites, complaints, social media such as Linkedin, Pinterest, Google+ and other networks, thus allowing you to learn something almost every day about your customers, their relationships and influences.

Big Data is not only being collected, but usefully combined from various sources and then used for analysis. Correlations for purchases, reasons to buy and action patterns are analysed to gain important information for both development and marketing, and service performance. Thus, for example, more optimal custom pricing can be addressed through sales and usage behaviour. Think of Amazon.com that reacts directly in a search with the option "Customers who ordered this product also bought….". The goal is to increase the range of services for the customers, and hence the profits of the enterprise, while increasing customer loyalty.

Increase your supply through Big Data

- Develop customer-oriented and performance-matched products
- Offer products tailored to the customer
- Offer additional products in their area of interest
- Optimise customer service and training
- Enhance your service performance

Success factors with Big Data

Ask the right questions. If you discover for example that 65% of your customers in a certain country don't buy coffee in the morning, then don't ask what the 65% of your customers buy in the morning, but why the other 35% do buy coffee in the morning. So you're able to learn customer needs and behaviour patterns. In our analysis we need to adapt to another question behaviour.

If you want to be successful with Big Data, ask yourself the following questions:

- What objectives are concretely achieved with Big Data and what questions are being answered?
- What data must be constantly analysed in a one-off or in real time? What can be automated?
- What data do you already have? What do you still need?
- How reliable is the data analysis? Can you use the data to achieve your original goal?
- Do you have the right staff and the right software for the high and increasing amount of data?
- What is the cost benefit ratio for the data analysis effort?

11 MARKETING IS GAINING IMPORTANCE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

This article deals with <u>Marketing Automation</u>**. Marketing is becoming increasingly more technological. The effectiveness of a good** <u>online marketing</u> **solution can't be denied. Target groups can be addressed quickly and directly. Establishing personalized dialogues is possible too. For marketers there is a variety of electronic solutions available to manage, implement and measure their activities.**

<u>Gartner</u>, a leading market research company for the IT industry, predicts that software spending will be driven more by marketing managers or CMOs than by information managers or <u>CIOs</u> in 2017. The pace by which Marketing is automating their processes certainly leaves few doubts about Gartner's prediction. The fact that marketing is becoming more technological would in any case mean that powerful marketers need to expand their digital competences.

Improved Lead Generation by Marketing Automation

Marketers are measured primarily by the number of interested consumers (or leads) they obtain. This figure also provides the link to Sales. Qualified sales contacts are the basis of specific sales activities.

Marketing Automation provides marketers with a software solution that revolutionizes their activity field. The implementation starts with a precise target group analysis:

- Who are the business decision makers?
- What does our target group's buying process look like?
- What content is interesting for our target contacts?
- How and when do the information needs of potential customers change?
- What marketing activities have to be aligned to attract and develop prospective customers?
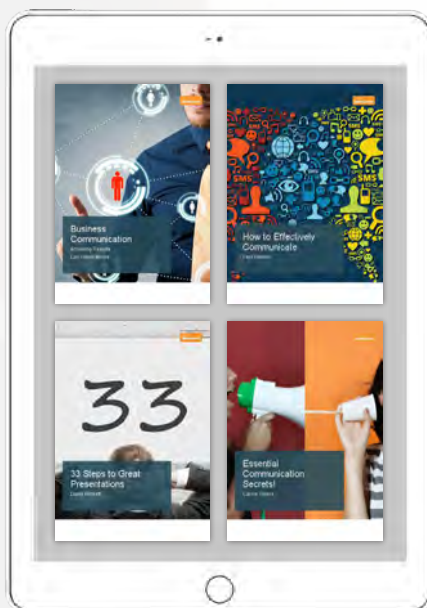
Your marketing methodology will not be changed by a digital solution. But the complexity of your information is managed electronically. Digital campaigns are based on the analysis grid, which will provide best results when developed in close cooperation with Sales. Common knowledge structure about the target group and the derivation of communication activities becomes a legally binding instrument for customer facing departments such as Sales.

Communication

A better understanding of information needs is just the starting point of Marketing Automation. Online behaviour of website visitors is analysed and used to send personal advertisements by the strength of the software. Depending on who does what clicks, your tool will know what content needs to be forwarded to what lead through the predefined Target Group/Content matrix.

Marketing and Sales as one single team

Marketers using Marketing Automation solutions dive deeper into sales processes, because their campaign programmes are put to the opportunity status. Since the acquisition of new customers is much more expensive than the development of existing customers, cross-sell and up-sell initiatives are an important aspect of Sales. Again, Marketing doesn't play an exclusive role upstream of the actual Sales process. Sales colleagues are supported in their persuasion through communication activities over several decision phases.

Close collaboration between Marketing and Sales has always been an important success factor. Through better ways to control and measure marketing activities, actual cooperation is relevant in practice. What was previously presented by Sales in person is now often and preferably provided online. Marketing now becomes as accountable as Sales have always been. And the pressure to succeed increases.

12 HOW TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES CONNECTING MARKETING AUTOMATION WITH CRM

The focus in this article is on integration between Marketing Automation and CRM. So, how easy is integration of Marketing Automation?

Many marketers who turn to internet marketing and are looking to use marketing automation systems are facing synchronization problems of their own CRM systems with new marketing systems. Reputable Marketing Automation software vendors such as Act-On, Eloqua, IBM Marketing Center, Marketo and Neolane offer standard interfaces for specific CRM systems such as Salesforce.com, NetSuite and Microsoft Dynamics. This allows for a data exchange without difficulties between the two systems and the users of these systems are able to execute synchronization without even any specific IT knowledge.

But what does reality look like? Most companies have widespread CRM systems. Did you know that in large enterprises there are countless independent CRM systems that have been programmed over the years for various requirements? I think that this reflects the reality. There is in fact a variety of CRM systems in the market and in the application of many companies.

Proprietary CRM systems need programming

To synchronize Marketing Automation systems with proprietary CRM systems you need to develop an interface. The cost of this program can't be estimated without a professional assessment of the two systems, since every CRM system has various functions and data fields. I would recommend that this analysis is performed before programming in any case. There is no way round it; you need to synchronize all customer-related information and activities between the Marketing Automation system and your CRM system. Once you install manual processes, you lose the benefits you have connected with the implementation of automated systems.

Correct data content and clear data structures in your CRM system

Once the cost of developing this interface is available, it is highly recommended to make a few preparations so that you don't experience disappointment when programming the interface. One of these preparations consists of amending your CRM data. Depending on the situation, this requires certain experience in processing and cleaning customer related data content in a structured way.

Be prepared for problems

After you have developed the interface and you have successfully completed your data preparation, you need to assume that there can still be problems between the systems. But the emergence of communication problems between the systems can be identified and corrected using simple methods. Without doing this, these problems would be many times larger and more expensive.

In the end you will find that the synchronization between the new Marketing Automation system and your current CRM system will have major efficiency and cost-saving benefits.

Never change a winning horse

Maybe you have thought about buying a new CRM system. This could be an option if you are not satisfied with your current CRM system. But without such need, replacement of your CRM system is not recommended. Consider only the necessary training required for all employees who work with your current CRM system.

If you are satisfied with your CRM system, then leave it like that and develop the interface to your Marketing Automation system. If you have experienced initial success with inbound and content marketing, you will realize the profitability of your interface investment.

Takeaway

Many marketers see the benefits of a Marketing Automation system and want to connect this functionality to their CRM system. If you currently have a proprietary CRM system, you will have to develop an interface. Before starting, you need to analyse your effort and calculate the costs. And amend the data in your CRM. Unless really necessary, don't replace your current CRM system.