

The challenge of martech and automation

 By Paula Sartini

20 Sep 2021

Marketing technology (martech) is growing in popularity, and there is no shortage of statistics to support the benefits that technology can bring to the marketing arena. However, while many software offerings and tools tout to help marketing teams achieve their goals and objectives, they can also add to the complexity of the day-to-day.



Source: www.pexels.com

To start, there are more than 8,000 martech offerings available on offer for marketers to choose from. All of these choices can be a daunting and even complex task. Particularly as there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. Each offering provides a solution to meet a specific need and not knowing what you need can cost money without the benefits. This is further challenged by the need to implement solutions that will meet customer's changing needs and expectations.

It is for this reason that marketers are looking to add more tools to the martech stack as they try to keep up with the changing martech landscape. This is supported by the World Advertising Research Centre (WARC) and BDO research which found that 76% of marketers want to add more tools to their marketing stack. However, before marketers add more tools to their stack, they need to reassess their needs and then implement a solution that will help them achieve their objectives.

The challenge of upskilling

Before selecting a martech solution, marketers need to understand what the upskilling requirements will be to be able to use the solution. While automation, for example, is believed to free up employee time so that they can focus on pressing matters and strategies, many solutions can add to the complexity of the task, particularly if it requires time to learn how to use the solution, understand the data and keep the technology up to date.



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For technology to be effective and make a difference, it needs to be easy to use and seamlessly integrate into the solutions users are accustomed to using daily. Many technologies require an upfront time investment in learning how to use the solution and to train other staff on how to use the solution. This can add extra pressure on teams as they focus time and energy on learning how to use the technology and keeping up to date on new updates and changes to the technology which can detract from workloads.

The challenge of over automation

Automation can help to minimise time spent on repetitive tasks, engage customers via bots, keep customers updated on news and product offerings via email campaigns and more. It is for this reason that 63% of marketers plan to increase their marketing automation budget in the next year. However, as consumer behaviour and sentiment can change, messaging must be authentic and relevant and marketers cannot rely solely on automation to get it right.

Marketing is about providing great value at every customer touchpoint and email campaigns and customer engagement needs to manage the process, it cannot be outsourced to an automation solution to understand your customer's needs. Marketers need to manage the process of personalised engagement to ensure that customers are not being inundated with irrelevant messaging and campaigns but rather, are receiving the right message at the right time. This process requires human intervention, creativity and technology to work together to create the right results.

The challenge of changing customer expectations

As the marketing landscape changes and new technologies are introduced to meet changing customer's needs, marketers must remember the core of marketing which is about building relationships with the audience. This must be the key factor driving technology purchasing decisions as marketers seek to free up time to pay attention to building relationships with customers.



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Building relationships with customers continues to be about focusing on the human touch and emotional connection rather than the products or solutions your company sells. Technology cannot create these connections with your customers, but it can empower companies to make their customers feel special by freeing up staff to provide the human touch by engaging with customers and using data wisely to inform them of relevant offers that they would be interested in. When looking at

martech it is important to look at it from a human context to determine if it will add value to your customer experience.

While there are a lot of innovative technology solutions available to marketers today, before feeling pressured into using solutions for the sake of using them, marketers need to go back to their roots. They need to have a great strategy, know their customers and understand how to establish emotional connections with their customers. Once they have this in place, the technologies implemented should help them to achieve this by freeing up time to enhance customer interactions and focusing on the marketing strategy.

ABOUT PAULA SARTINI

With over 20 years' experience helping leading organisations overcome various business challenges, Paula understands the challenges that companies face in delivering a consistent brand experience and the impact this has on their bottom line. An analytical thinker that strives to solve business problems with innovative solutions, Paula believes that technology plays a major role in solving critical business and branding challenges. As such, she established BrandQuantum to help businesses overcome their branding challenges in the digital age.

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