

Chief Marketer B2B Special Report

Digital Directive

Why synergy between data, content and channels is essential for a successful online B2B strategy

Marketing is all about making connections. Data, content, creative, technology and strategy must work together to reach prospects and customers at the right time to engage and close the sale.

Successfully connecting communications initiatives across multiple digital channels is vital for B2B marketers. This is why after marketing automation and account based marketing, many B2B marketers see having an integrated customer experience as the next hill to climb, notes Tom Beck, managing director at the Silicon Valley office of r2Integrated.

"They're thinking more synergistically than in the past," says Beck. "Marketers don't want to do things as one-offs. It's better to have a synced up calendar over time. People need to think in a broad editorial sense and put together things that have a longer episodic life."

"Marketers are asking themselves how they can integrate all of their communications into a single stream," says Eric Shaffer, director, digital media solutions, Infogroup. "You need to integrate all your different marketing components into a unified view and tailor content and offers across channels, and many people aren't there yet."

B2B marketers are looking more at marketing clouds to employ content management and other strategies, to create more complex B2B marketing plans, he says.

Many companies are still struggling to create content that will connect with prospects at the right time in their journey. "They need to build content that isn't just focused on their products and services, to get people to raise their hands deeper into the buying cycle," Beck notes.

B2B companies are moving into the next phase of maturity for content, and working to utilize enterprise content management systems

to deliver a better experience.

One important thing to remember is that engagement doesn't necessarily mean interest, says Sean Hagan, demand generation specialist, Yesler. Just because someone downloaded a whitepaper or attended a webinar doesn't guarantee that they're ready to buy now, or that they even want to talk to a sales person.

"It comes back to the buyer's journey," he says. "The first touch may indicate interest but it doesn't mean they are ready. Content should be categorized by buying stage, and you need to watch the signals to separate those out those who are just

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curious. You need to send your audience something they are more likely to be interested in, and that will differentiate your brand in their eyes.”

Sometimes the smallest of signals can have the most clout. It’s key to know what interests prospects at what point in the journey, and what triggers their interest. Of course, you need to remember that marketers can push people away if they jump too quickly to engage a new prospect who isn’t ready to talk to a salesperson.

“Sometimes it might just be one touch—they might look at one page and be ready,” he said. “But at the same time, in B2B there can be multiple people involved in the purchasing decision, so you need multiple ways to engage.”

“When people have taken some kind of action, you need to figure out what kind of nurture program to put them into and know when they’re a sales ready lead,” says Jeff Adeo, senior vice president, list services group, Infogroup. “You need to constantly test and revise your strategy to see what works best and come up with a good formula.”

For many organizations, siloed data is still a concern. “You can’t transform your process without the data to inform it,” Beck says. “Many large B2B brands still don’t have good customer data, so they’re spending a lot of time appending to get that in place. It’s

an ongoing issue.”

“Siloed data is a significant challenge,” agrees Shaffer. “Social data can seem like it’s in a walled garden, and then you’ve got third party data and your own data—it can be a challenge to navigate, take action with and measure.”

“You have to be careful how you structure [your team] internally,” said Adeo. “You don’t want to set up more silos [between departments]. You need to optimize your messaging.”

In digital, a big challenge for both B2B and B2C brands is figuring out how to unify the customer ID across all channels. “There’s no unified ID that gets shared across digital channels, and we really need something along the lines of a professional or a consumer ID,” says Shaffer, noting that the only two companies at present that have any sort of strong foothold on this concept are Google and Facebook. “We need to do a better job of getting our hands around this.”

B2B marketers are also challenged with unifying data that has been connected on different devices, from tablets to phones to laptops. “So much is disconnected and that can be problematic,” says Shaffer. “The missing piece is tethering it all back together and measuring it.” —BNV

FOLLOWING THE MONEY

B2B DIGITAL SPENDING ON THE RISE: SURVEY

B2B digital marketing spending will increase 7.6% to almost \$77 billion in 2015, according to Outsell’s 2015 Advertising and Marketing Study.

Website spending remains the largest category with \$29.1 billion in spending, according to Outsell’s report. Ad spending on social networking sites will grow more than 15% year over year, but spending on companies’ own social engagement exceeds social ad spend by \$1.1 billion. Email continues to maintain an impressive 11% share of B2B marketers budgets, but its growth has dropped 1.8%.

Breaking down spending by vertical markets shows that manufacturing, technology vendors, biotech/chemicals/pharma and professional services cite their own websites as the top ROI method of marketing, while financial services cited conferences.

The top marketing problem area varied by vertical market—manufacturing said applying analytics, while tech and professional services said evaluating ROI, biotech/chemicals/pharma said marketing analytics skills and financial said vendors were not solutions oriented.

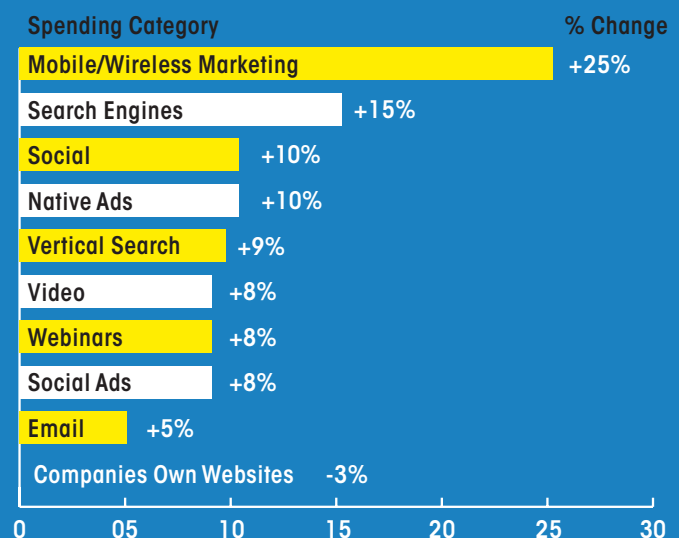
B2B marketers will spend \$72.4 billion on direct-to-consumer marketing, according to Outsell, bypassing established media companies. That represents more than 47% of total B2B advertising and marketing spending and has risen dramatically since 2010, when B2B direct-to-con-

sumer spending was only \$53.3 billion.

Data for the study was collected via survey in January, and combined with 10 years of trending data. Of the total 1,487 US respondents, 719 were B2B-focused marketers, while 768 were consumer-focused. —BNV

Digital Jumps

YoY Change in B2B Marketing Mix



Source: Outsell Advertising & Marketing Study 2016

WHAT'S YOUR TRUE DIGITAL ROI?

THE TOP 5 ANALYTICS TO WATCH TO SEE HOW YOUR MARKETING IS REALLY PERFORMING

1. Traffic and Audience Segmentation

You probably have the basic segmentations such as device type and OS, geographies, traffic sources and demographics (age and gender). These are necessary to understand who is visiting your website and how they are connecting so you can optimize their experience.

But to really know your audience and their behavior, you have to start looking at more advanced segmentations. Know your goals and what you view as a conversion. B2B sites might want to set whitepaper downloads as a key goal, while for e-commerce businesses the ultimate goal might be to complete a purchase.

An example of using advanced segmentation could be as simple as looking at multiple variables, say device type vs. bounce rate, traffic sources vs. conversions, returning vs. new visitors or specific product purchases vs. demographics.

2. Pathing and Behavior Flow

Simply put, pathing or behavior flow is the analysis of a path, sequence of events and customer journey through your website. The analysis is meant to help you identify gaps and improve the overall customer experience to improve conversions. The path analysis is typically represented as a flow visualization. The analysis can get very complex unless you identify specific areas you want to view such as pages that have the highest drop offs, the most used paths or the least used paths.

A few reasons you might want to look at this sequence of events is to identify if you have an unusually high number of drop offs right before a conversion or a high number of abandoned carts. You may then revisit the user experience and redesign web pages and flow to increase completion rates.

3. Attribution

There are several attribution models that you can

use to assign credit for the conversion to the various touch points in the customer journey. Before you get to attribution, the underlying analytics collection has to be in place across your marketing mix: paid and organic search, email, display ads, social media,

mobile marketing, referring links, and more. Attribution will then help you understand what influences your audiences and determine your marketing ROI.

Common attribution models include first click, last click, equal weight to each touchpoint in the journey, or position based, where first and last click get more credit than the intermediate steps.

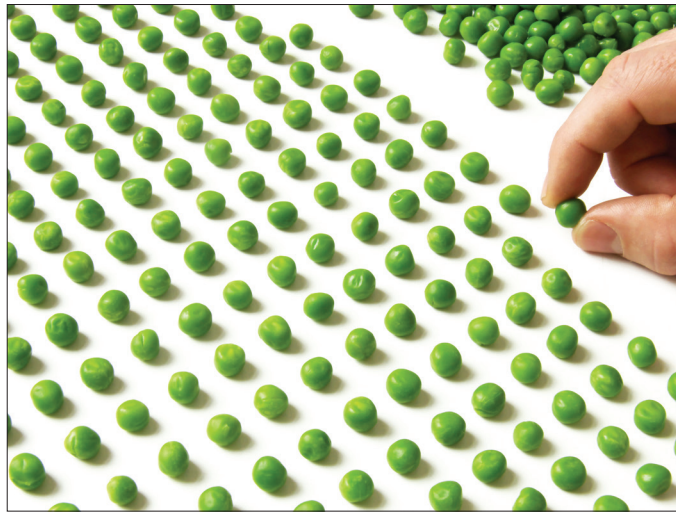
4. Social Analytics

Enterprises of all sizes are incorporating sophisticated social strategies, using content marketing or social listening. The key to determining the success of engaging prospects with either approach is social analytics. While social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn and social tools such as Hootsuite and Rignite have analytics capabilities, none really provide the necessary data needed to measure ROI.

To measure your social strategy, you have to combine your social and digital analytics for a complete view, tying in conversions on your website. This can be done via your base digital tools such as Google Analytics and Adobe Analytics. There are also many tools that will take unstructured data from your social channels and combine them with others sources for a finer slice and dice view of your social data.

5. Mobile Analytics

There's an app for that. And beyond that app is a business model for large and small enterprises hoping to engage consumers with their brand. Similar to web analytics, the process starts by defining goals and objectives. The implementation can be done through web analytics tools such as Adobe and Google Analytics, which have specific mobile tools for mobile analytics measurement. These tools have similar user, page visit and session data and also useful mobile specific data such as downloads, application crashes and application usage. —*Taqi Mohiuddin, VP, marketing, Xcelacore*



METRICS BEYOND CLICKS

HOW DATA DRIVEN MARKETERS SHOULD TRACK ENGAGEMENT

The average American spends upwards of 11 hours a day on electronic media. But don't think that means they're welcoming all the marketing messages in that tsunami of information. A study by Media Dynamics shows that thanks to ad blocking and DVRs, the average consumer pays attention to only 12 of the 363 advertisements they're exposed to each day.

Earning engagement in this noisy and ad-adverse climate requires marketers to draw up a different game plan—and a modern set of metrics to go along with it.

Recent technological advancements don't just offer new platforms for marketers to leverage; they also present a whole new set of metrics with which to evaluate true engagement beyond mere clicks. Here's five tips for which metrics to adopt—and which to forget.

1. Double down on retention. In the past, marketers were limited to blanketing mass audiences with mass messages, hoping they would reach the right eyes. New technology, however, allows marketers to place more focus on retention. Are there any better "right eyes" than the ones you already know are interested in you?

The benefits of a retention-based marketing approach can be enormous. Recent studies show engaged consumers buy nearly twice as as their unengaged counterparts, spend 60% more per transaction and deliver 23% more revenue. Marketers should measure retention through metrics such as email click-to-open rates and visitor recency, or how often visitors return to your site. These stats can let marketers know whether they're consistently grabbing users' attention and truly building relationships.

2. Shift the focus from campaigns to individual customers. Once upon a time, marketers had to view consumers as a gray, faceless mass, so they fed everybody the same messages. But mass marketing is now obsolete: According to a Janrain study, 74% of today's consumers say they're fed up with seeing irrelevant content.

Luckily, modern marketers can now look at each audience member as an individual with unique wants and habits. We have the power to send the right promotions to the right people, which is particularly valuable for brands and stores that offer diverse product ranges.

Instead of looking at the successes and failures of theme-based campaigns, marketers should look at customer-focused data to determine whether

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SOUND INVESTMENT

NEW APP HELPS HARTFORD FUNDS REACH FINANCIAL ADVISORS

A pair of new mobile apps is helping Hartford Funds market to both internal reps and financial advisors who recommend products to their customers.

"These are two diverse audiences," noted Mark Kitson, director of digital marketing, Hartford Funds, who spoke at the recent Adobe Summit.

A major challenge was to differentiate the brand from the competition. "Performance cannot be the only reason to choose a mutual fund company," he says. "Insights and value added content are key differentiators."

Hartford Funds' products must be purchased through financial advisors. Their marketing efforts also work to help wholesalers within the organization, who work to promote Hartford to the advisors.

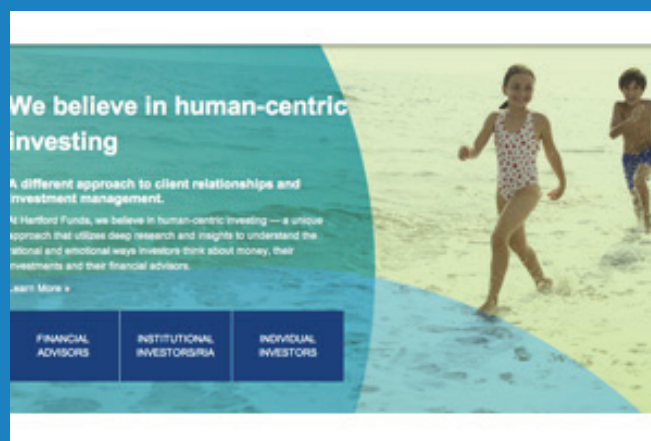
The brand wanted to deliver sales material—like stats about funds, whitepaper PDFs and video—in an engaging and easy to access format.

It also wanted to take content created for one channel and leverage it in another—for example, use case studies created for email to help populate the mobile app in a responsive format, powered by Adobe Experience Manager Mobile.

The first app, created for the internal wholesalers, launched in February. An app for financial advisors will launch in April.

So far, reps are adapting to the app quickly. Of the 66 that are using it, 90% report using it at least once a week, and 50% are using it on a daily basis.

The audience for the financial advisor app will be significantly larger; there's a potential user base of 30,000 reps around the country. The app's content will be updated quickly, and it will be the first public presence of Hartford Funds in the App Store. —BNV



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users continue to interact with their content over time.

3. Look at customers in terms of behavior, not demographics. Marketers need to move beyond static demographic data and get familiar with behavioral data.

If you know someone's age, gender and location, do you actually know what they're interested in? Nope. The best you can do is make an educated guess. But knowing that a consumer spends her time watching Taylor Swift videos on YouTube and sharing articles about cats on Facebook is a lot more useful. This information reveals who she truly is and what she's interested in.

By tracking the sites visited, apps downloaded, and purchases made in real time, marketers can uncover more accurate pictures of consumers. Case in point: a report from EConsultancy shows that 68% of marketers say focusing on personalization and analyzing behavioral data boosts return on investment, and 74% say it bolsters engagement.

4. Track data across channels. Brands used to pick up a couple of media spots and have individual campaigns on each channel. Now, consumers engage across a range of platforms and properties, and a survey from mBuys showed that 72% prefer when brands take an integrated marketing approach.

Cross-channel marketing is important, as is delivering an experience that's simultaneously consistent with the brand and personal to customers. Data consolidation helps modern marketers look at the customer's entire journeys to determine how to engage them every step of the way.



5. Use data to look forward, not backward. Marketers once approached campaign development by trying something, seeing how it worked, and adjusting the next campaign accordingly. Now, advanced segmentation can make this whole process a scalable, real-time affair.

Machine learning technology can track any quantity of users, understand any amount of content, and deliver it by predicting

what's relevant for every single person. The beauty of this technology is its ability to self-optimize through a continuous feedback loop.

Along with saving an enormous amount of time, machine learning produces deeper insights to help marketers better plan their future campaigns. In the end, marketers don't just know whether their campaigns were successful; they know why those campaigns performed how they did and what strategies are most likely to work next.

By focusing on retention, behavior, and cross-channel experiences — while using data to be proactive, not reactive — marketing teams ensure audiences genuinely enjoy their digital campaigns, not just grudgingly accept their existence. —*Nick Edwards, co-founder/CEO, Boomtrain*



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