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The new age of marketing: 5 leaders share their stories

Microsoft, Verint, Thomson Reuters, Fujitsu, Deloitte



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Comment

Overcome ‘Catch-22’ marketing with a disruptive campaign



Guy Little
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Do you feel pressured to hit the accelerate button on your marketing campaigns, but have already exhausted every “rule of marketing” you know? You’re not alone.

Generating traffic and leads remains to be the biggest challenge that marketers are facing, with 61% admitting it’s something their organisation struggles with, according to a report by HubSpot.

Solving that dilemma can feel like catch-22.

To collect those leads, you’ll need to establish strong engagement rates with your current audience and grow your following through several referral and acquisition strategies. But you can’t establish engagement without a disruptive marketing campaign that makes your business seen (and heard) above the competition.

The same applies for increasing revenue. You want to demonstrate valuable business input, improve existing revenue models, and prove to the c-suite that your marketing strategy has real value, right? To do that, you’ll need a disruptive campaign that leverages the latest martech.

A new era of marketing is emerging, where we’re relying on big data and analytics to inform our strategies. Strengthening digital engagement is a top priority for many B2B CMOs — as is understanding the latest distribution tactics.

Producing engaging content is a struggle for 60% of B2B content marketers, but it’s tricky to discover the most effective strategies to retain and delight your audiences. Enter: the need for smart technology and automation to do this on a larger scale, and see greater benefits.

But with CEOs in B2B organisations expecting fast growth from their leadership team, you’ll need to make an impact and build a disruptive marketing campaign if you’re keen to impress – and experience the results you’ve been promising to c-suite.

Business models are changing, and there’s a huge focus on real time. From speed of responses to being equipped with a team that can respond to customer issues without delay, you’ll need to switch up your entire marketing strategy to stay ahead of your competitors.

Sounds worrying, right? Especially when commitment to lead and deliver innovation quickly is a top priority for 82% of marketing leaders.

So how are some of the industry’s most forward-thinking marketers delivering innovation quickly and addressing some of these challenges?

In *The New Age of Marketing: 5 leaders share their stories* we’ve interviewed marketing heads from Deloitte, Microsoft, Verint, Thomson Reuters, and Fujitsu to give you an inside look at what’s hot in the world of content marketing for 2019 and beyond…

Introduction

Vive la révolution.
The old ways of marketing are over. Long live the new rules of marketing.

It's an increasingly difficult challenge for marketers to stand out in a cluttered landscape. How do you meet that challenge? By joining the revolution of market disruptors. Evolve now or become obsolete.

In this report, written in conjunction with content marketing agency Tomorrow People, we interviewed five senior marketing leaders on their vision for a new world. We discussed how they have challenged their competitors, delighted their customers, and in the process laid down new rules for marketing.

In hearing these stories, you'll learn about the highs and lows of change, the value of adopting these approaches, and advice on how to do so.

We've learned that game changers in marketing are focused on 5 new rules of marketing:

1. Transformation is the new norm, but it's about more than data and digital

Your customers have fallen in love with tech, but that doesn't mean you should rush to deploy more yourself. Successful transformation boils down to people, process and tools. Scott Allen, CMO, Microsoft shares his experiences.

2. Your principles are as important as your product

Marije Gould, VP marketing, EMEA at Verint used a futurologist to map her customers' growing concerns. Far from it being just about the product or price, her customers care deeply about the ethos of the business they buy from, including its privacy, personalisation and ethics.

3. Emotion is the blueprint for your customer journey

Traditionally seen as a trick deployed only in consumer marketing, savvy B2B marketers are learning how to track, measure and market to the customers' emotions. Antonia Wade, head of content and campaign marketing at Thomson Reuters tells us how she rebuilt the marketing function, putting customer emotions at the centre.

4. Personalisation is the future, and ABM is the road to achieving it

Customers want to feel heard, understood and have a connection. They want bespoke solutions marketed in an even more personalised way. Andrea Clatworthy, head of ABM at Fujitsu and guru in account-based marketing, explains why ABM is the best solution.

5. Staff need personalisation just as much as your customers

To deliver any of the above, marketing leaders must build and grow a strong team set for the future. Annabel Rake, partner and CMO at Deloitte explains that to retain and motivate the best employees, you must cater to their individual needs.

Rule 1

Transformation is the new norm, but it's about more than data and digital

Case study: Scott Allen, CMO, Microsoft

1.1 Introduction

As a leading tech company, Microsoft and its CMO Scott Allen are at the heart of transformation. He knew that the business had to engage a generation who, as he puts it, "could pinch and zoom before they could crawl".

He had to find news ways to reach a changing audience over various platforms, but that also meant looking at three key areas: people, processes and tools. "If one of these things is missing from your transformation, it won't work," he says.



1.2 Case Study: How to transform from the inside-out

People

Scott has spent time focusing on millennials and generation Z, as employees as well as customers.

He responded to their values such as a need for diversity and inclusion, maximising every person's contribution, whatever their stakeholder type.

Internally, Scott invested in analytical heads who became data interpreters, providing Scott with analytics in a marketing language he could use and understand.

Process

Although he warns of a fine line "between being personal and being creepy", individualised marketing has been a key part of his transformation. To do this, he employed one-to-one ABM marketing alongside a programmatic approach using machine learning. He has leveraged analytics and insights to create personalised and relevant messaging.

The transformation also focused on brand safety and sensitivity. Beyond just making sure its adverts aren't showing up on undesirable sites, the company is now a lot smarter about who they work with and if they're aligned to their own company values.

Tools

New technology means you can test and learn with your marketing quickly and get fast results. Marketing analytics tools became the muscle (not the motivator) of Scott's operations. In particular, his team used Microsoft Power BI to gain insight into customers and future decisions. This created a new way of thinking, allowing the team to spend its money more effectively and target specific groups of customers.

What's exciting you about marketing right now?

"The power of AI and the human together (the interpreter) means that you can work faster and be much more impactful."

What's your crucial rule for transformation?

"You have to think about how to transform people, not just tech and processes."

1.3 Tips for success: How to transform your people

Employees are encouraged to put 'growth mindset time' in their calendar, setting aside time to think, collaborate, go for a run or simply disconnect.

Introducing the workplace team hub, Microsoft Teams, has increased effective collaboration, and reduced email by up to 50%, freeing up employees' time to work on strategic-level thinking. "We're not measuring our employees on the amount of hours a week they work, it's about the impact they make," says Scott.



1.4 How to start a digital revolution

1. Talk to staff about the desired outcomes of the transformation and what they will personally achieve.
2. Don't boil the ocean and try to do too many things at once.
3. Focus on data and insights. This is much easier to do today with the cloud and the apps available.
4. Be open-minded, involved, and bold.
5. Test and learn should be part of your DNA.

What does the future look like for marketing?

"By 2020, the volume of data will reach nearly 50 zettabytes – that's 20,000 times the total amount of data that existed in the world less than three decades before. Data is definitely the fuel of the digital era and it is a very exciting time to be a marketer."

Rule 2

Your principles are as important as your product

Case study: Marije Gould, VP marketing, EMEA at Verint

2.1 Introduction

We all know the value of listening to the customer. Every modern marketer aims to understand the client's challenges, needs and opinions. But increasingly, those concerns stretch beyond the product or service offering. Chiefly, customers want to know whether you are 'their kind of company.'

When Marije Gould, VP marketing, EMEA at Verint employed a futurologist she unlocked crucial understandings about how customer expectations would develop in the coming decades. The research became a key part of Verint's marketing strategy, helping understand its customers and putting them at the centre of its work.

The research revealed the need to focus on three big trends:

- The ethical consumer, who cares about company's impact on society.
- The sceptical consumer, who's wary and protective of data.
- The heartfelt consumer, who wants personal interaction.

What's the most important discovery the futurologist made in their research?

"The future is not all about technology, it's about people. The human touch is so important, both in the workplace and in your relationships with customers."



2.2 Case Study: How Verint learned to engage with customers

The futurologist's research allowed Verint to develop thought leadership content that made it a leader in its field, but it also led the company to change its own approach to marketing.

"Six years ago we weren't able to get three customers in a room together," admits Marije. This prompted a focus on customer intimacy. Verint decided to invest in annual customer conferences and an advocacy programme, whereby customers share successes with their peers and create a trusted community. "Our most successful campaigns come down to human contact – customers engaging with us and with each other," Marije says.

While the research uncovered three distinct customer types, Verint's method was not to approach them as homogenous personas, but as individuals attuned to three key issues.

It recognised that ethics, data security and personalisation are each of significant and growing importance – especially among millennials.

This meant Marije had to re-think Verint's approach to its marketing, including the sweet spot between privacy and personalisation. "We shouldn't be good with customer data just because GDPR tells us to," she says. Now the company focuses on personalised efforts, using technology only when relevant to its customers. "It's much more targeting, much less big net fishing."

As a result of these moves, Verint has seen a big uptake in terms of marketing influence and engagement with its customers.

How can you create a trusted space for your customers?

"We organise user forums for our customers where no salespeople are present, allowing open conversation."

What steps did you take to put customers first?

"We now have a VP of customer experience, something that every serious organisation in the B2B space is going to have to start looking at."

2.3 How to put the customer first

- Focus on educating your customers and facilitating their needs, rather than just selling to prospects.
- Turn your customers into your biggest advocates by giving them space to network and collaborate in a trusted environment.
- Tech is your friend, but it won't replace the human touch. A good strategy is up to you.
- Don't ignore millennials – as customers they're early adopters of technology, and care about brand ethics. As your employees they're keen to keep growing.

Rule 3

Emotion is the blueprint for your customer journey

Case study: Antonia Wade, head of content and campaign marketing at Thomson Reuters

3.1 Introduction

Emotional marketing was long thought to be the exclusive stomping ground of B2C marketers. Its premise is to entice, delight and ultimately sell to customers by playing to their emotional drivers. It will tug on heartstrings and respond to the consumers' primitive needs and desires.

Most thought that emotional marketing had no place in B2B's rational, long, complicated buying cycles and committees.

But when Antonia Wade, head of content and campaign marketing at Thomson Reuters received some timely product offerings from her newly purchased Amazon Alexa, she realised – as have other insightful people – that all buying decisions are emotional as well as rational.

Antonia knew there was more her team could be doing to market to customers based on how they were feeling about the brand at key moments in the buying journey.

3.2 Case Study: How Thomson Reuters shifted its focus from products to people

Antonia set out to reorganise the marketing strategy, aligning it to personas and putting the customer at the heart of Thomson Reuters' marketing function. She used the company's website redesign this year as a catalyst for transforming its customer engagement.

The team started by researching pain points and classifying clients, then identifying which channels they engaged with, and which messages worked. This led to detailed personas, including well-defined customer goals, motivations, and frustrations. The team used this to inform channel strategy, thought leadership topics and campaign activation plans.

How far through the transformation are you?

"If you imagine it's a major race and you've got to climb the mountain first before you're on the flat, we're reaching the flat. We've done the hardest bit."

3.3 The highs and lows of the customer journey

Antonia's team built customer experience maps that acted as a blueprint for the customer journey – from awareness and interest, to purchase and advocacy. This allowed the team to create a feelings chart for each journey. Classifying each stage as high or low on the feeling chart allowed them to understand where there might be opportunities to enhance the brand experience – whether it was a moment of delight or an opportunity to overcome frustration.

The team created 27 user scenarios, detailing different journeys and trigger points across the website. Content was created for each step, from long-form whitepapers to snackable pieces.

While the website won't launch until November, the nine-month overhaul has so far been a success. Marketing's year-on-year performance has improved significantly under this new approach, as have customer interactions.

Why does emotional marketing matter?

"When customers are making strategic decisions around vendor choice, you need to appeal to them as human beings. Customers will feel less likely to leave you if they are connected to you in a way that's not transactional."

3.4 How to turn your marketing emotional

- Customers come with questions, not requirements. Make these answers apparent at an early stage in the customer journey.
- Think about when a customer might want communication from you outside what you already do today. Use this as an opportunity to surprise and delight them.
- If you ask for feedback, you will get it – so be ready to flex your approach.
- Work with a team of people who can take feedback, understand what you want to achieve and are committed. You aren't always going to agree.

Rule 4

Personalisation is the future, and ABM is the road to achieving it

Case study: Andrea Clatworthy, head of ABM, Fujitsu

4.1 Introduction

Account-based marketing is taking over. Join in or move aside.

It's the topic everyone is talking about, not just because it's the fashionable new thing, but because it successfully caters to any modern marketing challenges. At its heart is higher revenue generation through highly relevant personalised marketing, with insight as the starting point.

Renowned ABM guru Andrea was one of the first to use account-based marketing when she rolled it out across Fujitsu in 2010. She calculated that lead generation was pointless, as the amount the company spent on it equated exactly to its return. She decided to divert the resource to strategic one-to-one ABM and turn every marketer in the UK team into an expert. It had revolutionary results.

What have you enjoyed most about this journey?

"Building a plan and seeing the results is satisfying. Most human beings want to see something tangible."

What are the results you can expect?

"If most people have a win rate of one in 10, you can expect a three-fold increase on that, particularly in large, complex deals."

4.2 Case Study: How to start an ABM programme, Andrea's way

Deploying ABM across Fujitsu was an enormous change, and Andrea used the full-throttle approach. She trained all 54 people in her UK team with two-day, face-to-face training. The company created a portal of resources, including how-to guides written by every specialist on the team so that they could combine its knowledge.

The result was a strong team of marketers that could serve themselves and each other. Those who previously never interacted with customers found themselves in client-facing roles. These skills could then be applied to their day job. "It helped instill customer obsession in the community," she says.

4.3 Scaling up ABM

At the end of the first year, Fujitsu launched a strategic growth programme, focusing on a small number of global accounts across the region. The decision was made that ABM would be part of that strategy from the get-go.

In the first year, win rates increased significantly and there was excellent feedback from account executives and clients. "There was recognition from that first big year that ABM had a role to play at a strategic level," Andrea says.

The next step was to go from being UK-centric to looking at strategic accounts across EMEA. An EMEA ABM team was created, with dedicated roles and a move away from a country-focused approach. From that point 60% of Fujitsu's influenced pipeline came from Andrea's team of just seven marketers.

The company is now on its third iteration of ABM, and she's enabling another 48 dedicated EMEA ABM roles.

How has ABM transformed the marketing industry?

"It's given a lot more people job satisfaction. Marketing has been repositioned as vital to an organisation, not just a support function."



4.4 The dos and don'ts of ABM

- DO get sales and marketing collaborating – strategic ABM only works when both sides understand the benefits.
- DO invest in training and e-learning modules.
- DO pay attention to detail. Be obsessed with the little things and take a hands-on approach, that's what makes the difference between a good ABMer and a great ABMer.

- DON'T start an ABM programme with 54 accounts! Start small and scale up.
- DON'T over-invest in flashy martech. Marketers need to understand the needs of the customer, which is about skill. Andrea started ABM with just a spreadsheet.
- DON'T lose a good ABMer. They're a rare breed, so if you find someone with skills, treat them well.

Rule 5

Staff need personalisation just as much as your customers

Case study: Annabel Rake, partner and CMO, Deloitte

5.1 Introduction

The world of work is changing. As consumer demands and product delivery evolve at a faster pace than ever before, employees and their leaders must keep up. This often means training, but it also equates to a multi-disciplinary approach. Employees must be more reactive, productive and innovative than ever – yet they must also find balance with their personal lives.

These vast developments in tech and changes in how people work prompted Annabel Rake, partner and CMO at Deloitte, to think about her team's future.

Annabel learned how to create an open culture that rewards and attracts talent, while responding to the changing workplace. Deloitte's marketing function, like the rest of the firm, is fully welcoming of flexibility, part-timers and working parents.

While these actions don't provide a short-term monetary benefit, the long-term results are huge. For example, Deloitte frequently lists as one of the best places for women and part-time team members to work.

How do you retain your competitive advantage?

"80% of my budget goes on people, which is a lot. I want people who are happy and engaged. If I don't create the right environment, they'll leave."

5.2 Case Study: How to create a 21st century marketing department

Of the ten people on Annabel's leadership team, half are not based in London, many work flexibly, and all are working parents.

Some employees have school-term-only contracts, with the company also running a return to work programme for people who have had a career break of two or more years.

This approach is backed up by policy and reinforced by formal events that focus on respect, inclusion and flexible working. During these times, people from different functions talk about their experiences.

Deloitte's employee tagline is the question "What impact will you make?". It puts the emphasis on impact, not hours worked. In response to this, Annabel switched her team to a project-based approach, which allows flexibility and doesn't rely on someone being in the office five days a week.

5.3 Deloitte's digital agency

In 2014, Annabel changed the way the marketing department is structured by developing its own internal agency, Deloitte 368, named after the Pantone reference for the green dot in the company's logo. Within it, there is a project manager who brings in experts from other areas such as social, content marketing and insight. Freelancers and contractors are now used more regularly, as well as those on part-time contracts.

How do you prepare marketers for new skills?

"We do a lot of training in resilience and understanding how change works. Transformation is exciting, but for lots of people it can be daunting and stressful."

5.4 AI and robotics

In Australia, Deloitte is trialing robotics for marketing. Three robots are being tested to create and publish pages on its website, and the trial so far has been successful. "This wouldn't necessarily replace a role, but would augment somebody's existing role, so they could spend more time on other things, such as A/B testing."

Annabel now looks at recruitment differently, assessing whether a role has to be based in London, needs to be full-time, and if robotics can support it, freeing up man hours to focus on more strategic value-add activities.

Why is workforce transformation so important?

"The world is changing both from a tech perspective and a workforce perspective. If you don't change, you're fighting a losing battle."



5.5 How to create a transformative culture in which marketers thrive

- Be an open-minded leader, allowing people to come forward with new ideas.
- The only way to create an open culture is to be open yourself.
- Up-skill your marketers in change management, judgement skills, analysis, and creativity. These are the skills of the future.
- Scale quickly but fail quickly. Learn from your mistakes and don't be afraid to get things wrong.

Section 6

Key takeaways

1. **Embrace transformation.** Invest in analytics and data interpreters to create personalised messaging and help you predict customer behaviour. Think about how you motivate your team - do you need to implement policy to make sure they have time to re-set, collaborate or think strategically?

2. **Put the customer at the heart of your marketing.** If you want to empower them, give them space to communicate with each other. Think about setting up a forum purely for open conversation or education, rather than selling.

3. **Invest in emotional marketing.** Map out your customer journey, using data to identify how customers feel at each stage. This will allow you to enhance moments of delight and overcome frustrations.

4. **Stand out with ABM.** If you're thinking of implementing the strategy, get sales and marketing collaborating before you start a pilot. The best way to do this is face-to-face training, explaining the benefits ABM can bring for both sides. Think small - five accounts is a much better start than 55.

5. **Your workforce is the lifeblood of your business.** Think about your team structure - is there room for a flexible approach to working? If you're thinking about implementing new policies, make sure you set an example, allow for open discussion, and give employees a platform to feedback back and encourage others with their experiences.

About

B2B Marketing

B2B Marketing is the comprehensive information resource for B2B marketers. Its mission is to provide practitioners with the information they need to perform better and achieve more, whatever sector of the B2B space they are operating in.

Launched in 2004 as *B2B Marketing* magazine, it has since evolved into a multi-faceted resource, delivering a broad range of content in a variety of different forms and formats.

Its key products are:

- Online community
- Magazine
- Awards
- Research and reports
- Training
- Events
- Membership.

For more information on any of these products or services go to b2bmarketing.net or call +44 (0)20 7014 4920.

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Tomorrow People

Tomorrow People is an award-winning data-driven content marketing agency with offices in Birmingham (UK), London (UK) and New York (US). They believe the secret to marketing success, no matter whether its ABM, product marketing, inbound or any other strategy, is compelling content.

Founded by two partners in 2011, Tomorrow People employs over 35 people across editorial, web development, account management, design and digital marketing teams, as well as working closely with a pool of sector expert copywriters and videographers.

Tomorrow People uses content to redefine marketing strategies for some of the world's best-known organisations such as Oracle, TrustPilot, Unify, Tech Data, TeamViewer, and Solvay.

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