snowflake®

B2B Marketing
Intelligence • Connection • Development

How to break down data silos and become the data-driven marketer you need to be



b2bmarketing.net

Contents

Foreword
by David Rowlands 3

Becoming data-driven in B2B marketing 4

Introduction 5

Section 1
Four potential reasons B2B marketers are failing to realise their data-driven dreams 6

Section 2
Product usage data and subscription models: A help or hindrance? 8

Section 3
Smashing down data silos once and for all 9

Section 4
Bringing IT and marketing together 10

Section 5
Three ways cloud data will propel marketing to the next level 11

Section 6
Cloud-based martech: The centrepiece of the modern marketing tech stack 13

We would like to thank the following individuals for generously giving their time to help build this report:



Tony Lamb,
Propolis Hive expert for Data Strategy, Insights & Intelligence

Want to get even more insight from Tony and the Propolis community? Why not check out Propolis today.



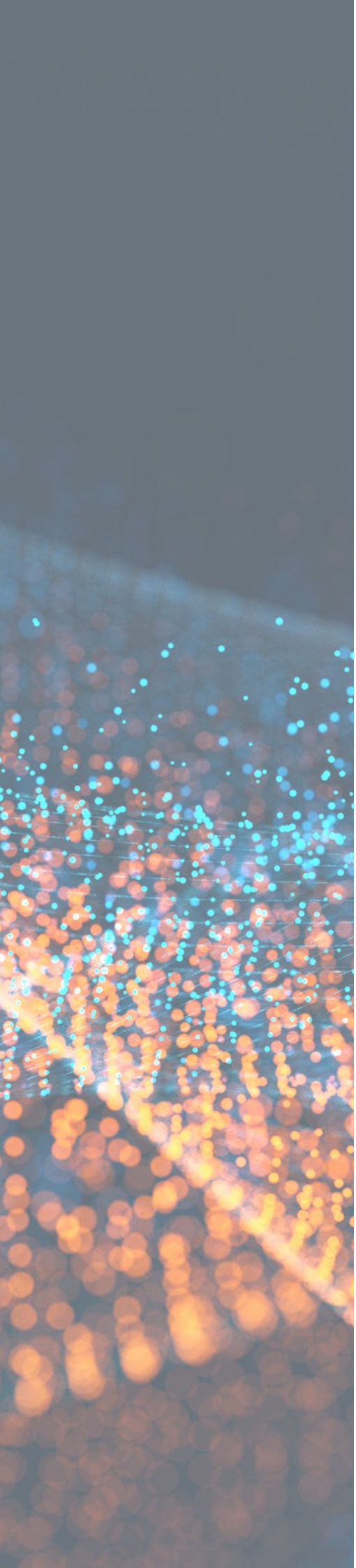
Jada Balster,
head of international marketing,
Adobe Workfront



Steffen Drucks,
global head of marketing operations & data analytics,
Atos



Becky Skiles,
CMO,
Deloitte Digital



Foreword



David Rowlands,
senior editor,
B2B Marketing

Over the last few years, the number of solutions available on the market to help marketers collect data has skyrocketed. At the same time, marketers are now running campaigns through more channels than ever before, collecting data at an increasing number of touchpoints. As if that weren't enough, the average buying team has also grown in size, injecting further complexity still.

The result is that marketers have a universe of data at their fingertips – data that could help them demonstrate attribution of ROI to marketing spend (which, for the majority, is a mere pipe dream), obtain a 360-degree view of their customers, and know when and where to engage these customers. Ultimately, the data is there for marketers to become data-driven.

However, due to the number of channels and data types, complexity around buying teams, and issues like legacy software, this universe of data is often scattered across numerous silos. Ultimately, this makes it difficult for marketers to access, understand and act upon this data in any meaningful way. When this is done, it is usually through a herculean effort, involving hours of manual labour and late nights.

Thus, a solution is needed. The solution is to build a partnership between IT and marketing, and move all these data onto a single cloud solution. Doing so allows marketers to access all of their data easily, thus helping them to make sense of it and act upon it.

With that in mind this report will outline the issues faced by marketers seeking to become truly data-driven, and will introduce the solution. Read on to learn more...

Becoming data-driven in B2B marketing



Karen Beaune,
VP international marketing,
Snowflake

It's a mandate today for every marketing department to be data leaders in their organisation. With mountains of data being created every second, from sales to IoT, marketing has a unique vantage point into the needs of customers and the health of the business. However, with data growing and spreading across ever-increasing numbers of SaaS solutions and data silos, it can feel like a never-ending struggle to deliver insights from data.

Heavy is the head that wears the data-leader crown

This report contains a synthesis of the challenges faced today by marketers. From data silos to increasing customer expectations and growing business model complexity, one would not be blamed for giving up on the data-driven mission. However, we are seeing that the leading marketers of tomorrow are facing this challenge head on, becoming more data savvy, and not passing up the opportunity to drive change and sustainable growth.

Every mountain is climbed one step at a time

This report also contains a view of the future – one that is achieved through practical steps and widely available technology. Marketing leaders know they can't let perfection get in the way of progress. Read on to hear how they are leveraging the data cloud to build 360° views of customers, enhance measurement of marketing spend, and engage customers with rich personalisation.

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together

Finally, these outcomes are not achieved by chance… and not by marketing alone. Take warning to ensure your digital transformation doesn't become a never-ending project. It takes a partnership across marketing and IT. Armed with the combination of aligned business outcomes and deep technical knowledge, this partnership is driving material change.

The research is clear. The path towards data-driven transformation requires strong leadership, best-in-class technology and strong partnerships across the business and IT. We hope you find this resource helpful along your journey.

Introduction

No matter which team or department you work in, it's highly likely that data dictates at least part of your job. For marketing, this reliance increases tenfold.

We're all well aware of the common stats thrown around, telling us X quintillion bytes of data are generated every second. It's often an inconceivable number (what does quintillion mean, after all?), and the daunting – yet equally exciting – truth is that it's showing no sign of slowing.

This is because there are now more channels available than ever before, meaning marketers are collecting data across an increasing number of touchpoints. As if that weren't enough, the average buying team has also increased, adding further complexity to the equation.

Of course, where there's a problem, there exists a solution. And, as in many cases, technology represents the saving grace for many marketers trying to make sense of the vast swathes of data they're collecting on a daily basis. The martech sector has exploded in recent years, yet each new piece of technology poses the risk of creating an extra isolated silo, another application to integrate into their existing stack, another obstacle marketers have to overcome.

After all, each brand faces its own set of unique challenges when it comes to data and its inherent silos, but marketing's primary objectives are broadly similar: to demonstrate attribution of ROI to marketing spend; to generate more complete pictures of their customers; and to use those insights to create better, more personalised experiences that engage people in the right place and at the right time.

Yet, when it comes to technology, martech has, for too long, been viewed in isolation – a separate piece of technology, not always integrated into the rest of the marketing stack. That's why the solution to creating a truly data-driven marketing approach – and to eliminate the silos between IT and marketing once and for all – is using technology that can house all that disparate data in a centralised hub, so marketers can make sense of it (and use it) in one single location.

But what's stopping them for realising this ambition?

SECTION 1

Four potential reasons B2B marketers are failing to realise their data-driven dreams

1.1 Increase in customer touchpoints equals higher expectations

Before, during and after purchase: from social media to online ads, customer reviews to press releases, and community management to company websites – the sheer number of customer touchpoints now available can prove intimidating to even the most seasoned marketer.

After all, the modern B2B customer journey is no longer a linear affair – it's an extensive and complex process that can span months (or even years) and comprise multiple decision-makers. But the positive attitude among many marketers is that more touchpoints equals more data – an opportunity, rather than a hindrance.

"Rather than getting overwhelmed by the complexity, marketers should look at each touchpoint as an opportunity to gain additional insight into their customers and how they interact with different content," says Steffen Drucks, global head of marketing operations & data analytics, Atos.

Jada Balster, head of international marketing at Adobe Workfront agrees, arguing that more data, when used correctly, will invariably lead to a more customised and personalised customer experience. The problem, she says, is that marketers haven't yet worked out how to embrace and integrate all their data, due to the fragmented nature of their incumbent marketing systems and workflows.

For Jada, the solution lies in data consolidation. "By embracing a single source of truth, a data platform through which all sources of information are parsed, marketers will have better access to granular insights, and be able to build smarter campaigns that foster loyalty with their customers."

You'd think that an increase in touchpoints would result in more understanding from a customer perspective, but it couldn't be further from the truth. People's expectations are higher than ever before, and they demand a smooth experience that seamlessly transcends channels and devices.

As Tony Lamb, Propolis Hive expert for Data Strategy, Insights & Intelligence, explains: "In our multichannel comms world, business people, rightfully, want to be treated as an individual. Their expectation of what a good experience looks like is held to the highest standards by the likes of Google and Amazon. That's what they expect – whether you buy something on your phone, via a website, or physically in a shop, people expect a unified view of how their data is being used."

1.2 More martech tools providing different forms of data

Like most industries, marketing is no stranger to the relentless march of technology and digital disruption currently dominating our world.

A new piece of martech emerges seemingly every week, solving a new data issue that's arisen. Often, this new piece of technology is difficult to integrate into a business' existing tech stack, another silo suddenly appears, and friction between departments (namely IT and marketing) grows.

According to Jada, this disparity and difficulty in analysing big data, results from companies operating with multiple, fragmented data systems. "They [companies] are all working in silos, and possibly contradicting each other," she says. "Analysing vast amounts of data requires cross-department cooperation, so that big data is effectively processed and actioned, but this can be a challenge to achieve when individual departments each have their own goals and focuses that may not be aligned with the enterprise as a whole."

For Steffen, the basis for analysing and making sense of data requires marketers to answer a rather basic question. "Marketers need to ask themselves which element of their technology stack will be able to combine and collate all the different data sources to get a more complete picture of the data and, ultimately, the customer."

Becky Skiles, CMO, Deloitte Digital, adds: "In B2B organisations it's quite often the sales teams that have the credibility around 'knowing the customer', but data gives marketers the opportunity to provide fact-based insight into the approach the organisation should take to its customers. According to Deloitte's UK CMO survey, accelerating the move to digital platforms and technologies is the leading priority for marketing leaders in the 12 months ahead. What's more, our research shows that CMOs are prizing analytical skills over creativity within their teams. Digital skills are now vital for marketers and teams must be confident in their abilities, as well as collaborative in their approach, to projects. Modern marketeers face an incredible challenge- it's not enough to be brilliantly creative, you also have to be analytical and technical as well."

1.3. Purchase group size continues to grow

Of course, not all of the blame for data complexity can be laid at marketing's door. It's an issue that's also compounded by their buyers. The size of the average decision-making group has risen exponentially in recent years, giving marketers even more data to wrestle with.

Furthermore, there's the issue of parent companies, subsidiaries, sister companies and the like.

"It's still very easy to confuse customer profiles, with something as simple as a shared name. We still see this happen often and it can create chaos," explains Tony. "A key consideration should really be about data input, and trying to standardise as much of your data as possible during that initial input stage. That way, you don't have to cope with spelling mistakes, or repetitions. It makes the matching process a lot easier."

After all, marketers will often unwittingly find themselves wasting time, money and resource on flooding completely unqualified people with content, when that person has absolutely no say in the decision-making process.

What's more, it's certainly not that target's responsibility to notify the brand that this communication is pointless – how many of us have ignored irrelevant emails, even if it may be relevant to someone a little further up the food chain, or in a different department?

The solution to this is twofold – more detailed customer profiles that use higher-quality data to calculate whether someone is a decision-maker or not and, secondly, an automated process that will flag when a target has consistently ignored comms. Don't leave the onus on the target to personally respond; people just don't have the time for that.

For Steffen, an important thing to remember is that we're not perfect – it's important to acknowledge that not every interaction will follow a perfectly formulated, data-driven journey. "For me, the key is to be proactive to minimise the potential for failure," he says. "Rather than being reactive and waiting for that bounced email or missed conversion, we should apply rules of good data hygiene, map out account hierarchies and conduct regular refreshes using internal and/or external intelligence. After all, your data is one of your most valuable assets, so you want to make sure you invest enough resources to manage the volume and complexity in order to stay on top of it, and therefore be able to provide a relevant, personalised customer experience."

SECTION 2

Product usage data and subscription models: A help or hindrance?

Product usage data (e.g. customer behaviour such as logins, clicks and actions) represents an important way for marketers to measure objectives like customer success, retention likelihood, next best action to renew, upsell, or reduce churn.

Yet, as with other considerations, such as more customer touchpoints, it could be argued that increased availability of usage data and the growing importance of subscription models, is making marketers' lives more difficult when trying to become data-driven.

According to Steffen, the combination of usage data and subscription models is actually accelerating the traditional sales cycle, by adding more emphasis to the concept of customer success and centricity. "From a seller's perspective, we can look at usage or IoT data as early indicators of customer success to pre-empt customer satisfaction," he says. "At this stage, marketing becomes the internal advocate of the customer and can facilitate conversations between multiple stakeholders to identify the root causes for low usage or adoption and how they can best be tackled – whether that's by R&D, sales, or marketing teams."

Tony agrees that the subscription model represents the future of more customer-centric marketing, and that usage data can add immense value here. "There's so much choice out there, so if you provide bad customer service, it's very easy for your customers to go elsewhere," he says. "If you have a subscription-based model, you possess so many data points on usage, that you've got no excuse for failing to add value to that relationship, to keep them loyal and coming back for more – as opposed to flogging them something and then disappearing."

From a customer perspective, a subscription model is more attractive because it provides flexibility and added value. Given this, if marketers are serious about becoming completely customer centric, then it makes sense that usage data and subscription models should be a serious consideration.



SECTION 3

Smashing down data silos once and for all

The common theme underlying all the above obstacles is a lack of data integration and overabundance of silos, preventing marketers from either accessing all that data being collected by various pieces of tech, or being unable to make best use of the insights available to them.

With all that complexity – whether it's increased customer touchpoints, channels, devices or martech solutions on offer – data silos are bound to emerge. That's why it's so critical to establish a resting place for access to all customer data, which is actually capable of enabling marketers to get a 360-degree view of their customers.

Fortunately, the emergence of cloud data and centralised storage hubs – accessible anytime and anywhere – is providing marketers with a solution to wrestle back control of their data, enabling a more detailed, 360-degree view of each and every customer.

As Jada explains: "A system where all data is centralised removes fragmented knowledge, broken workflows and work in silos, meaning marketers can more effectively access and implement the findings produced from their analytical tools."

Tony agrees, saying the cloud data trend will only increase due to its widespread benefits. "A lot of companies are seeing the advantages of taking their data to the cloud," says Tony. "It's extendable, third-party managed, and just generally, a whole lot easier."

As Jada explains: "A system where all data is centralised removes fragmented knowledge, broken workflows and work in silos, meaning marketers can more effectively access and implement the findings produced from their analytical tools."

SECTION 4

Bringing IT and marketing together

Adoption of new technology is bread and butter for most marketing teams, yet this can sometimes cause friction between marketing and IT departments. A strong relationship between these two entities is paramount to achieving competitive advantage, especially considering the increased pressure both teams are under to drive a more customer-centric approach.

As Jada explains: "CMOs are being pressed to intimately understand their customers, their respective behaviours, and translate that into customer experiences that improve the relationship between the brand and consumer. Marketing already works closely with IT teams to build their martech stacks, but, as that ecosystem and our need for data grows, marketers who fail to adapt to this new technological era will not survive."

Similarly, IT teams are under considerable pressure to ensure every new piece of tech or application is safe, secure and compliant. For Steffen, trust is the primary building block for a better relationship between the two departments. "Considering the number of integrations, the volume and sensitivity of the data involved when setting up a cloud data platform, it's vital to establish a good working relationship and build trust between marketing and IT," he says. "Strong cross-departmental collaboration is needed to integrate and maintain all the various pieces of martech into the data platform and establish inbound and outbound data feeds in a secure and compliant way."

Marketing already works closely with IT teams to build their martech stacks, but, as that ecosystem and our need for data grows, marketers who fail to adapt to this new technological era will not survive

Becky adds: "At its core, marketing leaders must be proactive in collaborating with digital teams, if they are separate. This collaboration has to be all the way through a programme, to ensure they are consulting on the opportunities, and potential risks, from day one. However, this will likely require a mindset shift for most CMOs, who may be more used to working in more siloed teams. This is especially true when comparing CMOs with their executive peers: According to Deloitte research, while other executives routinely identified collaboration as a top skill, CMOs tend to prioritise it lower than the rest of the c-suite."

SECTION 5

Three ways cloud data will propel marketing to the next level

5.1 Proving marketing attribution

The perennial challenge for marketers, particularly in B2B circles, is actually proving their hard work and effort is paying off and demonstrably benefiting the wider business.

According to Steffen, cloud data storage is a great way for marketers looking to really get a handle on attribution and become data-driven and efficient with their budget, by bringing together structured and unstructured data to break down silos that have emerged. "This allows marketers to gain deeper insight and forms the basis for applying different kinds of attribution models," he says. "This information, in turn, helps you to make better decisions about how and where to invest your marketing budget."

Crucially, however, Steffen adds that: "technology is only one part of the equation. Organisations require the right skills and talent to interpret the data and formulate strategies and actions as a result of the additional insight."

Tony agrees, claiming that marketing's value doesn't exclusively hinge on cloud data storage, but more data storage in general, and whether you're actually able to access and efficiently use that data. Of course, the cloud provides that conduit for data storage, but Tony is quick to point out that it can't connect every dot.

"During my time working data services at the Royal Mail, the big question from sales was always: 'what is direct mail doing to drive revenue?'," he says. "This was often because a customer would receive something physical through their letterbox, and then log onto the Royal Mail website, meaning there was no direct link between the cause and the action."

However, Tony adds that if you're focusing on multiple digital channels, then efficient data storage makes it easier to map the customer journey and build better profiles. "As long as you can identify the customer at some point, it becomes infinitely easier to prove marketing's value," he says. "Say, for example, a customer receives an SMS message, and then follows a link and purchases via the website or mobile app – that's where good data storage and hygiene proves its value."

5.2. Segmentation? Sorted

One of the biggest draws of owning a centralised data house is that it allows marketers to segment their audience based on a number of variables, such as their specific stage on the customer journey, the way they engage with the brand, their general behaviour, and much more.

And, as Steffen explains, the cloud is key to this. "The data cloud's technology further allows marketers to unify and augment data sets across channels to understand patterns in their data," he says. "That, ultimately, helps to better segment customer into more homogenous groups, whether it's within one account or across different accounts and/or industries."

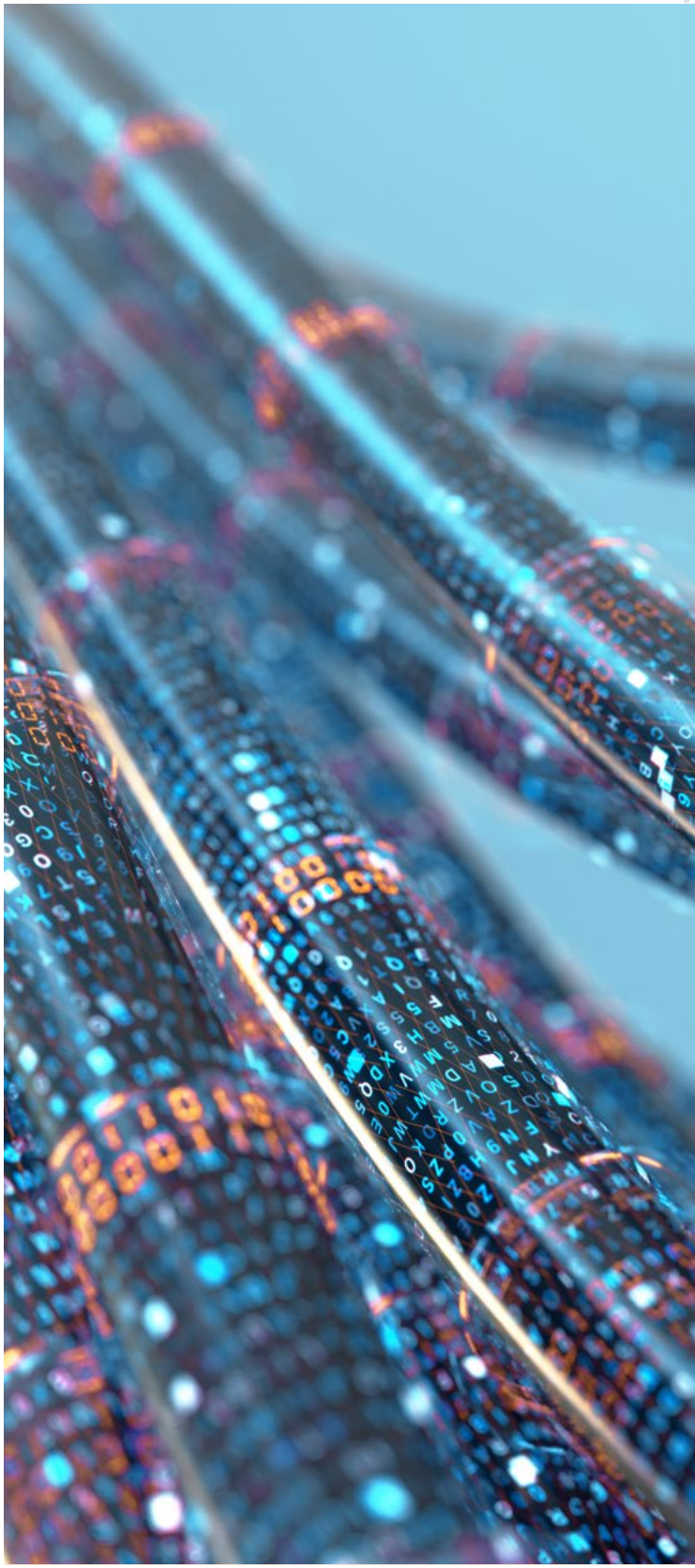
For Tony, those groups can be broad and varied, but the success is the same. "Once you've started to integrate all your sources of data, you can then start to understand who's spending most, who you want to keep and lose, who's buying what, and which product is most successful," he says. "This will invariably lead to higher returns than if you're just communicating a generic message to everybody."

5.3. Power to the personalisation

Of course, separating customers and prospects into segments is only half the job – these clusters still require the personalisation treatment, no matter their stage of the customer journey. Ultimately, this will help B2B marketers evolve from a one-size-fits-all approach to one that's highly-personalised and highly likely to drive repeat custom and long-lasting customer loyalty.

For Jada, good personalisation boils down to a marketer's ability to put themselves in the shoes of their customers, and data is key to achieving this. "Data allows marketers to understand the different needs customers have, the ways they want to interact, and the products they're interested in," she says. "This can all lead to a more personal and unique customer journey that fosters loyalty and enjoyment."

But, as Jada is quick to point out: "In order to develop those experiences, marketers must first translate the many sources of data they have in front of them into a customised picture. That's why cloud-based martech is so important in the data-first approach; it allows marketing teams to integrate the right data from every touchpoint into the marketing decision-making process."



SECTION 6

Cloud-based martech: The centrepiece of the modern marketing tech stack

In many ways, marketing's data-driven aspirations create a self-fulfilling prophecy. Higher quality data will lead to more detailed segments, which will result in better personalisation, thus improving the customer experience, increasing campaign effectiveness and, ultimately, generating further proof that marketing is having a tangible impact on business revenue. And, of course, more accurate marketing attribution will boost budgets, resource and people power, allowing the cycle to start again, but this time with even better data and an even better understanding of the customer.

For many marketers, the issues preventing them from realising these data-driven goals are attitudinal. The primary obstacles cited by many marketers, such as the explosion of customer touchpoints and channels, should be treated as opportunities, rather than stumbling blocks – opportunities to get to know your customers better, and engage with them in more personalised, authentic ways.

"For a global, mobile workforce, access to data through cloud-based applications is a great option to enable data driven marketing. It gives teams the opportunity to access client insight in real-time, and to collaborate with others in real-time too, which has become increasingly important as businesses navigate through new ways of working."

"Of course this has to start with gaining a clear overview of the customer journey," Becky continues. "However, as this gets obstructed with the decline of third-party cookies, brands may look to cloud-based customer data platforms that capture and analyse customer behaviour. These platforms capture omnichannel data to map the entire customer journey and enable brands to focus their marketing efforts towards the right audience, in the right places, at the right time."

Of course, for all this to work, you need a way to aggregate all that data in one place and eliminate the data silos that have been holding back marketing for years. For this reason, cloud technology serves as the great enabler. As Steffen puts it: "Data cloud technology provides the flexibility to easily connect disparate data sources and bring them together in a structured way – it's the centrepiece of the modern marketing technology stack."

The primary obstacles cited by many marketers, such as the explosion of customer touchpoints and channels, should be treated as opportunities, rather than stumbling blocks

About

B2B Marketing and Propolis

Powered by the community, for the community.

Established in 2004, B2B Marketing is now the number one go-to resource for B2B marketers across the globe.

Right from the start, we had a clear mission that remains as strong and clear today: to provide marketers at business brands with the tools, insight and inspiration they need to grow and succeed – as both individuals and businesses.

To do this, we need to continually evolve to make sure we are delivering what you need.

This is why Propolis was born – our exclusive community for B2B marketers.

We're proud to serve as the focal point for the B2B marketing sector, and to be a force for greater connectivity, enabling marketers and leaders to share experiences and learn from one another.

b2bmarketing.net
propolis.b2bmarketing.net

info@b2bmarketing.net
+44 (0)20 7014 4920

B2B Marketing

Snowflake

Thousands of organisations, including 180 of Fortune 500 companies, use Snowflake's Data Cloud to unite siloed data, discover and securely share data, and execute diverse analytic workloads. Wherever data or users live, the Data Cloud delivers a single data experience that spans multiple clouds and geographies. Snowflake's platform is the engine that powers and provides access to the Data Cloud, creating a solution for data warehousing, data lakes, data engineering, data science, data application development and data sharing. Join Snowflake customers, partners, and data providers already taking their businesses to new frontiers in the Data Cloud.

Learn more at snowflake.com.

snowflake®

B2B Marketing

Intelligence • Connection • Development

Contact us

B2B Marketing
Westgate House
9 Holborn
London
EC1N 2LL

b2bmarketing.net
info@b2bmarketing.net
Tel: +44 (0)20 7014 4920

snowflake®

snowflake.com