

sitecore®

white paper

The Top Seven Success Factors for Optimizing the Customer Experience With a CXM Platform:

The Digital Marketer's Perspective

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Taking Full Advantage of a Customer Experience Management Platform

While marketers are sold on the benefits of integrated marketing for driving customer engagement and delivering a seamless customer experience, they soon find they can't execute the strategy effectively with their existing, disparate set of marketing tools.

That's why marketing organizations are turning to a centralized platform to enable true integrated marketing and a cohesive, excellent customer experience. A recent study sums it up nicely: McKinsey reported that marketers are looking to implement an enterprise-scale platform that will deliver greater customer insight so they can tailor digital experiences that inspire engagement, loyalty, and advocacy.[1]

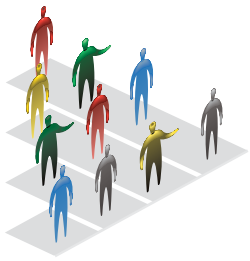
Too Many Tools

In a 2012 Marketing Tools Study, 33 percent of U.S. marketing professionals reported using 5 to 6 different tools to manage a single campaign. More than a quarter (29 percent) of respondents used 3 or 4 tools, while 15 percent used 7 to 9 tools, and 13 percent relied on **10 or more different tools to manage a single campaign.** No wonder then, that 1 in 10 marketers said that their biggest marketing goal for the year was to work more efficiently with their vendors or find a single vendor with a "one-stop-shop" digital platform solution.[2]

But you can't successfully deploy an all-in-one, customer experience management (CXM) platform the same way you would approach a point solution designed to solve a discrete, tactical problem. Nor can you expect a new platform to integrate your internal processes and departments for you. Instead, to be successful with integrated marketing, you need to manage internal expectations and plan for the organizational and strategic changes you'll need to make to take full advantage of your new core system and realize the benefits of optimizing the customer experience.

This white paper discusses the key factors — from a digital marketer's perspective — for successfully optimizing the customer experience with a platform that centralizes your web, email, social, and other channels into one integrated, cross-channel command center.

Success Factor #1: Understand the Benefits of a CXM Platform



Whether you are in the process of looking for or deploying a new CXM platform or want to improve your usage of an existing system, the first place to start is to understand what barriers are keeping your organization from achieving true, multichannel integrated marketing. Then figure out the benefits of removing those barriers — either through new technology or organizational changes or both — and use those benefits to guide your selection of a CXM platform.

1. "The Digital Marketing Platform: The Future of CXM," David Nickelson, *CMS Wire*, January 23, 2012
2. "Marketing Tools Study 2012," PointRoll and Kelton Research, March 27, 2012

Typical technology barriers include:

- Disjointed, manual processes to manage content and digital assets
- Lack of a customer-centric view across channels
- Siloed tools designed for only one channel
- Poor support for campaign management and optimization
- No or few localization/multilingual capabilities

A robust, comprehensive CXM platform can overcome these technology barriers and others to help you achieve a comprehensive, unified engagement strategy that drives more conversions, creates greater customer loyalty, and increases lifetime customer value.

Success Factor #2: Start Making an Organizational Shift Now



While a new CXM platform can remove technology barriers to integrated marketing success, you will also need to identify and address organizational barriers. Your organization needs to be aligned to take advantage of the new technology and the benefits of integrated marketing that it can bring.

Starting now, even before a new platform is deployed, you need to structure your organization to plan and execute multichannel campaigns collaboratively. Consider creating cross-functional teams to share information and brainstorm marketing strategies. The point is to break down the silos between departments and responsibilities and refocus the team around the customer experience.

You also need to rethink objectives and align them across departments and groups to encourage this greater collaboration. You may even need to change budget allocations and authority to focus not on specific campaigns, but on larger objectives such as customer engagement and satisfaction.

> A CMO Global Marketing Readiness Study reported that 56 percent of marketers agree that coordination between digital and traditional marketing teams is more challenging than five years ago — silos and a lack of coordination are getting worse just as the need for collaboration is becoming greater.[3]

Apply these organizational changes to your current marketing efforts, adapting current processes and creating new ones to support the shift to integrated marketing. Focus on processes that foster collaboration and enable your teams to listen and learn in every channel and then apply that insight across all your channels.

3. "Five Challenges for Tomorrow's Global Marketing Leaders: Study," Freddie Laker and Hilding Anderson, Forbes, August 21, 2012

Success Factor #3: Prepare Team Members for Their New Roles and Responsibilities



As a follow-on to the organizational changes you've made to align with integrated marketing principles, you may need to make significant changes in the roles and responsibilities of marketing team members. These changes will reinforce your team members' focus on the total customer experience rather than individual channels or campaigns.

In addition to adapting organizational roles and responsibilities, you will also need to define how team members will use the new platform. While everyone is excited about using the new platform to drive meaningful customer interactions and increase conversions, they need to understand exactly what their areas of responsibilities will be. For example, you need to define who will be content editors, who will have publishing rights, who will be responsible for monitoring and tracking, and so on.

You also need to spend time preparing team members for working collaboratively and across channels and disciplines. Help them see the value in having a unified view of the customer and the impact that visibility can have on their marketing success. Also give staff members incentives and goals to reinforce this new way of working together. Don't forget to invest in the appropriate training to help staff get up to speed quickly on the new platform and learn how it can help them in their new roles.

Finally, keep the stress of change more manageable by starting small and not planning the biggest campaign of the year as the test case for your new system.

Success Factor #4: Recognize the Importance of Integration and Collaboration



Your CXM platform will play a central role in your enterprise ecosystem. This means your platform — and your department — need to integrate with many parts of the business beyond the marketing organization — including IT, sales, product development, customer service, and others involved in the customer lifecycle.

For instance, marketing needs to work closely with IT in selecting, deploying, and utilizing the CXM platform to maximize effectiveness. Forrester reports that mature practitioners of integrated marketing are also more likely to collaborate with sales to set goals and execute programs.[4] View this as an opportunity to align with other departments, with marketing taking a leadership role in driving a seamless, exceptional customer experience.

> In its 2012 Global CEO Study, IBM found that more than 70 percent of CEOs are seeking a better understanding of individual customer needs and improved responsiveness.[5]

4. "The Multichannel Maturity Mandate," Forrester Consulting, May 2012
5. "Leading Through Connections: 2012 Global CEO Study," IBM, 2012

Your CXM platform should also integrate with core systems such as your customer relationship management (CRM) software, ad-serving software, video streaming application, and any other system that would benefit from sharing customer data across the enterprise or automate components of the customer experience.

For instance, integrating with your CRM system lets you automatically deliver actionable data on prospects and customers to the sales team. Work with your IT team and other departments to evaluate where your company can streamline processes and improve the customer experience by automating integration with your new platform. And be prepared to work hand-in-hand with IT to define which information should be synchronized with other systems.

With this level of collaboration, you'll improve alignment between marketing and other departments, improve the effectiveness of campaigns, and lay the groundwork for a better return on marketing investment.

Success Factor #5: Optimize the Experience to Optimize Results



The power of a robust CXM platform is the real-time insight you can gain into the needs and behaviors of individual customers and customer segments. You can take this insight and use it to personalize the experience, delivering relevant, timely content and interaction. This predictive personalization should be a core capability within your new CXM platform.

Specifically, your CXM platform should enable you to maximize personalization and marketing results by:

- Centralizing collection and storage of data about your prospects and customers, including: interest level, keywords used, preferences, behaviors, needs, wants, patterns of usage, and more
- Allowing you to model and automate scenarios for which content or offer to present next in the relationship based on the data collected about the customer
- Supporting A/B split testing and multivariate testing to help you optimize your efforts

Hopefully, A/B split testing and multivariate testing are already commonly deployed in your organization. An all-in-one platform doesn't change the need to conduct tests. On the contrary, now you can do more testing and do it better because instead of optimizing just one aspect or channel, you can optimize the entire customer experience.

By optimizing the customer experience in every way that you can — including the use of personalization — you can drive deeper engagement, improve conversions, and accelerate the buying cycle.

Success Factor #6: Rethink How You Measure Marketing Performance



Similar to realigning your organization's objectives and goals, you need to realign the way you measure success with an integrated marketing strategy and a focus on the entire customer experience. You have to start thinking in terms of customer engagement and measuring the customer experience rather than simply measuring the number of clicks, opens, downloads, and likes.

Your CXM platform should give you the ability to correlate the effectiveness and value of your marketing efforts across all channels. Specifically you need to gain intelligence into the interplay between touchpoints and channels that will let you optimize the experience. For marketers who have been challenged to show return on investment, this will mean finally being able to demonstrate success in terms that executives will find meaningful.

> According to a study by Forrester, 77 percent of marketers agree they will drive more sales and profit by evolving into an effective multichannel organization.[6]

While this capability is central to the success of your integrated marketing strategy, it does require a change of thinking for the marketing department. It means taking a cross-functional, cross-channel view that looks at all touchpoints in the customer buying journey and defines the value to the organization of each touchpoint. Then you can measure and track engagement value by individual customer or segments of customers. This way you're moving from simply measuring volume to measuring and understanding engagement for a more effective way to ensure you're optimizing the customer experience.

Success Factor #7: Be Global in Scope



Does your company have a presence in other markets or will it soon? If so, you'll need to think about the global customer experience and how to optimize it as well when you deploy your CXM platform. This means that your platform must be fluent in global marketing — from support for multilingual online channels to content editing tools that speak your local, in-country marketing teams' languages.

To be successful in deploying your platform beyond your own country, you can take the cross-functional team concept you use for integrated marketing and extend it to create cross-regional teams that collaborate and communicate to optimize the global customer experience. But one thing is certain: to ensure consistency of the customer experience across all the markets your company serves, you'll want to maintain control of the core components of the customer experience centrally. At the same time, you'll want to allow local marketers to customize content and capabilities specific to their markets' needs.

> A recent Millward Brown study found that 75% of senior marketers found it challenging to cope with the diversity of "global consumers" that also have strong regional subcultures.[7]

6. "The Multichannel Maturity Mandate," Forrester Consulting, May 2012
7. "Five Challenges for Tomorrow's Global Marketing Leaders: Study," Freddie Laker and Hilding Anderson, Forbes, August 21, 2012

For all these reasons, international companies will require a CXM platform that enables them to:

- Manage and deploy an unlimited number of websites from a single installation
- Customize workflow processes for versioning, approvals, incremental publishing, notifications, and archiving
- Easily integrate with professional translation services
- Control who can manage sites in the staging environment
- Provide a user interface for your CXM that is not only intuitive, but also available in major global languages such as French, Chinese, and Russian
- Monitor performance across all sites

Deploying the Right CXM Platform

While your success will ultimately depend on how you handle the success factors reviewed in this paper plus other factors unique to your company, you can give your organization the best possible chance for success by starting with the right technology. This means migrating from siloed, one-channel-only tools to a platform that unifies channels, campaigns, information, and performance measurement into one powerful integrated marketing tool.

Anjali Yakkundi, a researcher at Forrester Research, says: "By now, everyone knows that engaging and dynamic customer experiences are a key competitive advantage, and 'business as usual' will no longer suffice to support these engaging digital experiences. From a technology standpoint, the key to success will be integrated, best-of-breed customer experience management (CXM) solutions."[8]

More Resources on customer experience management

Forrester Study: The Multichannel Maturity Mandate

Personalization? It's Easy

Five Ways to Demonstrate Clear ROI

By choosing a CXM platform that delivers a single view of a customer, you can deliver exceptional customer experiences that turn your prospects into customers and your customers into brand advocates.

About Sitecore

Sitecore is a global software company that creates products to deliver the most relevant experience and content to customers at any moment of interaction and via any communications channel — the web, email, mobile, social and offline. Our customer experience management platform combines proven web content management with customer intelligence to create a single view of a customer that drives meaningful interactions, increases conversions and builds lifetime customers. Global brands, including American Express, Carnival Cruise Lines, easyJet, Heineken, LEGO, Microsoft, and Nestle rely on Sitecore to get and keep loyal customers who engage more and drive revenue growth.

8. "The Revival of Digital Asset Management," Anjali Yakkundi, DestinationCRM, May 18, 2012