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Marketing Cloud

Four Keys to Marketing Success in the Attention Economy

How B2C marketers can break through the noise and win customers

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Welcome to the Attention Economy

This is not an easy time to be a B2C marketer. First, many companies—especially retailers—are directly competing against Amazon, the omnipresent online force whose annual revenue in 2019 was $280.52 billion.[1] Second, almost every company in almost every sector faces the threat of innovative startups seeking to reinvent and conquer whole industries. We have already seen how these digital startups have upended established sectors such as music (Spotify), transportation (Uber), and hospitality (Airbnb).

Of course, B2C marketers also face another daunting challenge: being able to capture the attention of today's distracted consumer. The consumer predicament confronting marketers today was partly foreseen by Nobel Prize laureate Herbert A. Simon nearly 50 years ago when he introduced the idea of the attention economy. Simon theorized that "In an information-rich world, the wealth of information means a dearth of something else: a scarcity of whatever it is that information consumes. What information consumes is rather obvious: It consumes the attention of its recipients." Simon's theory of the attention economy is universally accepted.

However, the information-rich world of 1971—a world of snail mail, daily newspapers, and a handful of major network TV stations—pales in comparison to the endless flow of information that now streams across a consumer's phone, computer, and wristwatch screens every day. In the current attention economy—one in which a Facebook mobile user typically devotes 1.7 seconds to a piece of content—your challenge as a B2C marketer is to deeply understand your consumers and capture their attention by delivering the right message, in the right channel, at the right time.[2]

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The Modern, Distracted Consumer

The internet has made it possible for everyone with a computing device and an internet connection to post content—and lots of it. As a result, B2C companies in the retail, travel, hospitality, and other sectors are competing for consumers' attention against not only each other but everyone who has a smartphone and a propensity for sharing. This competition in today's attention economy ranges from family members who regularly blog or post videos of their favorite cat or dog to publicity-hungry celebrities like Selena Gomez—with 169 million followers on Instagram.

How steep is the competition for a consumer's attention?

From 2019, here is an abbreviated summary of the activity that occurred online during a single minute:

Email:

188 million emails are sent[3]

Text messages:

18.1 million texts are sent[3]

Facebook and WhatsApp:

41.6 million messages are sent[3]

Twitter:

87,500 tweets are posted

YouTube:

4.5 million videos are watched[3]

Snapchat:

2.1 million Snaps are created[3]

Netflix:

694,444 hours of video are watched[3]

Tinder:

1.4 million profiles are swiped[3]

The end result is that your marketing team can devote weeks to conceptualizing, developing, producing, and posting an expensive, amazingly clever campaign video, but many viewers will dismiss it in less time than it takes for a tween to send a text.

Four Keys to B2C Marketing in a Multiscreen World

People encounter marketing messages everywhere, all the time. And they move around a lot—90 percent jump from screen to screen sequentially.[4] So, in order to succeed in this attention economy, you need to capture their interest with relevant, contextual, cross-channel messages. As a result, businesses of all sizes have embraced marketing automation platforms, so their marketing and sales teams can work together on a shared platform to reach consumers and increase their sales both in brick-and-mortar stores, and more importantly, online.

Marketing automation platforms are rightfully heralded for their time-saving capabilities. They automate many repetitive manual tasks for email campaigns, web forms, and landing pages, thereby letting your marketing team be more efficient, productive, and strategic.

Furthermore, marketing automation makes it easier for marketing and sales to collaborate on essential revenue-promoting tasks such as improving customer loyalty, analyzing marketing ROI, cross-selling and upselling, and generating, nurturing, and scoring sales leads.

90%
of consumers jump from screen to screen sequentially.[4]

Most notably, marketing automation provides B2C companies with a proven, cost-effective way to achieve four key consumer marketing goals in today's multiscreen world:

1. Know who your customers are

In sales, you need to understand your customers. However, many marketers possess an incomplete view of their online customers. This is especially surprising because, for many businesses, especially large retailers, their future growth is dependent on online sales, not in-store purchases.

The best marketing automation platforms give companies access to various online and offline sources of data about a customer, including their demographic and behavioral data, so you can create intimate profiles of your customers. This data provides your marketing team with critical data about a customer's shopping preferences (such as mobile vs. laptop or desktop vs. tablet), their purchase history, and their responsiveness to sales promotions.

This customer data is essential for targeting customers with personalized messages— and it pays off: Seven out of 10 consumers prefer content and advertising that is tailored to their personal interests and shopping habits.[5]

2. Deliver personalized experiences across multiple channels

One of the revenue-enhancing strengths of marketing automation is how it empowers marketers to follow customers across email, mobile, web, and social media to deliver personalized, context-aware messages to them with every interaction.

Marketing automation can also help you understand customers' real-time context: You can know where your customers are, what their mood is, and what their needs are, and then provide the right message for that particular moment—automatically. This ability to understand a customer and deliver a personalized experience can be the difference between whether a person makes a purchase or not. An Accenture Interactive survey of 8,000 consumers across North America and Europe found that the majority possess a positive attitude toward personalized offers and services.

- **83 percent are willing to share their data to enable a personalized experience.**[6]

- **Nearly three in four respondents (73 percent) said that a business has never communicated with them online in a way that felt too personalized or invasive.**[6]

- **74 percent would find "living profiles" valuable if used to curate the experiences, offers, and products they recieve.**[6]

91% of respondents are more likely to buy from a retailer who recognizes them, remembers past purchases, and provides relevant recommendations.[6]

3. Be data-savvy

Companies that use data to make informed business decisions possess a competitive advantage over their peers.

B2C companies that have not embraced marketing automation often find themselves at a considerable disadvantage. Their marketing teams often use an assortment of products and services from different vendors, which makes it difficult to collect the totality of data and analyze it as a whole. This siloed customer data makes it difficult, if not impossible, for marketers to realize the holy grail of adaptive marketing, in which they can continually adjust product pitches, sales offers, and marketing messages to a customer's changing needs and desires.

Marketing automation platforms don't suffer from these problems. All of the customer profile data, ad campaign data, and marketing and sales department data is accessible in a single platform. This allows you to measure the performance of messages and adjust them as needed, so an email can be delivered at its ideal time. Marketing automation also lets you measure the outcome of a particular campaign and use that data to plan and optimize future campaigns. Finally, it can support your long-term efforts by demonstrating to the C-suite how marketing has created new sales leads, increased conversions, and boosted revenue.

4. Empower visionary marketing

One of the chief advantages of marketing automation is that it removes many of the repetitive, manual tasks associated with email and other ad campaigns from your daily to-do list. This frees you to spend more time on strategic endeavors, such as using your marketing automation platform to launch creative, attention-grabbing efforts like these:

Welcome campaigns
Once customers sign up for a newsletter or open an account, your marketing automation platform automatically shoots them a welcome email. This gives you an opportunity to tell them more about your company and its products or simply persuade them to start shopping again.

Post-purchase programs
After a purchase, marketing automation lets you immediately connect again with customers and ask them to write a review, share a photo, or purchase another product based on their previous order. These rapid-fire, post-purchase programs are invaluable for cross-selling and upselling.

Reminder campaigns
Everyone needs gentle reminders. Did a customer open a marketing email but not click on the sale link? Marketing automation lets you send a personalized reminder email with an even better deal, remind them about the aforementioned sale's free shipping, and more.

Marketing automation is a proven game-changer for companies that use it intelligently to provide personalized recommendations to customers and develop relationships with them. However, not all marketing automation platforms are equal.

How Oracle Responsys Helps B2C Companies Succeed

Some of the largest, most sophisticated B2C companies in the world rely on Oracle Responsys to help perform mission-critical tasks that drive incremental revenue. In fact, Oracle has more than 50 customers who use Oracle Responsys to deliver more than 1 billion marketing messages, across multiple channels, each year. Translation: that's 2.7 million messages per company per day.

Oracle Responsys outperforms other marketing automation platforms, thanks in part to its six unique, industry-leading capabilities that empower businesses to:

1. Create cross-channel customer experiences with one platform.

Marketers can deliver context-aware, personalized messages to **targeted audiences across multiple channels** and interact with them in near-real-time. Oracle Responsys' Orchestration Canvas provides marketing and sales teams with one shared, intuitive canvas for organizing their cross-channel journeys. Our top 10 customers use Oracle Responsys to deliver more than 5 billion cross-channel messages a year.

2. Drive revenue and relationships with email marketing.

Oracle Responsys provides marketers with a proprietary personalization scripting language that lets them perform deep personalization with very little effort. That means you can **deliver highly personalized emails** at the optimal time to thousands of domains worldwide.

3. Provide a sustainable B2C experience across multiple channels.

If a customer abandons a cart, Oracle Responsys lets marketers immediately trigger **a personalized message**. It performs this and other highly contextualized features, at scale, for millions of people across mobile, email, web, and social media. Its Message Designer tool, for instance, gives you a what-you-see-is-what-you-get editor to create personalized content that can be easily previewed for messaging on different devices.

4. Test email campaigns, then improve them.

One of Oracle Responsys' best **email campaign testing** features is Multivariate Testing, an optimization tool that tests subject lines, "from" names, and email messages for up to eight versions of every email, so you can send the best possible message to your targeted audience. Thanks to Multivariate Testing and other built-in Oracle Responsys tools, our customers' email campaigns have increased their revenue by up to 25 percent.

5. Engage everywhere, but focus on mobile.

Sales are increasingly **moving to mobile**. Oracle Responsys' features like Mobile Push and Rich Push let you deliver personalized push messages that increase engagement and drive mobile revenue. These easy-to-use tools can be deployed without needing to bother IT for app assistance.

6. Analyze and understand your campaigns.

With Oracle Responsys, you can **analyze nearly every aspect of your campaigns, programs, and messages** and improve the content of messages, their frequency and time of delivery, and their chosen channels based on each platform's analytics and reporting capabilities. This lets you deliver the best possible messages to your customers and demonstrate marketing's value. Oracle Responsys' Program Analyze tool enables marketing to measure in-flight campaigns and make adjustments in real-time to produce better results.

Conclusion

Consumers are exposed to thousands of brand messages every day, and you need a marketing automation platform that will help you capture consumers' fleeting attention with the right message, via multiple channels, at the right time.

Marketing automation has proven itself to B2C marketers as being the best solution to this challenge.

B2C marketers who use marketing automation have traditionally gotten more leads, improved their targeting of messages, and enjoyed better conversion rates. They are also able to more easily analyze and measure their marketing campaigns and quickly make adjustments to realize higher returns. The vast majority of successful B2C marketers cite marketing automation as being essential to their success.

Takeaways

1. One of B2C marketers' biggest challenges is capturing the attention of consumers in today's information-rich, multiscreen world.

2. Many marketers possess an incomplete view of their online customers, but marketing automation collects data from multiple sources so you can create intimate profiles of your customers.

3. With this deep understanding of your consumers, you can capture their attention by delivering the right message, in the right channel, at the right time.

4. Marketing automation lets marketing and sales teams work together on a shared platform, so they can reach consumers and increase sales in both brick-and-mortar stores and, more importantly, online.

5. Thanks to marketing automation, marketers are able to follow customers across email, mobile, web, and social media and deliver personalized, context-aware messages to them with every interaction.

6. Marketing automation handles many of the repetitive, manual tasks associated with email and other ad campaigns, so marketers can be more productive and spend their time on strategic endeavors.

About Oracle Marketing Cloud

B2B and B2C marketers use Oracle Marketing Cloud, an integrated portfolio of best-in-class applications, to drive sales, brand, and customer loyalty. OMC offers the industry's richest datasets and most adaptive intelligence so marketers can deliver irresistible, consistent, and connected experiences to customers wherever they are and however they choose to engage. **Visit oracle.com/marketingcloud.**

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Has your company realized the advantages of marketing automation platforms like Oracle Responsys? If not, I highly recommend "4 Keys to Marketing Success in the Attention Economy."Economy."