

SPONSORED BY

überflip

validity

DEMAND GEN[®]
REPORT

SPECIAL REPORT



WHAT'S WORKING IN DIGITAL EXPERIENCES?

MARKETERS TURN TO CUSTOMIZED “LIVE” EXPERIENCES, CHAT,
PODCASTS & OTHER CREATIVE APPROACHES TO ENGAGE BUYERS



Introduction

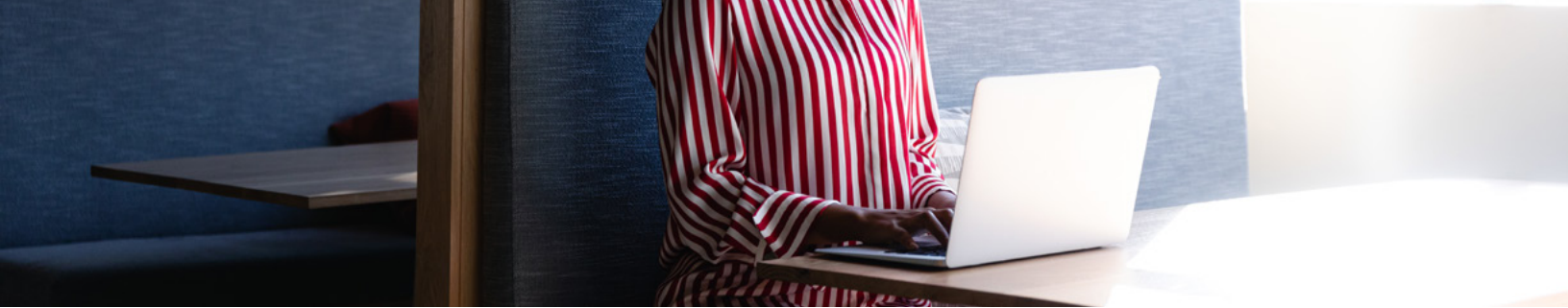
Forced to find creative ways to engage buyers while face-to-face interactions are limited, B2B marketers have doubled down on their digital initiatives. And with B2C digital experiences continuing to raise the bar, B2B brands have had to be increasingly creative on their strategies to meet their buyers and prospects at their preferred time and place.

“People have had to educate themselves on digital experiences at a really rapid rate in order to improve and figure out how they were going to close gaps that they had in their pipeline plans,” said Kate Adams, Senior VP of Marketing at **Validity**, in an interview with *Demand Gen Report*. “How do you create this digital experience that meets the buyer where they are and creates a personalized experience for them?”

As a result, organizations are looking for new tactics to engage their buyers digitally, finding ways to personalize digital experiences for buyers with specific schedules and needs. Many organizations are turning to more intimate online experiences, such as online executive seminars, cooking classes, wine tastings, etc. And by capturing these events digitally, many marketers are finding creative ways to repurpose the “live” events for on-demand viewing. At the same time, with Zoom fatigue setting in, many organizations are looking for ways to offset the drop in digital engagement while reducing their reliance on video calls.

“I’ve talked to companies that are doing bourbon tastings, wine tastings, all of these different things virtually, and are finding success in doing those types of events,” Adams added. “People aren’t as motivated to digitally walk the exhibit hall floor of live events, so marketers are experimenting with new creative ways to create relevant, informative experiences for buyers whenever, and wherever, they are.”

However, many organizations still struggle to deliver digital experiences to their buyers efficiently and effectively. **Research** from **Crownpeak** showed that 87% of B2B organizations struggle with their digital experience management and delivery strategies, resulting in reduced pipeline, loss of buyer engagement and internal strife.



To address this digital gap, many organizations are placing emphasis on organizational agility when managing their digital experiences, focusing on internal collaboration and communication to create newer, more engaging buying experiences quickly and efficiently. By being agile, organizations can create real-time digital engagement with new technologies and strategies such as chat, social media and AI-driven virtual assistants to send automated follow-up emails.

This report will explore the steps organizations are taking to rebuild their digital experiences and strategies for the modern B2B hybrid world, including:

- How collaboration amongst organizational teams can lead to more agile digital experiences;
- The impact of intimate, online digital experiences on buyer engagement;
- How new digital experiences can be repurposed from pre-existing live content; and
- The tools and tactics organizations are leveraging to engage buyers digitally and in real-time.

“People have had to educate themselves on digital experiences at a really rapid rate in order to improve and figure out how they were going to close gaps that they had in their pipeline plans. How do you create this digital experience that meets the buyer where they are and creates a personalized experience for them?”

KATE ADAMS, VALIDITY



Creating Agile Digital Experiences Through Internal Alignment

B2B marketers have had to accelerate the alignment of their internal teams and systems to keep up with shifting buyer schedules and pain points. To do this, many organizations are overhauling their internal technology and planning strategies to create more attentive digital experiences for their buyers.

Hannah Shain, Director of Marketing at **SmartBug Media**, explained that organizations that encourage internal collaboration can be more agile with the data and insights used when creating digital experiences. Marketing, sales and customer experience teams can all leverage the same datasets and feedback from various parts of the organization, allowing them to experiment and plan out their digital experiences more efficiently.

SmartBug Media applies this philosophy to its own organization, holding meetings with all teams present every two weeks to discuss buyer feedback, pitch new ideas for virtual content, discuss potential ideation for clients and more. SmartBug also leverages **HubSpot** to manage its internal and external emails, keeping a constant line of communication between teams and buyers open for seamless engagement. This allows for teams to engage key accounts digitally while providing all teams with the flexibility to adapt to changing buyer needs.

“When we’re planning and just making decisions every two weeks, instead of making decisions for a whole quarter, it gives us this natural cycle of being able to experiment,” Shain explained. “We can test smaller experiences out, plan out larger campaigns and get it done pretty quickly in a week or two weeks. Then we take in feedback from across the organization to learn and iterate from there.”

IBM also heavily relies on internal collaboration to create agile digital experiences, as their multiple departments are responsible for reading and converting first-party data. Ethan Dreilinger, Solution Consultant at IBM, explained that multiple teams leverage data insights to enhance their Watson Advertising capabilities, allowing them to be more informed when working with clients to build digital experiences and engage more customers in more channels.



“There’s a lot of collaboration within IBM, even though it’s such a big company,” Dreilinger explained. “We’re focusing on the field of features and capabilities that our customers would like to see us bring to market. This focus has allowed us to be more responsive in the market, and build more agile digital experiences with our clients.”

In the case of smaller organizations, being agile is critical to the success of their digital experiences. Matt Heinz, President and Founder of **Heinz Marketing**, explained that organizations need to have consistent messaging across all their digital experiences; having every team member working different tasks under one mindset is critical for success.

Heinz Marketing itself operates its digital experiences with a centralized, integrated approach, allowing its employees to independently write blogs, host live streams and more for various channels while promoting a consistent message to its buyers that keeps them engaged.

“That foundation makes it so that we are more consistent more often with the right message,” said Heinz. “It also gives us the flexibility and freedom to deviate when needed, such as when topics come up in the industry. When we get questions from customers, we can address those in our communication and marketing channels very quickly. And then we have the mechanism to be able to echo that across multiple channels at the same time very quickly, as well.”

“There’s a lot of collaboration within IBM, even though it’s such a big company. We’re focusing on the field of features and capabilities that our customers would like to see us bring to market. This focus has allowed us to be more responsive in the market.”

ETHAN DREILINGER, IBM



Leveraging Real-Time Online Experiences Increases Buyer Engagement

According to Adams, the most successful digital experiences in the advent of the pandemic were online events, such as webinars, conferences, etc. Now that the pandemic has slowed down and Zoom fatigue has set in, Adams believes companies need to shift the focus of their live events on educating buyers, as well as being creative with those live events.

Validity, for example, hosts a monthly webinar series called **State Of Email Live**, where the company explored customer success stories in email marketing with its key accounts. This allows for more personalized engagement in an intimate setting, helping Validity to keep buyers engaged and educated on the state of email marketing and trends.

“People are still hungry for information and education,” said Adams. “You can still have a lot of success with a webinar as long as the topics are relevant to the buyer experience. The topic is even more important than ever, so make sure that you’re providing people with information they really need and want.”

Live events are not the only digital experiences organizations can take advantage of, as branded websites are another valuable channel for engaging buyers digitally. According to Dreilinger, live experiences can happen anywhere and at any time, and placing conversational ads on various websites is one of the best methods for engaging buyers in a live environment.

IBM leverages its **Watson Conversations** solution to help its clients establish chatbots on their websites, engaging website visitors with automatic responses relevant to their needs wherever they are. These forms of “conversational ads” allows buyers to interact with the chatbots in full 1:1 conversations, and can connect with individual marketers and sellers in private text sessions.

“Chatbots and live chat allow brands to have 1:1 conversations with their customers,” said Dreilinger. “The nice thing about it is that those chatbots can be on their brand site, but also on other websites. Wherever you run one of these conversation chatbots, you start to engage customers right away and start to pull them in.”

A person with curly hair, wearing large white headphones, is looking down at a tablet device. The background is a blurred office or hallway setting.

How Snowflake Increased Their Deal Size By 3x With ABM

Snowflake, cloud-based data warehousing company, works with data management, data integration, and BI partners to easily bring together data and enable all users to perform cutting-edge analytics.

The Challenge

When the marketing team at Snowflake began to implement an account-based marketing strategy, they knew that customization of the messaging they sent to each account was going to be the key to their ABM success. However, from a content perspective, there was a cumbersome process for sharing content with prospects that simply wasn't scalable. The marketing team knew that every visitor experience they created had to matter, but if they couldn't personalize at scale, it wouldn't be worth it.

They started looking for a solution that would scale and help distribute better-tailored and consistent experiences across the various touchpoints in their campaigns. The new solution also needed to better align sales and marketing to further enable consistency with content distribution.

The Solution

Snowflake's campaign started with display ads delivered to specific accounts, specific groups within each account, and most importantly, key decision-makers within each group. The ease of integrating **Überflip** with other tech stack elements meant that Snowflake was able to incorporate audience signals like intent and behavioral data to personalize even further.

"With Überflip, we were able to use one-to-one tailored content experiences for each prospect, to help continue conversations," said Daniel Day, Former Senior Manager of Account-Based Marketing at Snowflake.



Once prospects land on a page, the marketing team was able to see how they were engaging with the content. “We wanted them to engage with the Snowflake brand, so we measured content consumption — what they clicked on, what they read, how long they spent on the different assets, how many pages they scrolled through. All of that data was really important for us to capture.”

At some point there is a handoff to sales, and it's imperative that they continue to send personalized content that complements what the prospect has received to date. For this, Snowflake wanted to get content off sales desktops and allow the marketing team to control the content journey — all while providing insight into the effectiveness of the content within the program.

By doing so, sales were empowered to send the right content, to the right prospect, at the right time, maximizing the effectiveness of their outbound outreach.

“The great thing about using Uberflip with our ABM platform is it helps reinforce a message without stepping on toes. Our reps can email someone 100 times and phone 20 times, but if a prospect gets a display ad directing them to a stream of content that is personalized to them, they are blown away,” said Day.

Using Uberflip to quickly spin up customized streams of content, coupled with an ABM platform to help get in front of their target accounts, has yielded tremendous results.

In the beginning, the marketing team had a goal of creating tailored experiences for 30 different accounts. As they used these experiences as the destinations for display ads, emails, signatures and web pages, the Snowflake sales team took notice and adopted the use of Uberflip's sales enablement tools. Since then, sales and marketing have been working together to create personalized content streams and create more than 1,500 one-to-one campaigns.



The Results

Since implementing Uberflip as part of their ABM campaigns, Snowflake has seen increases in engagement and click-through rates. In fact, the Snowflake ABM and sales teams were able to engage 100% of their 1,500 target accounts and can identify the 300 accounts that are driving over 50% of content consumption. Conversion rates at each stage of the funnel have also increased and Snowflake was able to land one of their top target accounts with no previous traction or engagement.

The BDR and field teams at Snowflake have completely adopted the Uberflip platform. They love that they can use relevant content to create tailored experiences, using Sales Streams directly in their emails.

“Never in the history of our organization has sales been knocking down the doors of the marketing team asking for more. The alignment is insane,” said Day.

“Uberflip was the perfect tool to align with our other ABM platforms. It truly was the vehicle to make the dream of personalizing at scale a reality.”

DANIEL DAY, SNOWFLAKE



Repurposing Live Content For Digital Experiences On-Demand

With buyers' schedules in constant flux, attendance for online events may not be as high as projected. As a result, marketers are still exploring new ways to repurpose their live digital experiences into completely new ones for the “on-demand buyer.”

According to Shain, SmartBug Media repurposes its existing webinar content from live events, speaker sessions, research explorations, guest panels and more, and puts it into digestible podcast clips for buyers to listen to, allowing buyers to stay engaged with SmartBug Media but at their own pace.

“We’re going to re-launch everything that we already have recorded,” said Shain. “We had a ton of really great guest speakers and topics that we covered, still relevant for this year, and we want buyers to experience that. This is a smart way for us to reuse the content we’ve already collected while keeping our buyers engaged.”

Heinz Marketing also worked with its clients to learn how to best repurpose their digital content, and helped **ON24** repurpose content within its own podcast series **CMO Confessions**. The podcast explores the daily lives of CMOs in the B2B space and shares the trends they want to make their buyers aware of. By reusing clips from that podcast for promotion on social channels, ON24 can engage buyers with meaningful content, drive more traffic to the podcast itself and connect CMOs to target accounts for engagement.

“The podcast is basically a CMO-to-CMO conversation, a kind of real-talk discussion,” said Heinz. “It was an opportunity for them to create some content for the CMOs to reuse, but also get engagement with some of the CMOs in their named account targets, in a value-added way.”



Apart from podcasts, Heinz Marketing also repurposes its LinkedIn content to reuse as part of their own website's content. Heinz Marketing hosts live surveys on LinkedIn to gain data insights into buyers' needs, pain points and more, and repurposes the data into various blog posts and live community discussion events. This keeps the buyer engaged by involving them and their peers in the creative process, simultaneously creating a unique digital experience that drives pipeline.

"It creates very interesting and powerful commercial insights for us and for buyers," said Heinz. "You do the research through a LinkedIn post, you can tease it in a LinkedIn live, turn it into a blog post, infographic, webinar, community discussion, etc. Both the broader benchmark research projects as well as the lighter LinkedIn polls are great examples of having information of value that can be leveraged across multiple channels to give it more impact, as well as a longer shelf life."

Both the broader benchmark research projects as well as the lighter LinkedIn polls are great examples of having information of value that can be leveraged across multiple channels to give it more impact, as well as a longer shelf life."

MATT HEINZ, HEINZ MARKETING

The 3 Key Elements For Delivering Great Digital Experiences

By Jeff Foley, Sr. Director of Product at Validity



As B2B marketers, the pandemic has forced all of us to double down on digital. Without in-person activities like industry tradeshows, private events or user meet-ups to top off demand generation funnels, we repurposed budgets toward webinars, online advertising and virtual events. As discerning connoisseurs of good digital experiences, we've witnessed how higher quality interactions encourage us to do business with companies — and lower quality ones tell us to take our business elsewhere.

It's the quality of those digital experiences throughout the customer lifecycle that turns prospects into customers, and customers into advocates. But what determines the quality and effectiveness of those digital experiences? The evidence points to three key elements: Your data quality, your prospect and customer communications, and how quickly you learn and improve.

“It's the quality of digital experiences throughout the customer lifecycle that turns prospects into customers, and customers into advocates.”

JEFF FOLEY, VALIDITY



Data Quality Predetermines Your Baseline Success For Digital Marketing

Marketers have unprecedented access to data, including ads viewed, web pages visited, digital events attended, content consumed, even chat transcripts of conversations. If customer profiles are incomplete, enrichment services fill in the missing details.

Your customers aren't naïve, either – they know how much data you have on them and they expect you to use it to create a more personalized experience. **According to Forrester SiriusDecisions**, 80% of B2B buying decisions are based on a buyer's direct or indirect customer experience; only 20% are made based on the offering or price. They want the information they need when they need it, and if you can't supply it, they'll look for it elsewhere.

At the heart of all this is your CRM data, capturing your every interaction with prospects and customers. It's the hub for your account-based marketing (ABM) and your marketing automation platform. It powers your marketing campaigns. It gives you visibility into performance. It fuels your data-driven strategy.

Yet, your CRM data is always decaying. People move. Key contacts switch roles. Data collides from different sources, leaving duplicate records, inconsistent standards and inaccurate data sets. This adds friction to the customer journey, decreases conversion rates and slows down your sales team.

Revenue operations suffers when it's built on unmanaged or undermanaged data. A **study by LeadJen** suggests sales reps waste 546 hours/year chasing bad data. **MIT Sloan estimates** the cost of bad data to be 15%-25% of revenue for most companies.

An oft-cited maxim is that bad data costs 100x more than preventing it. Setting up cross-functional data quality and data governance initiatives, buttressed with leadership support, is crucial for maintaining high-quality data in your CRM. **Yet, a Validity study** showed only 8% of organizations embrace these practices. Data is your most valuable asset. Taking care of the data management lifecycle – activities like profiling, standardization, deduplication, verification and enrichment, automation and maintenance – ensures you can deliver great digital experiences.



Customer Communications Are Critical Touchpoints For Digital Customer Journeys

Communications with customers can span a variety of digital channels, such as social media, live chats, blogs and videos. At the heart of all these channels is email. Email addresses function as primary identifiers for B2B buyers, and with **more than 3,400% ROI**, email has the highest return of any marketing tactic.

Email remains a key touchpoint in the customer lifecycle. However, effective email marketing became trickier during the pandemic. Validity's year-over-year research shows:

- Inboxes are more congested: Volume has increased 94%;
- Mailbox providers have tightened filtering algorithms, making it more difficult to reach the inbox: Average inbox placement rates have dropped 9%; and
- Recipients have become more selective: Average engagement has decreased 5% for open rates and 4% for click rates.

Getting to the inbox and engaging recipients has become significantly more challenging. The ramifications echo throughout all your digital campaigns, be they webinar invitations, content promotion or nurture cadences. Marketers should **implement best practices** for improving their email deliverability and sender reputation so they can get more messages to more people and stand out in a crowded inbox.

How Quickly You Learn & Improve Directly Affects Your Pace Of Growth

With obstacles like data quality and email deliverability holding back performance, the winners in the competition to deliver great digital experiences won't be the companies that do a good job now. The winners will be the companies that improve over time by putting data to good use. A culture of rapid analysis, iteration and execution based on data-driven decisions is the rising tide that lifts all digital ships.

The enemy is time. It's extremely time consuming to dig through data from different sources, manage your contact database manually and identify what to prioritize to improve your outcomes. If you invest in ways to automate and accelerate that data gathering and those analyses, you can move faster.

Data quality, customer communications and rapid improvement – master these and you'll be ahead in the competition to deliver great digital experiences.



Conclusion

With buyers continuing to expect a more personal conversation with the B2B brands they are buying from, marketers are becoming more tenacious with their digital experience strategies. **Research from Sendoso** shows that 68% of companies leveraging digital experiences are building more personal relationships with their B2B buyers, highlighting how creativity and intimacy are the best ways to create and promote buyer experiences that drive engagement and pipeline in a digital market.

B2B organizations are leaning on their marketing, sales and customer experience teams to create digital engagement for buyers, leveraging technologies such as CRMs and chatbots for real-time engagement in a digital space. This allows organizations to convey relevant information to buyers while maintaining a singular focus internally.

Other organizations emphasize the creativity of their digital experiences, using private online events to personalize the buying experience for the individual or the target audience. This also allows marketers to repurpose content from older digital experiences to create new ones for on-demand buyers.

The B2B digital buying experience has changed, and marketers will need to continually innovate on their digital events, content and conversations to meet their target buyers in the digital market.

“I don’t think we’re ever going to go back to the marketing of before,” Adams added. “People have figured out that work has changed, people’s schedules have changed, and I think that’s a permanent fixture. If you don’t create a great digital experience on your website today and make sure that you provide an amazing experience for the buyers that are coming to your website, then you are only going to get left behind.”

Additional Resources



Uberflip is a content experience platform that empowers marketing and sales to create engaging, relevant content destinations quickly for every campaign, audience, and stage of the customer journey. Marketers use our platform to scale how they incorporate content into every touchpoint and remove friction from the customer journey by surfacing the right content at the right time. For more information, visit uberflip.com

888.694.2946

CONTACT@UBERFLIP.COM



Businesses run better and grow faster with trustworthy data. Tens of thousands of organizations rely on Validity solutions – including Everest, DemandTools, BriteVerify, Trust Assessments, and GridBuddy Cloud – to target, contact, engage, and retain customers effectively. Marketing, sales, and customer success teams worldwide trust Validity solutions to help them create smarter campaigns, generate leads, drive response, and increase revenue. For more information visit validity.com and connect with us on LinkedIn and Twitter.

800.961.8205

SALES@VALIDITY.COM





Demand Generation
Benchmark Survey Report



What's Working In
Demand Generation?



2021 Content
Preferences Survey



Demand Gen Report is a targeted online publication that uncovers the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and ultimately, drive growth. A key component of the publication's editorial coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multi-channel demand generation efforts.

201.257.8528

INFO@DEMANDGENREPORT.COM



MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ [in](#) [tw](#)

is an editor in the B2B space, writing on topics ranging from marketing solutions, B2B trends and industry insights. He likes reading, writing and the entertainment space. He lives in New Jersey.