STATE OF GROWTH MARKETING

Orgs Focusing On AI & Data To Improve Efficiency &
Increase Customer-Centricity

INTRODUCTION

Given the recent innovations in B2B, traditional marketing strategies are no longer up to snuff. With **83% of B2B buyers** indicating that personalized content enhances their purchasing experiences, the industry is rapidly shifting toward hyper-personalized marketing strategies and customer-centric approaches. This places the onus on growth marketing, as practitioners must devise new and efficient ways of reaching their ideal customers.

As businesses experiment with new ways to leverage data-driven insights and advanced analytics to create highly targeted and relevant content, marketers are testing new campaigns and methods of inbound marketing, retargeting and more, alongside new tools and technologies such as AI. But before practitioners dive in and start restructuring their processes, they need to identify the weaknesses in their current strategies.

"You need to look at your goals first: What's the sale pipeline, what's the sales revenue and what's marketing contribution?" said Carmen Goldstein, Director of Global Strategies and Campaigns Growth Marketing for **Unity Technologies**, a video game software development company. "And within that, you need to see the different opportunities that comprise the pipeline and, from there, the campaigns that are driving these opportunities. To determine areas of improvement, you need to look at all campaigns and see where they fell short."

This special report will uncover the current state of growth marketing, with a focus on the data and tools needed to promote campaign optimization and customer-centricity. Specific topics of discussion include:

- How AI-powered tools are revolutionizing lead generation, customer segmentation and campaign optimization by enabling businesses to streamline their marketing processes and achieve greater efficiency;

- The need for collaboration and effective communication between sales and marketing;

- The increasing integration of social media platforms — such as LinkedIn and Twitter — in B2B growth marketing strategies, and how businesses are leveraging these platforms to build brand awareness, engage with prospects and nurture leads more effectively; and

- The continued reliance on ABM and its effectiveness in targeting high-value accounts, fostering stronger relationships and generating higher ROI.

INCORPORATING AI FOR
AUTOMATION & OPTIMIZATION

Perhaps one of the most influential forces in B2B is AI, which is expected to see an annual growth rate of **almost 38%** through 2030. As more practitioners adopt the technology to help increase personalization, streamline monotonous tasks and optimize campaigns, they need to understand the gaps in their current strategies and see if AI can help close them.

"To determine if AI can help you, you need to come in with an understanding of what you want it to accomplish," said **Pam Didner**, a B2B marketing consultant, in her **#B2BMX keynote**. "In general, there are four things AI can do for practitioners: It can make decisions, predict outcomes, improve organizational efficiencies and create better customer experiences."

Once organizations determine whether AI is a fit for their marketing efforts, they then need to understand the best ways to implement and use it. To that end, Didner explained that the three main components of optimizing AI for growth marketing include:

1. Leveraging the AI that already exists in existing tech stacks and ensuring that any new tool brought in has AI built in;

2. Building workflows and processes, and then identifying the key areas that would benefit from AI testing; and

3. Collaborating with data teams to build internal predictive analytic models.

"As modern marketers, you need to understand how all of your processes work," said Didner. "You need to understand the workflow and how things happen from beginning to end. If you can explain your processes in a simple workflow, that means you understand your marketing on the back-end — and the more you understand, the better off your strategies are, and the better you can inform your AI models."

HOW TO PREVENT GROWTH MARKETING PLAYBOOKS FROM GROWING 'STALE'

With Ali Haeri, MNTN

B2B marketers are more limited in their toolsets than their B2C counterparts, which results in their playbooks growing a little "stale," said Ali Haeri, SVP of Marketing at Connected TV (CTV) and performance marketing platform **MNTN**. To learn more about the new solutions that are helping B2B brands accelerate their growth, the *Demand Gen Report* team sat down with Haeri to dig deeper.

Demand Gen Report: *Can you elaborate on some of the new tools that B2B growth marketers should keep in their arsenal?*

Ali Haeri: One such tool is CTV — a key solution in B2B's case, because it has expanded marketers' toolsets to now include the largest screen in the house. TV used to be inaccessible to B2B marketers because they couldn't get data from a TV campaign. But now it's fully measurable thanks to the digital DNA of CTV.

The key is to be open to experimentation. Our B2B strategy has often worked in unconventionally "B2B" ways because we've been willing to try non-traditional B2B social channels, like TikTok and Quora, as well as create new satellite sites like **MNTN Research** to engage our audience in new ways, and, in turn, generate a wealth of additional data we can keep learning from.

DGR: *How can practitioners combine their growth marketing practices with their performance marketing strategies?*

Haeri: I believe the gap between these various types of marketing — performance, growth and even brand — is closing. Each one is so closely linked with the other now. Performance marketing, specifically, demands efficiency and good ROI. In turn, when you analyze your data from current

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growth marketing efforts, you can apply those takeaways to your performance strategies to help achieve these goals. They can be one and the same, rather than separate strategies. This is great for B2B marketers, who don't have to split their efforts into individual strategies and can instead focus all their attention on a comprehensive marketing effort.

DGR: *Why is advertising a crucial component of growth marketing?*

Haeri: Advertising is an essential part of growth marketing — it's the fuel that powers the whole strategy. Advertising gives you a constant feedback loop of data on your messaging, targeting and overall campaign strategy. The data you get feeds the next steps of your growth marketing strategy, which helps you make educated decisions and elevates your results. Without the feedback from advertising campaigns, growth is just slower and harder to come by.

DGR: *What data-driven insights should practitioners use to identify target audiences and tailor their growth marketing efforts for maximum impact in the CTV market?*

Haeri: If you're new and ready to experiment with Connected TV, the best place to start is with your existing advertising channels. What's working for you on these other channels? Can you apply those strategies to your CTV campaigns? CTV is highly targetable, so you can reach your core audiences with tailored messaging. Take a look at your top-performing keywords and audiences across your other initiatives and just use those to get your CTV campaign moving.

But it doesn't have to stop there. You can also use CTV to find new audiences that further your growth marketing efforts. When you test new audiences with CTV, it creates a halo effect that actually helps generate even better outcomes across your other ad channels, too. For example, we had a client who added a new audience to their CTV campaign that not only resulted in a 35% stronger conversion rate than their original audience, but also generated a 138% improvement in their paid search conversion rates thanks to that halo effect. More engagement means more data to apply to your growth marketing.

DGR: *How can marketers optimize growth marketing efforts to improve user acquisition costs (CAC) and return on investment (ROI) in the CTV space?*

Haeri: You should be constantly learning from your data and using it to bolster your CTV strategy. Use top-performing audiences from your other efforts, but keep testing new audiences, as well, to keep your targeting pool growing and make sure you're constantly generating new demand.

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You can apply this strategy to your creative efforts, too. Effective messaging is a hugely important factor when prompting users to take action. CTV allows you to A/B test your creative as you would on other social platforms. When you do this continuously, you can iterate off the learnings. Plus, CTV makes it easy to manage large amounts of creative, so experiment with making specific creative for specific audiences.

This doesn't mean that you must create brand-new assets, either. You can tweak a voiceover, change up an end card or even reshuffle shots to appeal to a slightly different audience — there are plenty of ways to show people you and your team are always awake at the wheel. Best of all — and I know I've said this a bunch of times now, but I think it's that critical — CTV gives you the platform to experiment and measure the outcome of those experiments.

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ANALYZING DATA TO DETERMINE CUSTOMER BEHAVIORS

As organizations operate in an era laden with the infamous "do more with less" slogan, the focus has naturally shifted to reviewing and optimizing existing processes. With that in mind, practitioners are refining their data collection and analysis processes to determine what campaigns and strategies have resonated most strongly with buyers.

"When you're looking at campaign management and wondering how to enhance your GTM, you need to focus on customer data," said Christina Kay, a B2B marketing consultant and the host of "The Truth Factor" podcast. "It's the source of truth that tells you if your assumptions are right or wrong. You need to analyze data to inform your campaigns: You might want to focus on a specific feature of your product for new customers, but those customers might want information about product adoption in general."

As 85% of marketers believe that data analytics and insight generation are growing in importance, Kay cautioned marketers that data alone isn't enough. She explained that while analytics technologies are great to help make assumptions, the only "real way" to build trust with customers is to listen to what they're saying. She explained that practitioners should combine their technologies with real-world customers insights, which include surveys, reviews and conversations with thought leaders.

EVOLVING CONTENT TO PLACE CUSTOMERS AT THE CENTER

Armed with customer data and expectations, the next step is leveraging those insights to inform content creation. With **54% of marketers** indicating that they're overwhelmed with the amount of content available, practitioners need to ensure that the assets they're sharing are hyper personalized and speak directly to customers' needs.

"From a campaign standpoint, we're homing in on two things: Lead generation and becoming a thought leader to help build brand awareness," explained Unity Technologies' Goldstein. "The leads we get aren't 'one and done'; we need to make sure we're tackling the full buying network. Different personas and industries respond to different types of content."

As for what those different content types look like, **research found** that the most appealing content types currently include:

- Short-form content, such as infographics and blog posts;

- Webinars and digital events;

- Long-form/foundational content, such as white papers and E-books;

- Interactive multimedia content; and

- Audio and video content.

As practitioners work to distribute that content, the **top channels** to share business-related content include LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter (amongst internal collaboration platforms and email). With such a heavy focus on social media platforms, practitioners need to promote shareable content by refining their social strategies. Although there's a lot of noise around paid social due to how quickly it generates results, Goldstein recommended organizations shift their focus to the organic side.

"You need to focus on your foundation and organic channels before turning on paid media," she explained. "We did the opposite a couple years ago, and it didn't serve us well because we were too reliant on paid media. Now, we're doubling down on SEO and organic social, and we're able to see some savings because our organic channels are producing strong leads."

CONCLUSION

Embracing customer-centric strategies and leveraging advanced technologies to deliver personalized experiences across various touchpoints can result in increased customer satisfaction, higher conversion rates and improved ROI. Data is the backbone of growth marketing efforts, and practitioners are leveraging data-driven insights to increase customer-centricity and personalization. To help automate mundane tasks and streamline efficiency, organizations are folding AI into their growth marketing efforts to optimize campaigns and strategies.

By understanding and catering to the unique needs, preferences and behaviors of individual customers, businesses can forge deeper connections, enhance customer loyalty and drive sustainable growth. In today's highly competitive marketplace, where customer expectations continue to evolve, prioritizing customer-centricity and personalization is not just a differentiator but a necessity for long-term success in growth marketing.

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MNTN builds advertising software for brands to drive measurable conversions, revenue, site visits and more through the power of television. MNTN Performance TV is the world's first and only Connected TV advertising platform optimized for direct-response marketing goals. It redefines what advertisers can do with television, giving them the power to tie performance directly to their TV campaigns. We believe television belongs right alongside paid search and social in advertisers' direct-response marketing strategies. That's why we applied our experience in building performance marketing software to create an ad platform that combines the precision of digital with the impact of television.

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