RECHARGING
Marketing Automation For 2012:

−   **+**

3 Critical Components Of Maximizing Your Automation Investment

How to develop an understanding of target buyers, processes and content that support the buyer's journey and objectives

Many marketing automation users struggle to realize the full value of their investment because they have not implemented a systematic process for lead flow that is not only comprehensive, but also scalable. Process should involve all phases of the buying process and possess a central core methodology that internal users to understand and adhere to.

According to industry estimates, more than 3,000 organizations have deployed marketing automation in the last two years. Yet, despite the huge growth of the category, research shows the average company is only utilizing about 25% of the system's functionality. DemandGen Report found that less than half (43%) of organizations are utilizing more than 50% of their marketing automation solution's full features.

Moreover, organizations that are not optimizing the technology are unable to garner key metrics to analyze and refine campaign effectiveness. Research from DemandGen Report found that marketers who are struggling to gather key metrics cited the following hurdles:

- Lack of internal processes (48%);
- Limitations of tools/technology (45%);
- Inability to integrate data across technology platforms (43%); and
- Lack of knowledge/resources in the area (34%).

Additionally, there are a variety of problems and concerns that many organizations encounter that hinder their ability to maximize the system's value. Research from IBM indicates that there are many obstacles to successful deployment, including cost (cited by 72% of

respondents); lack of ROI certainty (60%) and lack of user skills (46%).

While marketers understand the potential to drive growth and enhance efficiency via marketing automation, it's important not to rush implementation without taking the time to define internal requirements, such as what will they need from the automation solution.

The process of mapping out requirements should include a variety of teams across the organization — broadening the scope beyond marketing and sales — to ensure that other relevant groups can cultivate a role in the decision-making process.
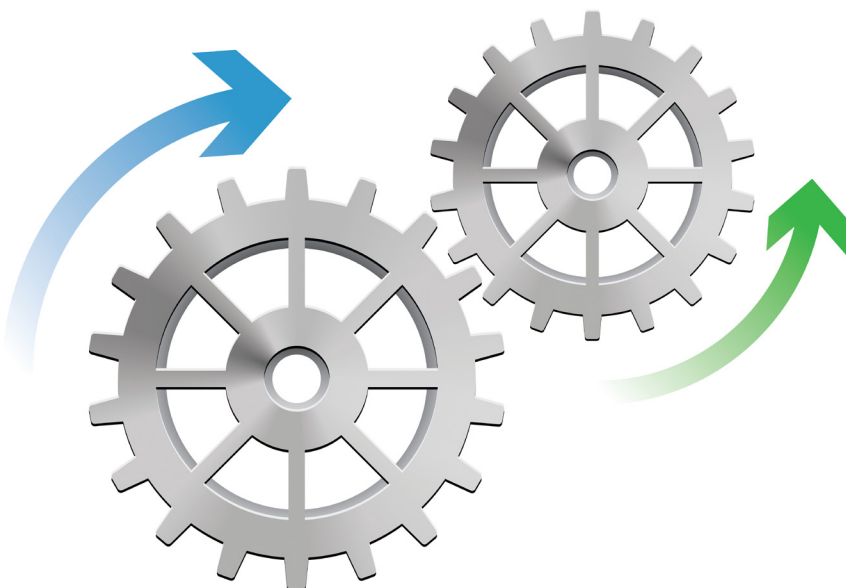
There is a vast disconnect between the process-based insight necessary to effectively utilize marketing automation, and actual effective execution. Therefore, many organizations develop the mindset that the technology is not a suitable solution for them.

Less than half (43%) of organizations are utilizing more than 50% of their marketing automation solution's full features.

- DemandGen Report

By implementing a process-based approach to marketing automation, progressive marketing teams are upping the ante on traditional campaign management to more effectively understand target buyers and how to communicate with them accordingly.

This brief will highlight the need for process-based insight, a global view of the buyer/customer and the key steps to optimize the value of marketing automation investments, as well as strategies to transform artistic marketing teams into revenue engines.

Too many organizations look at closed business and try to attribute marketing's role — that process should be reversed — organizations should be able to actually predict sales revenue based on marketing pipeline. A "work backwards" mentality is helping marketing organizations understand what metrics drive revenue. By understanding pipeline from cold to close, marketers can better predict pipeline impact and efficiently allocate resources accordingly.

According to the *B2B Marketing Measurement Survey*, conducted by DemandGen Report, marketers with greater access to and experience in using analytics tools are able **to track and respond** to the programs that generate the highest quality leads, as well as the campaigns that created the strongest ROI, in terms of leads that actually converted to closed deals.

Pressure to justify spend is a continued factor driving the move to marketing measurement. The role of marketing in revenue generation is increasingly visible as analytics tools and processes evolve as a critical component of the marketer's tool belt. Going beyond basic ROI metrics helps progressive organizations fuel efficiency from the outside in — improving internal operations and customer communication.

Additionally, the survey found that more than 4 in 10 CEOs (42%) are now actively tracking marketing's impact on revenue, and 21% of CFOs now have direct visibility into the revenue performance of marketing. By validating specific contributions to revenue, marketers are

Steps To Successfully Harvesting Analytics

1. **Start with a definition of success — what are your primary objectives?**

2. **What are the metrics that will help you drive business goals?**

3. **Focus on velocity, attribution and visibility into lead generation, as well as understanding the steps that buyers take from prospect to interest.**

4. **Develop plans and processes built on behavioral insight.**

empowered with pipeline data that enables the organizations to revise, refine and make improvements at every stage.

Ultimately, ROI and other metrics are key indicators of how marketing is helping to influence and drive revenue. In the new ecosystem of Revenue Performance Management, more marketers are being evaluated and compensated against revenue performance metrics. More than half of survey respondents (53%) said their marketing department is now responsible for a revenue goal. Marketing organizations that are able to initiate highly predictable, repeatable processes will use pipeline intelligence to drive strategic decisions and close more business.

Developing Processes For Demand Gen Success

"People, process, technology" has long been an organizational mantra for new technology rollouts, and it is especially pertinent to the marketing automation space due to the extensive change management required in order to maximize the value of these new tools.

The customer lifecycle can serve as a great model for how marketing and sales effectively communicate with prospects and customers, but also to enhance internal alignment by understanding the path to purchase.

By understanding the progression path of existing customers, marketers can optimize future campaign efforts. For instance, **response rates** can help marketers understand what messaging resonated best with various personas, providing the opportunity to refine and revise moving forward. With a clear understanding of the progression from an opportunity to a closed customer, marketing and sales organizations can develop processes that tightly align with **the buyer's journey**.

In DemandGen Report's *B2B Marketing Measurement Survey*, people and processes were equally important to technology in making marketing more predictable in impacting revenue. When asked how they planned to advance to the next stage of **marketing analytics** maturity, respondents cited the following:

- 76% plan to develop **better processes**;

- 60% plan to **improve alignment** between sales and marketing; and

- 41% plan to invest in new technology.

Adopting a methodology that allows marketers to better understand how prospects buy and what their pain points are will help optimize future campaigns. To do this effectively, experts recommend that companies "**progressively profile**" at least four or five different archetypes or "personas" they frequently market to, and consider six key components about them: Source, Wants, Attitude, Use of Time, Question and Approach. This process will provide real life examples that will enable businesses to create engaging content that speaks directly to *those* buyers in *those* markets.

The omnipresent sales & marketing alignment issue is a critical core area of successful automation execution. Sales should be involved in the marketing projects early on in the process, which helps establish clear goals and expectations across the organizations.

While sales is often primarily concerned with a high quality of leads, marketing strives with every effort to deliver. But often in the first campaign, sales will push back leads because they don't have the budget, industries aren't a fit, or they simply don't understand the product or service enough to be engaged with sales yet.

In addition, the involvement of sales enables the marketing department to build an effective "Buyer Persona" that matches the criteria for leads that are most likely to move to real opportunities and closed business. A "Persona" is often modeled around the demographic, **behavioral and psychological characteristics** of existing customers or prospects, which is why accurate and up-to-date database information is critical.

By developing a process for lead management, sales, marketing and any other team involved will know how to effectively do their part to ensure relevant prospect communication at every touch point.

In addition to sales and marketing alignment, another critical component of effective implementation is the proper synching of marketing automation systems with CRM systems. By **integrating the CRM platform** with marketing automation, marketers can correlate existing customer data with new prospects to begin segmenting and targeting buyers for future marketing campaigns.

Buyer Persona

☑	**Involvement**
☑	**Interaction**
☑	**Intimacy**
☑	**Influence**

A "Persona" is often modeled around the demographic, behavioral and psychological characteristics of existing customers or prospects.

While many marketers struggle to realize the full value of their automation investment, it's critical to consider the reasons why. It's not necessarily broken technology or too difficult to learn how to use, it's actually the processes behind the system that causes companies not to see the return they initially expected.

Every organization faces the same challenges — whether enterprise or SMB — knowing the buyer and what activities generate interest can be a challenging undertaking.

The marketing process should be based on the following attributes:

- **Fundamental buyer data** (the ability to know and understand the buyer).

- **Interest patterns** (developing processes to correlate buyer behavior with appropriate offerings); and

- Internal alignment (defining internal requirements, personas and execution plans).

Case Study

Jefferson **IN** National®

As a well-established company in a growing niche, Jefferson National, a provider of products and services for Registered Investment Advisors (RIAs) and fee-based advisors, didn't have a problem developing strong marketing content that generated plenty of qualified leads. The challenge came in accurately tracking which marketing mechanism generated them and how best to progress them through the sales process. As the company continued to grow, so did the overwhelming amounts of data, and the demand to tie all of it into an integrated, thoughtfully segmented marketing-to-sales process.

"We really didn't know how deep marketing automation went," said Nicole Gross, Director, Marketing Programs of Jefferson National. We didn't understand the capability of Marketo [marketing automation] until we contacted LeadMD. Simply put, we didn't know what we didn't know."

The company partnered with LeadMD's for assistance in understanding how to establish the right processes, and implement marketing automation best practices that would help them market, test, track and close sales faster.

LeadMD helped Jefferson National:

- Implement Marketo and Marketo Sales Insights

- Integrate with Salesforce.com

- Build templates and baseline programs

- Integrate the Jefferson National website(s) with Marketo

- Unify views on partner program ROI

- Track behavior(s), and score lead velocity and quality accordingly

- Build simple, easily trackable campaign ROI reporting

- Nurture, qualify and report on their leads and lead life cycle.

"Once we began to learn about the capabilities of a marketing automation tool, coupled with what LeadMD could do for us, it gave us more ideas about how to expand on our marketing. Because of LeadMD and Marketo, the way that we market and approach marketing has changed fundamentally," said Mark Forman, Jefferson National's Director of Online Marketing.

3 Utilizing Content To Position The Conversation

The proliferation of online and digital channels has created an environment in which each phase of the buying process is exposed online. From buyers attempting to fully understand their issues and how others have solved them — to deep commentary on solution alternatives — marketers are now presented with greater opportunities and challenges.

Content collateral helps marketers establish a relationship with prospects, an initial step that, among other benefits, helps companies secure a role in the decision-making process.

Implementing an effective **content marketing strategy** can be challenging, time-consuming and involve a variety of resources and personnel, but the return is immediate and long term. Again, the key is to evaluate content needs based upon Buyer Personas, so the content pipeline responds to what target buyers actually want.

The DemandGen Report *B2B Buyer Survey* found that:

- A majority of respondents (65%) said case studies were most helpful in the research process;

- 55% cited documents and tools that support the ROI justification for the project; and

- 67% of respondents said that the **consistent and relevant communication** provided by both the sales and marketing organizations as a key influence in choosing the company as a solution provider.

If done correctly, content helps marketing and sales teams develop a greater understanding of the buyer.

By immediately providing relevant content that speaks to buyer pain points and behaviors, marketers help progress prospects to close through education-based collateral, and implement practices that establish the organization as a thought leader.

Additionally, if done correctly, content helps marketing and sales teams develop a greater understanding of the buyer. Tracking activity and preferences enables organizations to proactively develop strategies and tactics that nurture these patterns. By defining and automating nurturing paths for collateral, marketers have clearer visibility into prospects that are interacting with the organization, opting in for education and best practice insight.

Case in Point:

A prospect registers for a webinar — that leads to downloading a buying guide — that leads to an ROI calculator. Approach that progression from a buyer issue perspective, make logical suggestions for content and measure how effective those nurturing paths are in generating business.
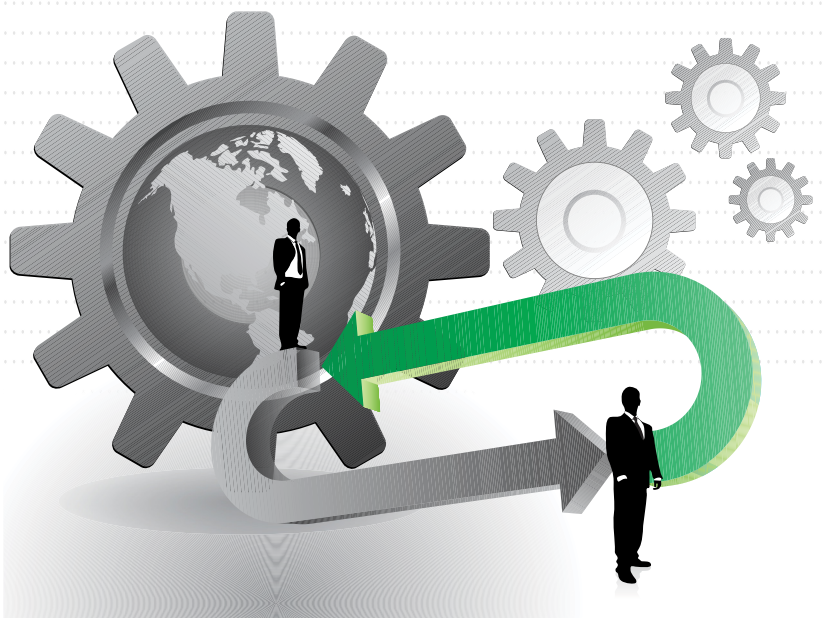
The blanket approach is no longer a viable strategy for any kind of successful content marketing. With a large number of campaigns firing out each day, prospects are inundated — this makes it harder than ever for marketers to vie for attention.

However, by developing buyer personas and complementary content, marketers can support an individual micro conversation with a prospect. Marketers need to feel confident that the processes in place support the buyer journey. When an individual qualifies, they're going to be routed down their success path.

Because buying organizations span across different industries, verticals, needs and sizes, buyers simply cannot be treated the same. They need individual treatment that nurtures their pain points and helps them address their business objectives.

Final Thoughts

The reason many organizations are not seeing a return on marketing automation software purchases is rooted in the "mid-stream" process in which the system is implemented. Without a platform for so long, marketing departments lack structure and process. Marketing automation presents an opportunity to reevaluate, reformulate and change. Unfortunately many organizations are insistent upon bending their old process around new software. Until a comprehensive approach is taken to determine what metrics will drive an organization from a revenue perspective, and organizations take a hard look at the buyer, and finally refresh content accordingly, marketing automation will continue to be scapegoated as a technology instead of an opportunity for process change.

About LeadMD

LeadMD combines the resources of a digital marketing agency with revenue focused sales and marketing alignment strategy, all through the use of on-demand cloud technology. Creating, managing and converting quality leads in higher numbers is how we enable our clients to out perform their competitors and out market their peers.

The most effective way to engage more prospects and convert better leads is through Conversational Marketing. At LeadMD, we will help your team leverage email and online channels to build buyer trust and engagement through cutting edge technology such as Marketing Automation. When your focus is on building a demand generation process that truly drives revenue, it's time to engage LeadMD and fix your funnel.

9383 E. Bahia Drive, Ste. 225
Scottsdale, AZ 85260

1.877.LeadMD (775-3236)
www.leadmd.com

About DemandGen Report

DemandGen Report is a targeted e-media publication spotlighting 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 focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multi-channel demand generation efforts.

411 State RT 17, Suite 410
Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604

1.888.603.3626
www.demandgenreport.com