

END-TO-END Engagement

Integrating Quality Data
To Optimize
**Marketing Campaign
Performance**



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Executive Summary

Quality prospect data is critical to assure that any company's marketing messaging is relevant, appropriate and aligned with prospect expectations at every possible touch point. As a result, it has become more vital than ever for marketers to enlist sound data management strategies and processes to maximize the value of their initiatives.

By leveraging marketing automation technology, progressive organizations are able to streamline their campaign management and execution, and optimize prospect-facing operations.

While marketers see great value in marketing automation tools and investments, however, many are realizing that there is a significant gap in their ability to connect process to usage because they struggle to lay out the groundwork with the right marketing data "building blocks." By implementing the right strategies to harvest and maintain accurate data, marketers can enhance their campaign initiatives.

To increase the value of marketing automation and improve the performance of campaigns, marketers are realizing it is imperative to integrate their marketing automation platforms with their databases. With an integrated data process in place, marketers can improve key performance indicators (KPIs) in their campaigns including:

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- **Open and click through rates.** Empowered with accurate, integrated data, marketers can more easily associate each unique prospect or customer record to a marketing campaign or promotional offer based on highly targeted criteria that most closely correlates to their propensity to buy; and
- **Conversion rates from leads to opportunities.** Understanding customers, what they look like and what they need, helps marketers develop informative profiles that can be used to drive additional business activity — from acquiring new, high-value customers to identifying current customers from whom an organization can generate incremental revenue.

By integrating data management tools with marketing automation systems, marketers are able to present the right messages at the right time. This ultimately helps improve the effectiveness of their campaigns and realize maximum return on their technology investments.

Industry insiders point to a growing need for better data management strategies. Although this is an age-old challenge, marketers are under growing pressure to address it successfully.



“The most present marketing reality is the need for a consistent customer experience across online and offline channels,” noted Ian Michiels, Principal, Gleanster Research. “We have found that ‘top performers’ do a better job creating a consistent customer experience with cross-channel campaigns (cross-channel in the context of actually orchestrating a consistent and timely communication across two or more channels versus multi-channel, which usually equates to fragmented messages across fragmented channels) but, the kicker is, they fake the perception of alignment by going through extensive manual work on the back-end.”

Ultimately, marketing organizations are struggling to connect data collection initiatives across social platforms, mobile, email, web sites and other sources to integrate customer touch points and develop seamless data management processes. This white paper will highlight the benefits of addressing these challenges by integrating prospect data with marketing campaigns and by detailing the value a marketing organization can expect to gain from this approach.

A vast majority (88%) of online buyers admit to providing false information when creating a new online account.

**–Consumer Perceptions of Online Registration and Social Login Report
Blue Research**

Data: The Hub Of Successful Marketing Automation

Although data integrity is an organization-wide issue, marketers are often the first to touch a prospect, and therefore they are charged with managing and maintaining prospect profiles.

In an effort to do this effectively, marketers utilize web forms to learn more about their prospects: who they are, where they work, what they’re looking for and how to reach them. This tactic, however, can be unreliable as prospects often supply fake information just to populate the forms and gain access to gated content.

A recent survey conducted by Blue Research about consumer perceptions of online registration and social login found a whopping 88% of respondents admitted to providing false information when creating a new online account. This all too common behavior significantly compromises the data marketers need to manage their campaigns and prospect communications.



As today's B2B buyers grow more accustomed to utilizing interactive channels that cater to consumer-driven habits, it has become a necessity for marketers to provide sufficient resources to educate prospects every step of the way. Forced to face the challenging realities of siloed data and disparate touch points, however, many marketers miss out on revenue opportunities because they aren't able to "connect the data dots" to inform and serve prospects and customers.

"Data issues are near the top of the list of complaints that I hear from marketers these days," noted Chad Horenfeldt, Director of Customer Consulting, Eloqua. "The immediate challenge that marketers are facing when it comes to data collection is that there are so many sources of the data feeding into multiple data stores that it's difficult to maintain a consistent process of data collection. It's like making an omelet with 20 cooks each adding their own ingredients. The end result is a mess. In this case you have too many cooks in the kitchen."

Given the various team members involved in the data collection process, there is a large margin for internal error. Organizations manage a plethora

of data collection scenarios, including sales people adding their prospects to the sales database, support teams mixing customer data with prospect data, marketers adding new contacts from third

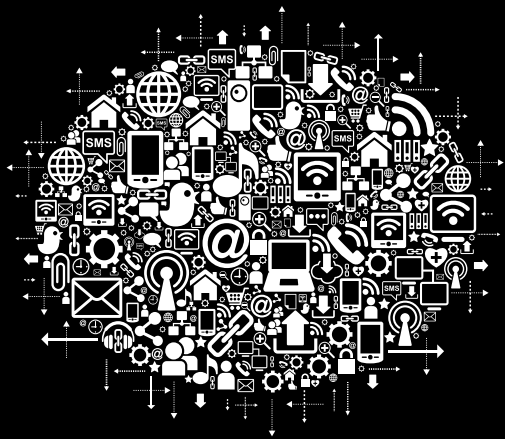
"There are so many sources of the data feeding into multiple data stores that it's difficult to maintain a consistent process of data collection."

**-Chad Horenfeldt
Director of Customer Consulting
Eloqua**

party sources and trade shows, as well as the data that prospects submit via your online channels. This type of activity, Horenfeldt warned, can lead to serious data-quality issues within an organization.

By integrating data in real-time with marketing automation systems, marketers can more efficiently manage the organization and effectiveness of internal, disparate teams. Moreover, marketers can optimize the end user experience by having richer, more accurate information that helps foster a greater understanding of prospect firmographic information, buying attributes, needs and objectives.

One common tactic, for example, known as progressive profiling, allows marketers to develop a prospect profile over time by asking series of questions over a variety of offers. When the prospect goes to download a second or third content offering, the marketer may ask additional questions. This approach enables marketers to "get more by asking for less" and gain a better understanding of customers' firmographic data and business needs. Another tactic to achieve a similar understanding is to append the missing data.



Is Your Data As Fresh As You Think It Is?

In today's rapidly changing B2B landscape, organizations feel the pain of data-quality issues involving completeness, accuracy, duplication and changing contact information.

SiriusDecisions, for example, estimates that B2B contacts go bad because of people changing jobs and companies at a rate of 2-3% per month, creating a constant stream of obsolete contact data.

In an effort to stay up to speed, some organizations operate on a more manual basis, with sales reps inputting missing contact information. This can take hours, as employees search the internet for necessary contact information such as business email addresses and phone numbers. It's a daunting and exhausting effort under the best of circumstances, and in the long run it can be impossible for an organization to keep up with the changes.

To combat these data maintenance challenges, experts emphasize the importance of taking a strategic approach. By assessing the quality and accuracy of your current accessible data, you can better understand where the holes in your information are, as well as the key demographical points that demonstrate any similarities or themes that can be used to craft future messaging.

This practice helps enable marketers to identify their most desirable prospects, determine how many of those prospects exist in a target market, and then decide which criteria are most vital to delivering the right offers and information to those prospects.

"Once a sound strategy is in place, B2B marketers can focus on the fixes that are going to make the biggest impact," said Ross Graber, Research Director, Marketing Operations Strategies at SiriusDecisions. "We hear from clients having difficulty with issues including record completeness, data accuracy, record duplication and poor email deliverability. The rate that B2B contacts go bad because of people changing jobs and companies – 2-3% per month – is a really big issue. But all of these problems are addressable with focus, time, process and investment. For many marketing organizations the most important, most immediate action they can take is to develop a strategic approach to data."

Data Downfalls By The Numbers:

- More than **48,000,000** businesspeople have changed jobs in 2011
- The average lifespan of a business contact is **2 years**
- Contact information degrades at a rate of **2% per month**

Source: NetProspex CleneStep Verification and Bureau of Labor Statistics

How Data Challenges Impact Demand Generation

Data is the lynchpin of any effective marketing program. Without accurate data, marketers waste precious time and resources, and they miss important opportunities as a result of insufficient follow up or misleading information.

Key data at the contact, demographic, social and company levels for customers and prospects empowers marketing organizations to provide the most relevant information at appropriate times and phases in the buy cycle. Yet missing information, such as job titles or email addresses, can stop what might otherwise be a quality lead from ever getting to sales. Even if it does get through, if sales reps can't contact the prospect, then conversion rates will still suffer.

A strategic approach to data management can solve these problems and empower marketers to optimize key phases of the revenue process, including:

- 1. Lead Generation.** Marketers need accurate contact data to engage prospective buyers with relevant information about their solutions and services. It's also critical to target the right prospects within an organization, and quality data allows marketers to ensure that their messaging resonates with the right target personas. Quality data helps marketers understand their prospects' business objectives, and those insights can then be used to craft messaging that interests and motivates prospects.
- 2. Nurturing.** The more information you're equipped with, the more success you'll have creating buyer personas and defining need-based objectives. You'll also gain a better understanding of the behavioral and consumption patterns of your target buyers. All of this knowledge can then be utilized to refine and optimize your ongoing nurturing processes for repeatable success.
- 3. Scoring.** To help prioritize appropriate follow-up engagements, marketers enlist scoring mechanisms to recognize and understand their most "ready-to-buy" prospects. Quality data provides the foundation for a successful lead scoring process and for refining that process over time.
- 4. Measurement.** As marketers are called upon to play an increasingly significant role in the revenue conversation, they also require the ability to measure and attribute their revenue contributions. Data provides vital measurement points to help you understand that your campaign and brand messaging are properly aligned with your target personas and that the resulting leads are generating the amount of revenue your organization expects to get from them.

From the top of the funnel, outbound marketing efforts require a clean set of data that matches your target criteria, but most of the time marketers are faced with gathering data from multiple sources, including in-house databases, trade show interactions and other sources that can compromise the cleanliness of an organization's data. Even data garnered from a clean database can decay rather quickly, so when you start a program, there's little to no visibility into which records are clean and which need cleansing.

When an organization adopts a comprehensive data management and quality strategy, it doesn't just eliminate these problems; it also sets the stage for maximizing the value of its marketing automation investment. "Marketing automation shines with respect to integration because it creates a core system of record for core digital channels: web site, email, social media, landing pages, SEO/SEM," Michiels noted. "It's powerful because you can configure business rules to trigger highly relevant interactions based on prospect behavior across one or more digital channels. It essentially allows marketers to achieve highly personalized customer engagement in relevant channels — something that would be nearly impossible to do manually."

Additionally, marketing automation provides marketers with ability to ability to segment based on behavioral based data. "This is the data that is collected from where people click on your web site, the information from their tweets and the emails that they respond to," noted Horenfeldt. "A recent study from Jupiter Research found that campaigns that use this type of activity based data can increase conversion rates by nearly 4 to 1 when compared to untargeted email blasts.

Marketing campaigns that use behavioral data can increase conversion rates by nearly 4 to 1 when compared to untargeted email blasts.

-Jupiter Research

You can't underestimate the power of what we call the 'digital body language' when it comes to optimizing campaigns."

Conversely, industry experts indicate that many marketing organizations are unable to realize the full value of their marketing automation due to a lack of data management and maintenance processes.

Organizations that combine technology with strong surrounding processes and an investment in data see a higher volume of inquiries and better conversion rates, according to industry experts, which can mean as much as a 23% increase in closed deals. As a result, companies that incorporate sound data management practices see a significant advantage over competitors that put off data investments.

"We still see organizations purchasing marketing automation technology in an attempt to automate processes that don't exist," noted Jay Famico, Research Analyst, Marketing Operations Strategies at SiriusDecisions". When companies don't have the data they need, they can't take advantage of many of the features that caused them to choose the marketing automation platform in the first place. More importantly, it means that they fail to generate the results they were hoping for."

5 Critical Actions To Improve Your Data Quality

B2B marketers today are being asked to do more with less, and it's vital that they get the greatest possible value out of the campaigns they manage. Here are five best practices to help marketers achieve their lead generation and revenue goals:

- 1. Know your buyer.** Target your programs directly at the people who are most likely to buy from you. The best way to do this is to look for trends in your historical purchasing data. Identify titles, industries and company sizes that buy most frequently, and once you've done this, make sure your marketing database is fully stocked with prospects that fit your target profiles.
- 2. Scrub your database.** SiriusDecisions determined that the average amount of usable records in a prospect database is 75%, although that number increases to 90% for best in class companies. For those looking to improve their databases, the best place to begin is by conducting a thorough cleansing process. Remove records that don't fit your target buyer profiles, including those that aren't likely to influence a potential sale. Normalize your data in terms of capitalization and the formatting of fields such as phone numbers and job titles. Remove or append information to fix incomplete or inaccurate records. Get rid of records that have bounced email addresses or that unsubscribed from your list.
- 3. Rinse and repeat.** You may have started out with a clean database, but it won't stay that way for long without good data hygiene practices. Remove hard bounces from your database as they occur, rather than giving them time to accumulate.
- 4. Build from quality sources.** When you're actively cleaning out bad data, you may find yourself with fewer target contacts than you'd like in your database. Use a marketing funnel or calculator to determine just how many leads you'll need to make your revenue numbers. If you plan to purchase data, check that your vendor has a dedicated process to ensure and maintain the quality of its records.
- 5. Accept only clean data.** By looking at all the ways your company gets marketing contact data, you may be able to head off some quality issues. For example, if you are gathering information from registration forms on your web site, you may want to employ dropdown lists rather than open entry fields to prevent errors.

Conclusion: Quality Data Drives B2B Marketing

Today's marketing landscape is largely driven by the ability to provide valuable content to engage buyers and enable their decision-making journeys. For content marketing to be effective, however, marketers need to closely match the content they produce with the audience they send it to.

"If marketers don't understand or don't have a full view into their contacts, they can't align their content, so their content marketing will fall flat," Famico noted. "Organizations that don't trust their data are left with some poor choices. They can develop less targeted content and cope with the lower response rates. They can ignore the quality concerns and risk damaging the organization's credibility by sending highly targeted offers to the wrong people. The problem is that with technology allowing for greater personalization and segmentation, data errors stand out more than ever."

By focusing and investing more into data quality, B2B organizations are realizing ways to enhance both internal and external initiatives, and provide more value for prospects and customers. With a strategy in place, you can focus on the fixes that have an immediate and measurable impact on your organization's marketing performance.





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About NetProspex

NetProspex drives customer acquisition by partnering with B2B marketers to deliver targeted prospect lists, data cleansing, and profiling analytics that help to uncover data insight and optimize lead generation results.

Voted Best Lead Generation Solution by the SIIA, NetProspex maintains a deep database of millions of crowd-sourced business contacts verified by CleneStep™ technology.

Thousands of B2B organizations rely on NetProspex to acquire and maintain clean, accurate prospect information to fuel high-performing marketing campaigns.

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