



# DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING

29 Experts Tell You How to Transform  
Your Marketing Organization

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# FOREWORD

Welcome Fellow Marketer:

Every day I encounter marketers who are working to create a data-driven organization. Some are at the very early stages and just starting to scratch the surface; others are many years into the process and leveraging advanced techniques—and technologies—to help them achieve their goals.

At Visual IQ, we wanted to create a resource to which marketers could turn for advice on this process from their peers who have already done it, whether at a brand, an agency, or a solution provider. The result is *Data-Driven Marketing: 29 Experts Tell You How to Transform Your Marketing Organization*.

We asked each expert for the advice he or she would give a peer if that person were seeking to make his or her marketing organization more data driven, and I'm thrilled with the incredibly diverse advice these experts gave. The insights range from internal change management and breaking down channel/departmental silos to advice about technology and the implementation process. Underlying these topics are insights around the need for marketing attribution and a holistic view of your overall marketing ecosystem.

We think there's something useful for everyone, and we hope you'll find a few specific gems within these pages that you can use at your organization.



Regards,

**Manu Mathew**

Co-Founder & CEO, Visual IQ



As a pioneer in the space, Visual IQ has been producing the world's most powerful cross channel marketing attribution software since 2006. Its hosted IQ Intelligence Suite of products combines a user-friendly interface with advanced attribution management and predictive modeling functionality to provide clear recommendations for marketing optimization. Recognized as a leader in cross channel attribution by a leading market research firm in 2014, Visual IQ won The Drum's 2015 Digital Trading Award for Best Attribution Solution, won the 2014 ASPY Award for Best Data or Analytics Solution, and was a finalist in the Digital Analytics Association's Excellence Awards in 2013, 2014 and 2015. For more information, visit [www.visualiq.com](http://www.visualiq.com).

# INTRODUCTION

Content has long been king in marketing, but that king has now been dethroned. The new king is data. With technologies making it possible to track individual actions, from first contact to final transaction, in an omni-channel marketing environment, marketers are able to shape and personalize content in near real-time so that it drives desired business outcomes. New marketing analytics and automation tools are changing how companies use their huge stores of data. All this progress is great, but many businesses still struggle to realize the full potential of their marketing initiatives.

In this e-book, which is generously supported by Visual IQ, we have endeavored to discover how companies use data to help ensure the success of their marketing strategies. We asked marketing experts the following question:

***If you had to give someone advice on how to turn his or her marketing organization into a data-driven marketing organization, what advice would you give?***

I am confident you will find many rich and useful insights in these essays. Two key ideas are the importance of a data-driven culture within the business and management allowing the time needed for a new marketing strategy to prove itself. One cannot enter into this process expecting instant results. Given the proper time, however, data-driven marketing models can deliver impressive, game-changing results.

I hope you find these essays as informative as I have.



All the best,  
**David Rogelberg**  
Publisher



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# NICE STATS

THE RIGHT ATTRIBUTION  
PARTNER CAN HELP YOU

DELIVER CRAZY-GOOD  
MARKETING RESULTS



LEARN THE  
**8 KEY CONSIDERATIONS**  
FOR CHOOSING THE RIGHT ONE

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# Determine Your Data Strategy

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# DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING: STILL A WORK IN PROGRESS



**TIM  
BOURGEOIS**

**Partner** (East Coast Catalyst),  
**Founder**  
(ChiefDigitalOfficer.net)

Tim Bourgeois is a digital industry veteran who has been active as a founder, investor, executive, publisher, and consultant since 1999. He formally entered the business in 1999, when he launched Pixel Bridge, a full-service interactive agency that was acquired in 2009. He is currently a partner at East Coast Catalyst, a Boston-based digital consultancy, and founder and editor of ChiefDigitalOfficer.net, a resource for senior digital professionals.



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Even though many digital marketing businesses and software tools are available to support sophisticated data-driven marketing strategies, most companies operate with a mix of digital and traditional marketing channels and tactics. Newer, smaller companies tend to spend more of their marketing resources on digital, while enterprises that have established marketing organizations and practices spread their resources across a broader mix of channels.

Part of the challenge of becoming a data-driven marketing organization is balancing resources among these channels and managing the continuous internal struggle for marketing budget. As digital strategies have become more important to marketing, there has also been a trend for marketing to become more independent of the IT department.

This shift is driven in part by the availability of good marketing analytics tools and digital marketing services. Yet tensions between IT folks and marketing still arise, because these tools are not always so easy to use. They require training, ramp-up time, and support, and marketing organizations are not always in the best position to assess those aspects of the purchase.

*“Part of the challenge of becoming a data-driven marketing organization is balancing resources among channels and managing the continuous internal struggle for marketing budget.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1** MOST COMPANIES STILL OPERATE WITH A MIX OF DIGITAL AND TRADITIONAL MARKETING ACTIVITIES.
- 2** ATTRIBUTION CAPABILITIES THAT DETERMINE HOW ONLINE AND OFFLINE STRATEGIES AFFECT ONE ANOTHER ARE GREAT, BUT DATA-DRIVEN PROCESSES NEED TO BE IN PLACE SO THAT ACTION CAN BE TAKEN ON INSIGHTS BEFORE A COMPANY CAN HAVE THE CONVERSATION ABOUT ATTRIBUTION.



# DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING: STILL A WORK IN PROGRESS

Nevertheless, there is clear value in the insights companies can glean from digital strategies. For example, I have a client who is an early-stage tech company launching a new product. The company developed its plan based on understanding the market. When everything was ready, it rolled out all its marketing assets, including a website and digital content. The strategy involves both online and offline tactics to promote the product.

Within three to six months of launch, the company will be able to make decisions based on a lot of empirical data, which means they will rely less on anecdotal evidence. For instance, although it's useful to know what a few people who stopped by the company's booth at a trade show had to say, the new digital strategy will tell the company that there were 300,000 searches on topics in their space, 20 percent of which were directly relevant to the organization. Based on that information, the company can make specific adjustments to its marketing assets to improve performance.

To become a data-driven marketing organization, companies must identify the problem they're trying to solve, and then decide what they need to do from a budgeting, staffing, and business process perspective before jumping into the digital arms race. If they're working a multi-channel marketing strategy (as most companies are), attribution capabilities that determine how online and offline strategies affect one another are great, but data-driven processes need to be in place so that action can be taken on insights before a company can have the conversation about attribution.

“

*There is clear value in the insights companies can glean from digital strategies.*

”



# YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THE PERSONAS YOU'RE TRYING TO INFLUENCE



**RYAN  
BONNICI**

**Head of Marketing,  
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Ryan Bonnici is the head of marketing at HubSpot Asia Pacific & Japan. He's an experienced digital marketing leader, having previously held roles at Salesforce, ExactTarget, Microsoft, and Qantas Airways. Being a strong advocate for inbound sales and marketing, he's incredibly passionate about educating brands on leveraging new ways to connect with their customers.



In the world of inbound marketing, the entire strategy is based on attracting potential customers and nurturing them toward a decision. How effectively you execute this strategy depends first on what you know about your customers, and then measuring your prospects' progress toward that decision.

Therefore, the first step in developing a data-driven marketing strategy is defining buyer personas—understanding who they are, what they're interested in, what challenges them, how they work, what they do on weekends, and many other aspects of their lives. It is important to get to know them personally.

At HubSpot, we have three key personas that represent different aspects of our target market. A company should have no more personas than it can service with distinct messaging strategies. For instance, if one body of content can service two different personas, it makes sense to merge those two personas into one.

Next, you must have a good understanding of how personas move through the buyer's journey, from awareness to consideration to making a decision or taking an action. In this way, you can match content to the buyer's decision process for each persona.

Finally, you must align engagement and content strategies to the appropriate sales and marketing funnel. Then, you will have the essential engagement touchpoints specifically designed to move customers toward a decision or series of decisions, taking them deeper into the sales funnel.

*“A company should have no more personas than it can service with distinct messaging strategies.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1** HOW EFFECTIVELY YOU EXECUTE AN INBOUND MARKETING STRATEGY DEPENDS FIRST ON WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR CUSTOMERS, AND THEN MEASURING THEIR PROGRESS TOWARD A DECISION.
- 2** COMPANIES NEED TO EXPERIMENT TO FIND AN ATTRIBUTION MODEL THAT GIVES THEM THE INSIGHTS THEY NEED ACROSS ALL THEIR POINTS OF ENGAGEMENT.



# YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THE PERSONAS YOU'RE TRYING TO INFLUENCE

With these key pieces of your marketing strategy in place, along with tools that measure the impact of each customer touchpoint, it becomes possible to monitor customer progress through the sales funnel. It also becomes possible to identify sticking points. Is a particular content item not resonating or moving people along as it should? Is something hanging people up on a website or is an app stopping people rather than moving them down the funnel? You can see all of this and make adjustments.

Good attribution models enable you to determine specifically whether points of engagement such as content assets, websites, and apps are doing what they're supposed to do. This information gives you insights into how to optimize them for better performance. To use attribution effectively, however, your systems must be sufficiently connected so that the data they generate give you a view of how all your channels are working together. Many companies are limited by the technology they use, which is one reason they never get past last-click attribution. Companies must experiment to find a model that gives them the insights they need.

“

*To use attribution effectively, your systems must be sufficiently connected so that the data they generate give you a view of how all your channels are working together.*

”

# TO BUILD A DATA-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION, CREATE A LONG-TERM ROAD MAP



**JONATHAN  
MARGULIES**

Managing Director,  
Winterberry Group

With an extensive background in strategic communications and executive-level advocacy, Jonathan Margulies leads the development of Winterberry Group's research and thought leadership initiatives. Since joining Winterberry Group in 2004, he has spearheaded the development of more than 24 high-profile research papers and led more than 100 consulting engagements, helping clients tackle an array of challenges. He also sits on the Interactive Advertising Bureau's Data Council and served as communications director for the Sergeants Benevolent Association, a 10,000-member organization of New York City police supervisors.



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When moving toward a data-driven culture, the first step is assessing the technology that you have at your disposal, the data assets available to you, and the business strategies and organizational objectives to which you're trying to be responsive. Many companies, even those that have highly data-driven operating cultures, have a tough time actually mapping, inventorying, or auditing their own data assets. If you don't know what you have to work with, it's difficult to make decisions about what you're going to do down the road. Moreover, a lot of organizations rush to launch initiatives without taking the time to tie them back to objectives that the company has laid out at the senior levels. Going through this process is really the first order of business.

The second step is to map out a series of use cases. Do you want to grow revenue? Do you want to bring more customers into the fold? Do you want to be more responsive to the needs of individual customer segments? Those are distinct priorities, and they tend to call for different kinds of data as well as different kinds of execution tactics and expertise. The secret to success comes in the sequencing of the steps and the prioritization that comes along with them.

*“Many companies, even those that have highly data-driven operating cultures, have a tough time actually mapping, inventorying, or auditing their own data assets.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 TAKE THE TIME TO ENSURE THAT YOUR MARKETING INITIATIVES TIE BACK TO YOUR COMPANY'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.
- 2 ATTRIBUTION IS ONE OF THE MOST CRITICAL CAPABILITIES TO ADDRESS WHEN ADOPTING A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO MARKETING.



# TO BUILD A DATA-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION, CREATE A LONG-TERM ROAD MAP

When you've done that, then you can begin to build a long-term road map for using your data in a way that leverages the technology available to you as well as the supply chain partners (agencies, database management companies, management consultancies) that are bringing new ideas to the table and managing business processes for you. If you can get the senior level buy-in you need to support that transformation, your chances of success will be enhanced.

As you consider the role of data as an agent for change in marketing execution, attribution will simultaneously represent one of your most important challenges and opportunities. You'll be looking to leverage data to support a range of strategic business purposes. You'll need to know more about addressable audiences to inform product development and customer strategy. You'll need to identify and segment those audiences in order to power more relevant, engaging communications. And you'll absolutely need to understand how well your critical marketing initiatives—your investments in customer relationships—are performing relative to each other, so that you can fine-tune your performance and put your dollars where they're positioned to do the most good. All three of these elements are fundamental to data-driven marketing. All three are increasingly becoming central to the design of next-generation marketing organizations.

“

*You'll absolutely need to understand how well your critical marketing initiatives—your investments in customer relationships—are performing relative to each other.*

”

# NEVER BE SATISFIED



**ANDY  
ZIMMERMAN**  
CMO,  
Evergage

Andy Zimmerman is chief marketing officer for Evergage, which delivers real-time personalization to more than 500 million web visitors. A frequent speaker at leading industry events, Andy has more than 20 years of experience helping software companies launch products, drive demand, improve sales productivity, and develop revenue-generating content marketing programs. You can follow Andy on Twitter at @AHZimmerman or @Evergage.

    
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I started playing competitive golf when I was a kid. I would read tips from the pros, observe what better players were doing, and then tinker with my swing. My goal was always to beat my own best score by adjusting and improving some part of my game. (I still do this today, by the way!)

The point is, I was always iterating. I wasn't so focused on winning tournaments—though that would happen once in a while—I just wanted to get better. This is the mindset modern marketers need to have.

What can you do to improve your conversion rates? What more can you do to attract potential customers? How might you drive a few more downloads or sign-ups per month? How could you better engage users of your app?

To steer toward the path of constant, incremental improvement, it's important to make sure that you're collecting data that are relevant, actionable, and measurable in relation to your organization's marketing objectives. To determine which data are relevant, ask yourself this question:

*What does marketing success look like, and has the management team bought into it?*

It seems straightforward, but you need to know the answer to this before you start collecting any data. You can't keep score if you don't know what game you're playing!

“What does marketing success look like, and has the management team bought into it?”

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 CONTINUALLY ANALYZE YOUR DATA, MAKE ADJUSTMENTS, EXPERIMENT AND TEST, AND NEVER BE SATISFIED, BECAUSE YOU CAN ALWAYS DO BETTER.
- 2 TO ENABLE CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT, IT'S IMPORTANT TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE COLLECTING DATA THAT ARE RELEVANT, ACTIONABLE, AND MEASURABLE IN RELATION TO YOUR ORGANIZATION'S MARKETING OBJECTIVES.





# NEVER BE SATISFIED

Once you know what data to collect, you need to make sure you have the right processes, systems, and people in place to take prompt action—ideally, in real time. We often see marketing systems that provide predictive analytics and automated actions based on data, particularly in the cases of website and app users. Even if you have large amounts of data, like web behavioral information, you need to be in a position to respond immediately to noticeable patterns and trends. Tracking those metrics requires some level of automation—generally, from multiple systems that include reporting, filtering, and trending capabilities.

A key piece to all of this is attribution. Be sure to experiment and test different programs and approaches to find out which marketing channels and tactics drive the most and best leads (and which ones don't) as you work toward your marketing goals. For instance, if your webinars generate more sales than Google AdWords campaigns, that knowledge will affect how you invest and plan your marketing efforts.

Finally, keep iterating. Continually analyze your data, make adjustments, experiment and test, and have fun along the way. Never be satisfied, though, because you can always do better. To me, that is the secret sauce to becoming a data-driven marketing organization.

“

*Even if you have large amounts of data . . . you need to be in a position to respond immediately to noticeable patterns and trends.*

”

# DON'T LET THEM EAT YOUR LUNCH



**DUSTIN  
ENGEL**

Head of Analytics and  
Data Activation,  
PMG Worldwide

Dustin Engel, the former head of product and strategy for ClearSaleing (acquired by eBay Enterprise) is an attribution thought leader. Dustin currently leads the analytics and audience science teams and serves on the executive team at PMG, one of the fastest-growing digital agencies in the United States. PMG is a 2014 Inc. 500 company (number 61 on Inc. 500 and number 5 for Advertising and Marketing) and a 2015 Advertising Age Silver Medalist for Small Agency of the Year.

    
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Becoming a data-driven marketing organization is a tall order if you have never really been one. Here are some suggestions for getting started:

- **Establish clear priorities.** It would be a logical first step to inventory your existing data. Then, you can prioritize data elements and move toward positive business change. Be clear about the problems you're trying to resolve before you start down the path of becoming data driven.
- **Integrate and blend.** Advertisers usually have more data on hand than they know what to do with, and the possibilities for using all these data aren't always apparent when they are first compiled. Integration helps reconnect disparate data elements so you can see what you have and how it might prove useful. I probably spend most of my time with clients on this task.
- **Invest in media.** You will always need media to realize your goals. That's why having a science-based attribution platform is crucial. It can give you complete visibility into customer paths, which will help you value your paid, earned, and owned media. That, in turn, will allow you to close the loop on your media investments.

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 ESTABLISH CLEAR PRIORITIES, AND THEN INTEGRATE AND BLEND TO RECONNECT YOUR EXISTING DATA.
- 2 SUCCESSFULLY SWITCHING FROM A LAST-CLICK MENTALITY TO A MORE HOLISTIC ATTRIBUTION APPROACH WILL REQUIRE AN EQUALLY SUCCESSFUL CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.

“A key element in switching from a last-click attribution mentality to a completely holistic measurement approach is to understand that some challenging change management issues lie ahead.”



# DON'T LET THEM EAT YOUR LUNCH

A key element in switching from a last-click attribution mentality to a completely holistic measurement approach is to understand that some challenging change management issues lie ahead. Here are a few issues that I'm always warning my clients about:

- **Latency.** The true length of time from first ad exposure to purchase is a lot longer than most marketers realize. I have seen, more often than not, latency windows greater than 40 days from first ad exposure. This understanding will inevitably force you to change your game.
- **Path fragmentation.** Having true visibility into customer paths is a real eye-opener—there's a ton of fragmentation. Making your channels work together will not necessarily be a linear process, nor will it necessarily be easy. So understanding the range of paths to purchase and the most common paths help add clarity to the process.
- **Consumer behavior.** Behaviors that you may hope to exploit are often volatile and extremely difficult to decipher. You need a wide footprint from a channel and placement standpoint and you should be prepared to test channels and placements that at once appeared to be not viable. This is one reason why a robust, algorithmic model for assigning fractional value to conversion touchpoints is so essential.

I often see advertisers who decide to switch to a true, science-based attribution strategy, but then fail to stay committed. I think they underestimate how daunting the change management piece will be and they stop following through.

In other interesting situations where there has been follow-through, the dollar allocations across media sometimes prove hugely consequential. When data are available and consumer behavior behind those data is decipherable, the marketing mix tends to change radically.

If you aren't interested in a more science-based approach to marketing, ponder this: your competitors probably are. Factor in the rise of growth hacking, and you might well feel alarmed. *Growth hacking* is a complete rewrite of the marketing rules, and companies born with the growth-hacker mentality are not traditional marketers. They can afford to ignore rules of the past and simply follow the data, because they aren't wedded to marketing's past.

If you choose to remain a laggard, odds are that some disruptive competitor will eventually come along and eat your lunch.

“

*If you aren't interested in a more science-based approach to marketing, ponder this: your competitors probably are.*

”

# STAYING FOCUSED ON YOUR OUTCOMES



**CESAR  
A. BREA**

**Founder and  
Managing Partner,  
Force Five Partners, LLC**

Cesar Brea is the author of *Marketing and Sales Analytics* and founder and managing partner of Force Five Partners, LLC. Force Five Partners works with leading brands across multiple industries to build their marketing analytics capabilities through hands-on solutions for real challenges and opportunities. Having received his MBA from Dartmouth University's Tuck School and his bachelor's degree from Harvard, Cesar has 30 years of business experience as a senior executive, entrepreneur, and advisor.



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Six points will help you become a data-driven marketing organization:

- **Avoid confusing means for ends.** A data-driven marketing organization is a means. A marketing organization that's driving 10 percent more qualified leads, 10 percent more efficiently (or whatever goals are most important to your business) is an end that can help galvanize and focus your journey to become data driven.
- **Work from the specific to the general.** "Becoming data driven" is general. Identifying and aligning a specific set of potential opportunities to investigate and realize with data and analysis—and managing this set as a dynamic portfolio from which you expect returns—is specific and accountable.
- **Start simple.** Manage increased sophistication (more data, more analysis) based on the incremental value it provides. For example, a marketer can start the journey toward complex attribution-based marketing by optimizing across two channels, such as search and online display. Then, he or she can add more channels and their associated touchpoints. By starting simple, not only do you avoid investing past the point of diminishing returns, but you also increase your understanding and ability to communicate.

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 IDENTIFY AND ALIGN A SPECIFIC SET OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO INVESTIGATE AND REALIZE WITH DATA AND ANALYSIS.
- 2 WORK ITERATIVELY IN 90-DAY CYCLES.

“Manage increased sophistication (more data, more analysis) based on the incremental value it provides.”



# STAYING FOCUSED ON YOUR OUTCOMES

- **Don't work data and analysis in isolation.** In my work with clients, I try to keep four ecosystemic conditions working harmoniously: (1) ensuring that senior executives agree on opportunities to pursue, (2) enabling practical and affordable access to data, (3) providing operational flexibility to act on insights, and (4) cultivating “analytic marketers”—that is, marketers and analysts who “get” each other and work well together rather than just lobbing things over walls.
- **Work iteratively in short cycles of no more than 90 days.** If you can't put some insight to work within 90 days to see if it pays as expected, then your analytic investments are at risk of collapsing on themselves. Reach for longer cycles only when you've got a healthy base of results powering you along. It's just like shifting up through a car's gears!
- **Don't chase unicorns.** Marketing analytics is a team sport, with lots of complementary roles, such as acquiring, organizing, and analyzing data; communicating insights; and acting on them. Good collaboration based on common understanding and accountable execution among these roles will lead to better outcomes than seeking, rarely finding, and (if you do) placing all your eggs in a rock star's basket and abdicating your executive responsibility for your business. You can hire some and partner for others, but however you proceed, stay focused on outcomes.

“  
*Marketing analytics is a team sport, with lots of complementary roles.*  
”



# LET THE DATA DRIVE (IT'S A LONG JOURNEY)



**PADDY  
FREEMAN**

**Digital Marketing Manager,  
Tesco PLC**

Paddy Freeman has spent more than 15 years working across marketing and technology, covering roles from programming engineer through program manager. Paddy currently manages the processes and systems required to create industry-leading programmatic advertising and personalized marketing capabilities across the Tesco Group. Paddy is a member of the Internet Advertising Bureau (UK) Display Trading Council. He graduated from Aston Business School with a BSc (Hons) degree in 1994.



Website

It is essential that a data-driven marketing strategy serves its company's core purpose – which at Tesco, is serving Britain's shoppers a little better, every day. We could not do that without a data-driven approach to marketing that makes us totally accountable for the money we spend and the customer loyalty we drive as a result of those expenditures.

For your marketing group to become data-driven, you must look across and beyond the business to identify quality data sources you can use for marketing purposes. Then, if you need to convert any non-believers, you must map those data against current marketing activities so that you can show how you are using the data and how they improve marketing performance. The benefits must be clear to key people throughout the organization. After all, the transition to a data-driven organization involves changing people, processes, and technologies, so it is best to start small and build on successes.

It takes time to turn a traditional marketing organization into a data-driven organization. The work of using data to improve marketing activities never ends. For Tesco, it really began when we launched the Clubcard loyalty scheme 20 years ago—a popular program that rewards customers with points they can redeem in our stores or with our partners.

*“For your marketing group to become data-driven, you must look across and beyond the business to identify quality data sources you can use for marketing purposes.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1** A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO MARKETING MAKES YOU ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE MONEY YOU SPEND AND THE CUSTOMER LOYALTY YOU DRIVE AS A RESULT OF THOSE EXPENDITURES.
- 2** ATTRIBUTION MODELING CAN BE USED TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT THAT DIFFERENT CHANNELS CAN HAVE ON CUSTOMER ACTIVITY. FOR THOSE THAT GET IT RIGHT, IT'S DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING AT ITS BEST.



# LET THE DATA DRIVE (IT'S A LONG JOURNEY)

The program was (and still is) a significant investment, but it provided us with great insights into our customers. Later, we launched our online store, beginning with groceries, and then expanding into clothing and general goods.

Shoppers can use their Clubcard both online and in the brick-and-mortar stores, so it provides a great bridge for data collection in those environments and has given us a rich set of individualized data that enable us to pursue – amongst other things – a customer-first programmatic advertising strategy. In programmatic advertising, we make real-time decisions about the timing and content of advertising to maximize the return on our advertising spend. This strategy places a premium on data-driven decision making, because in the time it takes for a browser to load a Web page, the advertising inventory on that page is bought and sold. We are able to bid in real time for advertising on third-party websites. The amount we bid and the message we deliver can be based on a real-time overlay of our own customer data.

Since we have marketing activities that run on a number of channels simultaneously, we also continue to explore attribution modeling to understand the impact that different channels can have on customer activity. It's not an easy thing to get right – but for those that do, it's data-driven marketing at its best.

Another area we are exploring is data discovery. We employ data scientists – people with serious smarts – to look for patterns in the data that indicate new marketing opportunities. It's incredibly important to explore the data in this way and give the data its own voice, rather than use it more-so to reinforce pre-conceived ideas. To misquote Andrew Lang, a great Scottish writer – “It can be easy to use data as a drunken man uses lamp posts – for support rather than for illumination.” When it comes to data-driven marketing, you never fully “get there” because new tools and new data sources are always becoming available. Data-driven marketing is truly an ongoing journey. To take the right path means putting the data itself in the driving seat.

“

*This strategy places a premium on data-driven decision making, because in the time it takes for a browser to load a Web page, the advertising inventory on that page is bought and sold.*

”

# THE DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM AND DATA-BASED DECISIONING



**ALAN  
OSETEK**

**Global President,  
Resolution Media, An Omnicom  
Media Group Company**

Alan Osetek is the global president of Resolution Media and oversees the global growth of Omnicom Media Group's search, social, and digital performance media unit. Prior to joining Resolution, Alan was the managing director for iProspect/Aegis and responsible for the company's east coast operations. Before joining iProspect in 2008, he served as a board member and CRO for Visual IQ. Alan holds a bachelor's degree in economics from Skidmore College and an MBA from Babson College.

    
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2015 has been the year of major media agency reviews, with twelve major marketers reassessing their agencies – this accounts to a total of over \$25 billion in advertising dollars up for grabs.

Why now? As someone who has participated in numerous agency pitches recently, I have a theory – data shows consumers are more active online and new media is being created within the digital ecosystem to reach these consumers. Marketers want to be more prevalent online to reach these consumers ahead of the curve. To do this, marketers need to reassess both their current media mix and their media agencies. Media is now more accountable and marketers are more data driven. Based on this new world digital media order, the following are three immediate actions marketers can adopt to become more digitally relevant:

- **Define how you will measure success.** This discussion often strays down a rabbit hole of features, functions and technologies, with the conversation focused on everything needed to build the digital marketing technology infrastructure. However, the real focus should be on answering a few key questions: What result are you trying to accomplish? What is the data implementation and collection strategy? How does that strategy sit with the marketing group's objectives? The answers to these questions can help you get started.
- **Form a right-brain/left-brain culture.** The ideal new hire should have a marketing background with analytical skills and a creative mindset.

*“Marketers need to reassess both their current media mix and their media agencies.”*



## KEY LESSONS

- 1 AS AN INDUSTRY, MARKETING IS MOVING CLOSER TO THE END OF THE LAST-CLICK ATTRIBUTION MODEL.
- 2 IT IS POSSIBLE TO SCORE QUICK WINS BY IMPLEMENTING DIGITAL ATTRIBUTION ACROSS A FEW CHANNELS.

# THE DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM AND DATA-BASED DECISIONING

This person should be able to analyze data and effectively tease out insights with tangible next steps on how to activate on performance. Instead, many organizations trying to become data-centric hire techies who have no marketing or creative abilities. Alternatively, more traditionally-minded agencies bring in purely creative thinkers who have no analytical chops. If you can't find individuals who wear both hats, hire teams that collectively add up to this kind of culture.

- **Challenge the status quo with data-based decisioning.** Look at your overall business goals, and leverage new media to deliver on these objectives. If your objective is to drive more revenue while focusing on in-store sales, then assess data collected from digital media activities to achieve this. If in-store sales are a key success metric, use data-based decisioning to inform new opportunities to drive success. For example, a mobile strategy can drive local awareness that funnels in foot traffic and mobile offers and couponing can all be new ways to drive in-store sales. Track marketing activities and collect data to understand who your target consumers are and what works and what doesn't with them. Then optimize—do more of what is working and invest less on what doesn't.

The good news is that cost-to-entry for digital media isn't sky-high. There are many advertising options and consumers are engaged. With a focus on data collection, marketers are moving beyond last-click attribution and marketing technologies are developing capabilities to track the consumer engagement journey not just online, but also offline. Even TV is moving towards online measurement and will eventually become fully digital and measurable. Technologies already exist that allow marketers to run TV-sync-social and TV-sync-search campaigns.

Although easy to activate, drawing insights from attribution requires building history – history that shows consumer actions from awareness to purchase. Leveraging data to solve a business problem by using a fully functional attribution platform typically takes three to six months of ongoing data collection, analysis, and optimization. It will not always be easy to get budgeting approval for this attribution investment when marketers need immediate ROI.

Attribution is key to real data-based decisioning. It is not enough to simply collect the data and act on it, attribution is necessary to truly understand the digital ecosystem. Eventually, attribution will become the center of the marketing universe. To me, the only questions are when and how.

“

*Eventually,  
attribution  
will become  
the center of  
the marketing  
universe.*

”

# Get Buy-In From the Top Down

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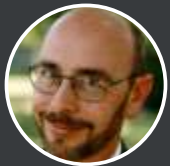
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# CREATING A COMPLETE DATA VIEW THAT FITS YOUR SALES CYCLE



**LAURA  
DEGRAFF**

Vice President,  
Digital Acquisitions,  
Barclaycard US

As vice president of digital acquisition at Barclaycard, Laura DeGraff manages digital strategy for online account acquisition, focusing on new innovations within the bank to deliver a best-in-class online experience to prospective customers. With more than 15 years of experience managing online marketing for agencies, brands, and as a consultant, she brings a unique perspective to campaign planning, implementation, and analysis. Her digital media expertise includes paid search, search engine optimization, affiliates, display, and creative development.



Website

Developing a strong data-driven marketing strategy starts from the top down. There must be agreement at all levels of the organization about which data will be used for decision-making. One problem that many organizations experience is that marketers are stuck in silos: one person might be responsible for search, another for social, another for email marketing, and so on. They become focused on looking at just the perspective of their channel without seeing how all the pieces come together.

Being able to look across channels often requires organizational change. It also requires having the right tracking tools that give you a view at the placement level to see what's working and what's not. With that information, you can optimize your media mix.

Attribution is important to a data-driven strategy because it allows you to weigh the value of individual marketing initiatives. Here at Barclaycard, we primarily leverage last-click attribution, but we know it's not enough. We have many touchpoints that lead up to a conversion. Unfortunately, without a more comprehensive view across channels, valuable contributions higher in the funnel, such as display or PR, are sometimes overlooked. Without the ability to analyze all your touchpoints together, you aren't getting a full sense of the customer journey. That is a disservice to all your marketing channels and your overall marketing mix.

*“There must be agreement at all levels of the organization about which data will be used for decision-making.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1** ATTRIBUTION IS IMPORTANT TO A DATA-DRIVEN STRATEGY BECAUSE IT ALLOWS YOU TO WEIGH THE VALUE OF TOUCHPOINTS.
- 2** A CONCERTED DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING STRATEGY MUST HAVE BUY-IN AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE ORGANIZATION.



# CREATING A COMPLETE DATA VIEW THAT FITS YOUR SALES CYCLE

We are currently working with our media agency to find the right kind of attribution solution, one that can work with the data we have and provide a measure of what's working and what's not within the time period of our sales cycle. This is an important point when considering attribution vendors. Some vendors require such a long time to return the results of the analysis that the data are too old to be useful.

The type of attribution strategy you select needs to fit your sales cycle. For instance, the sales cycle of a car, from first contact to purchase, is often six months to a year. The typical sales funnel for the credit card industry is around two weeks. We know that the majority of conversions will happen within that two-week window, with some conversions happening a lot faster. So, when we're looking at marketing data and doing attribution analysis, we need to be able to look at an attribution window that matches our two-week sales cycle.

There has been a lot of interest in attribution in recent years, but the industry is struggling with it, partly because there are many different attribution models but little agreement on a model that gives proper weight to the different touchpoints in a funnel. Also, when a business starts getting away from last click, it's going to change the perception of the value of certain channels, which can have major budgetary and organizational implications. That's why a concerted data-driven marketing strategy must have buy-in at the highest levels of the organization.

“

*Without the ability to analyze all your touchpoints together, you aren't getting a full sense of the customer journey.*

”



**JIM  
STERNE**

Founder,  
eMetrics Summit, and  
Board Chair, Digital Analytics  
Association

Jim Sterne is an international consultant who has focused on measuring the value of online marketing for creating and strengthening customer relationships since 1993. He has written seven books on using the Internet for marketing, produces the eMetrics Summit ([www.emetrics.org](http://www.emetrics.org)), and is co-founder and current board chair of the Digital Analytics Association.

Becoming a data-driven marketing organization is a culture question. If the organization likes to do things the way it always has done them, becoming data driven will not happen.

Unless we change corporate culture, there isn't much else we can do. To that end:

- **Build confidence in the validity of your marketing data.** When you're dealing with digital marketing touchpoints and attributes, you're talking about statistical analysis, not black-and-white bean counting. When upper management understands that, the organization can get on with determining *how* data are useful rather than arguing over *whether* data are useful.
- **Find out what matters to the boss.** Whatever the truth is at the front line, the generals make the decisions. If you know the problems your executives most want to solve, they will like and appreciate your data because they will trust that the data are answering their questions.
- **Turn data into real insights.** When you have approval and confidence out of the way, you can get down to solving problems. This is where you get into which numbers help you do what and what problems you actually can solve.

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 WHEN IT COMES TO MEASURING MARKETING PERFORMANCE, THE OLD-SCHOOL METHOD FOCUSES ON THE MARKETING MIX—MOVING MONEY FROM ONE BUCKET TO ANOTHER.
- 2 THE NEW-SCHOOL IS BOTTOM UP—MEASURING BEHAVIOR AND UNDERSTANDING WHICH CHANNELS AND TACTICS ARE INFLUENCING CONSUMER RESPONSE.

“How do you assign fractional credit to each of these channels and tactics? What drove people to make those choices?”



# BOTTOMS UP

There are two camps when it comes to measuring marketing performance. The old-school concentrates on the marketing mix—moving money from one bucket to another. Someone decides that the organization is going to spend more money online this year and so divides the online bucket among display, email, paid search, and social to see if there is an impact on engagements and sales. That's a traditional top-down approach.

The new-school is bottom up—measuring behavior. People are being exposed to your messaging, and they're clicking links, spending more time on your website, responding to your emails. How do you assign fractional credit to each of these channels and tactics? What drove people to make those choices?

That granular response is *attribution*. If you can figure those things out, you can build models based on, say, the last three months of experience. Then, you can run that model over the next three months to see if you were right. You can also create and test alternative models and determine which was most predictive.

**A note of caution:** all models are wrong, as George E. P. Box said, but some are useful. Building a predictive model is like drawing a map, a mere representation of a territory that inevitably has flaws built in it.

Predictive models are fairly mature in areas like supply chain management, but marketing is entering uncharted territory. Marketers are predicting human emotional responses to marketing stimuli.

The truth is, we marketers are getting better at it, but it's still new. To really make it work, the people at the top must have intellectual curiosity stamped into their DNA. Otherwise, we will never move forward.

“

*You can also create and test alternative models and determine which was most predictive.*

”

# RECOGNIZE AND ALIGN THE PARTIES INVOLVED IN A MARKETING STRATEGY



**ROLF  
OLSEN**

Chief Data Officer,  
Mindshare North America

As chief data officer of Mindshare North America, Rolf Olsen leads the company's Marketing Sciences group, a team of more than 70 data scientists who help the agency make real-time media investment decisions for clients. That role includes driving new tools and partnerships for The LOOP, Mindshare's adaptive marketing engine. Rolf brings more than 15 years of industry experience to his role. Prior to Mindshare, he ran the Marketing Sciences teams across iProspect, Copernicus, and Carat at Dentsu Aegis Network.



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Developing a truly data-driven approach to marketing is an enterprise-wide endeavor, not just one group or department adopting a solution. Every part of the organization needs to be aligned, from finance to operations to ad ops to strategy.

Building a successful digital marketing organization takes time, because a lot of work goes into aligning key areas of the business. For instance, answering even the most basic questions, such as how does pricing affect marketing outcomes, or what's the true cost of a promotion, requires breaking down traditional data silos. Different parts of the enterprise must communicate and share data in new ways, and this means dealing with legacy applications, legacy data, and different platforms within the organization. The larger the enterprise, the greater the alignment challenge. Successfully remaking the organization requires a top-down management commitment and the time to do it right. When digital marketing projects fail, they often do so in an environment where people expect results in a short period of time.

A good example is implementing an attribution strategy. Attribution helps marketing understand how digital assets work together. It also breaks down digital silos, so the search team, social team, display team, and website team must now work together much more closely.

“Building a successful digital marketing organization takes time, because a lot of work goes into aligning key areas of the business.”

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 WHEN DIGITAL MARKETING PROJECTS FAIL, IT'S OFTEN IN AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE PEOPLE EXPECT RESULTS IN A VERY SHORT TIME.
- 2 WITH A FOUNDATION IN PLACE, IT BECOMES EASIER TO CHANGE, IMPROVE, AND REFINE THE PROCESS GOING FORWARD.





# RECOGNIZE AND ALIGN THE PARTIES INVOLVED IN A MARKETING STRATEGY

Attribution is really the first tool that allows marketers to look across all these activities and apply a common measurement to assess their effectiveness. It creates a digital ecosystem that helps marketing be agile in flexing its budget and respond quickly to optimize marketing performance.

Many companies struggle to implement an attribution strategy because they have not developed the internal alignment necessary for success. For example, if a company signs a contract with a digital attribution vendor, the chief marketing officer (CMO) typically drives that process. He or she signs the agreement and wants to see results immediately. The challenge is that for the strategy to succeed, marketing now has to involve the internal technology teams and start asset tagging, which can take months. There may be restrictions on what marketing can put on the website. The media agency has a lot of work to do with incremental tagging, architecture, and naming conventions. A lot of work goes into the process from many different parties, something the CMO probably did not consider when he or she signed the contract.

Once companies have completed the necessary work of aligning their internal operations, they then must build and test everything incrementally to prove what works. If marketing has a short-term view of what it hopes to get out of this process, it may not get there. It takes time to implement an attribution model that works for a given business, but if marketing takes the time up front and builds an operational process around attribution and digital marketing, that makes everything easier. With a foundation in place, it becomes easier to change, improve, and refine the process going forward. Digital becomes just another part of the marketing workflow.

“

*Many companies struggle to implement an attribution strategy because they have not developed the internal alignment necessary for success.*

”

# BUILD INCREMENTALLY, AND TEST AS YOU GO



**SUMEET  
VERMANI**

Global Head of Digital Strategy,  
Symantec

Sumeet Vermani is an international marketing leader with a track record of developing innovative, customer-driven marketing strategies that combine traditional creative approaches with data science. He focuses on digital, social, content, and paid media strategies, bringing his experience to bear in such companies as Google, ESPN, Trinity Mirror, and Symantec to design and implement audience-focused, data-driven, agile digital frameworks and teams that deliver optimum returns for the organization and the customer.



Twitter | Website

The first step in becoming a data-driven marketing organization is to fully understand the data IQ inside your business. In other words, marketing must clearly understand how effectively data is captured and stored, and how it is used at the front end of the business. At the very outset, the business needs to benchmark where it is and understand what it has to build on. When businesses assess their data IQ, perception and reality are often not in sync.

With the amount of investment, time, and senior management buy-in required to build a data-driven marketing organization, the marketing group will quickly discover whether it is achieving results that meet expectations. An important part of assessing the data IQ within an organization is managing expectations. Then, as the organization moves forward with its strategy, it must effectively deliver on those expectations. The move to more data-driven marketing can be powerful, but there will be a point when people want to quantify their return on investment.

When there is a common understanding of where the business is and where it needs to go, the next important step in building a data-driven marketing organization is proving the value of the strategy. Marketing must showcase opportunities for people to see the value of taking this new direction.

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 AN IMPORTANT PART OF ASSESSING THE DATA IQ WITHIN AN ORGANIZATION IS MANAGING EXPECTATIONS, AND THEN DELIVERING ON THEM.
- 2 EFFECTIVE MARKETING IN TODAY'S BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT REQUIRES EVALUATING A CAMPAIGN OR AN ASSET IN A CREATIVE LIGHT WHILE ALSO EXECUTING THAT CAMPAIGN BASED ON INSIGHTS DERIVED FROM DATA.

*“When businesses assess their data IQ, perception and reality are often not in sync.”*



# BUILD INCREMENTALLY, AND TEST AS YOU GO

In my journey at Symantec, my group A-B tested two marketing approaches to a campaign. The A test represented the direction the majority of the organization wanted to take—an approach centered on creative hunches that have been the underpinning of the company's traditional approach to marketing. The B test used a data- and insight-driven approach. My team was able to show that the data-driven approach was far more effective.

Attribution is key to demonstrating the success of data-driven marketing. It is also an example of the need for an incremental approach when it comes to transforming the marketing organization. No one-size-fits-all attribution model works for every business. Attribution frameworks will differ depending on business setup, organizational structure, and business goals.

One challenge of attribution is that the technology must be in place for everything to work effectively. It takes time to collect data and feed it to the attribution model so that marketing analysis and optimization can take place. The best approach is to begin with a small, simple attribution engagement; demonstrate its value; and then layer in greater complexity.

By demonstrating results, people throughout the organization will start to join this journey to data-driven marketing. At Symantec, we are seeing that skills needed in the marketing organization are changing so rapidly that it is important to train our workforce continuously. We must also change the structure and processes we use to do the work and train staff on the use of new tools. The more successful you are at accomplishing this at your organization, the greater buy-in you will gain throughout the organization to do even more.

Making data the heart of the marketing effort also requires finding a balance between creative and data-driven marketing. A creative element is still necessary to convey the business' message effectively. Effective marketing in today's business environment requires evaluating a campaign or an asset in a creative light while also executing that campaign based on insights derived from data.

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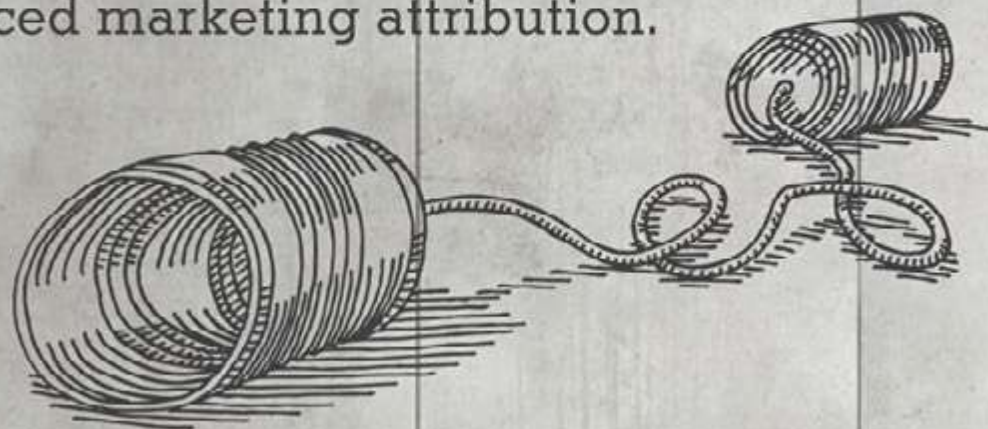
*The best approach is to begin with a small, simple attribution model; demonstrate its value; and then layer in greater complexity.*

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# CONVENTIONAL MARKETING IS SO LAST CENTURY

Find out how to take your marketing performance from mind-numbing to mind-blowing with advanced marketing attribution.



SEE THE MARKETING ATTRIBUTION  
INFOGRAPHIC THAT EXPLAINS IT ALL.

**GET IT**

# Break Free From Data Silos

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# BEYOND THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY



**JENNY  
WATSON**

VP of Digital and  
Direct Marketing,  
AutoNation Inc.

Jenny Watson has held global executive marketing and operational roles in the United States and China. She spent the past 13 years in e-commerce companies, predominantly in the travel industry, including eight years with Expedia. Jenny is currently with AutoNation (a Fortune 200 automotive retailer), leading digital marketing programs and the technical infrastructure that supports them. Being customer-centric, bridging the gap between the online and offline customer experiences, and evaluating the effectiveness of marketing investments are key components of her digital strategy.

How do you build a data-driven marketing organization?

**Step One.** Decide early on whether to build a centralized or a decentralized marketing function. Determine whether your capabilities will be able to scale and leverage your statistical analysis system. That will define how you drive the whole data-driven marketing concept.

**Step Two.** Figure out whether your executives view marketing as an investment or a cost. Do they think marketing adds incremental value or builds up a competitive advantage? If they do, they will view the marketing function as strategic and something more than just overhead.

My organization errs on the side of centralization and toward building, scaling, and leveraging data to maintain strategic advantage against our competitors. Internally, we are expected to run at a profit. That forces us to scrutinize each channel and determine our key performance indicators. We divvy up budgets after we have defined our metrics for measuring each channel's success. Then, we optimize across channels.

My company made deliberate choices about how to organize the marketing function. Our marketing analytics team, for instance, is housed within the finance department. Why? Frankly, because most companies don't trust their marketing department's numbers very much. They trust finance's numbers.

*“Decide early whether to build a centralized or a decentralized marketing function.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1** MOST COMPANIES DON'T TRUST THEIR MARKETING DEPARTMENT'S NUMBERS—THEY PREFER FINANCE'S NUMBERS.
- 2** ATTRIBUTION IS KEY TO BECOMING DATA DRIVEN, HELPING YOU NOT ONLY UNDERSTAND THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY, BUT ALSO WHAT INVESTMENTS YOU CAN MAKE TO FACILITATE THOSE CUSTOMER JOURNEYS.



# BEYOND THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Our analytics team plays the Switzerland role—the trusted, neutral advisor to finance. That helps immensely. That team has no emotional investment in my department's numbers and no reason to bias data. We can't be accused of bias when we make our budgeting requests. That's obviously important. Data-driven marketing requires a lot of investment—infrastructure building, team building, and process building.

Another component that's key to becoming data driven is attribution. A current key macro trend, for example, is to eliminate linear funnels. Customers don't take linear steps anymore as they interact with brands: they use multiple devices and are exposed to numerous touchpoints. Based on all those interactions, we are working on fractional attribution to assign value to our various in-market investments.

Attribution has value beyond the customer journey, as well. We pull our vendors' raw data through our attribution model to measure them against their relative peers in our mix of partners. That way, we can set a baseline value to all our partners vis-à-vis our business objectives using attribution.

My belief is that to be data driven, an agile approach to marketing is key. You need process, budget, and infrastructure that support agile methodologies and foster continual testing and iteration of everything you put into market. To do that, you need data. Data are not enough, however: you also need cross-functional team collaboration and local market knowledge. If you have those things in place, you will be set up to dive deeply into data and come up with critical new insights and actionable plans. You will find that you're making decisions faster and that you understand how to react effectively to consumer behavior in a rapidly changing marketing environment.

“

*Our analytics team plays the Switzerland role—the trusted, neutral advisor to finance.*

”

# A CENTER FOR CAPTURING ONLINE AND OFFLINE DATA IS ESSENTIAL



**CHRIS  
BRIDGES**

GM, Analytics Services,  
Analytics Pros, Inc.

Chris Bridges is general manager of analytics at Analytics Pros, Inc. His 26-year career started at DEC, followed by 17 years at Intel as a software engineer and manager. Chris left Intel and became director of engineering at MySpace, director of analytics at Outlook and Grindr, and then director of enterprise analytics at IAC for About.com and 10 other properties, totaling over 30 billion hits per month. In recent years, Chris also founded the Wonkydata analytics agency.

    
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The most important step in developing a data-driven marketing organization is being able to capture both online and offline data.

Online data include all sources of directional analytics, such as downloading apps, app usage, website activity, and content engagement. Online analytics are directional in that they result from actions users take as they engage with both inbound and outbound online assets; therefore, they provide direct measurements of user behaviors. Offline data are traditionally seen as business intelligence (BI) data. They encompass business data but can also include data from offline activities. BI people can use this aggregated business data to determine actual return on investment, actual revenue per 1,000 impressions, and actual cost per 1,000 impressions.

The directional data from analytics are the only data that provide insight into goal-tracking user behaviors, whether conversions or user-generated revenue. This means that directional data become valuable not only in the light they shed on marketing inferences, but also as a back end to the BI analysis, providing a connection between user behaviors and business results.

With a solid foundation of online and offline data, it becomes possible to develop attribution models that provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of marketing strategies.

*“The most important step in developing a data-driven marketing organization is being able to capture both online and offline data.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 WITH A SOLID FOUNDATION OF ONLINE AND OFFLINE DATA, IT BECOMES POSSIBLE TO DEVELOP ATTRIBUTION MODELS THAT PROVIDE DEEPER INSIGHTS INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MARKETING STRATEGIES.
- 2 WITHOUT HIGH-LEVEL SUPPORT, ANY DATA-DRIVEN STRATEGY WILL SUFFER FROM THE MYOPIA OF THE ORGANIZATION UNDER WHICH THE DATA FALL.



# A CENTER FOR CAPTURING ONLINE AND OFFLINE DATA IS ESSENTIAL

To successfully apply an attribution model, it is necessary to track everything you care about, which usually includes engagement with all your digital assets, including social, YouTube, email, mobile apps, ad clicks, search—everything that provides insight into user behaviors. Attribution of inbound analytics relies on proper tagging. One reason attribution models fail is that tagging is often not done well, so it's good practice to have a person solely focused on tagging and updating tags to accommodate new assets and changing campaigns.

From there, you can determine which traffic sources are providing a consistent benefit and which are not. If the tagging and attribution data are accurate, you can determine which traffic sources or combination of traffic sources are delivering conversions, and then determine the cost of any desired metric, such as cost per impression or cost per conversion. You can also relate those conversions to specific user cohort characteristics, such as geographical location or age. With this information, you can not only define your marketing strategies, but also adjust them accordingly.

To build an excellent data-driven marketing organization, you must have buy-in at the highest level. The CEO needs to praise the idea of analytics, and you need to have reports generated for that high-level perspective. Otherwise, data suffer from the myopia of the organization under which they fall. For instance, if the data fall under finance, an inordinate amount of effort can be spent on determining why the data do not balance exactly while overlooking essential business insights they contain.

“

*To build an excellent data-driven marketing organization, you must have buy-in at the highest level.*

”

# A FIVE-PRONGED APPROACH TO DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING



**BILL  
MULLER**

Chief Marketing Officer,  
Visual IQ

Bill Muller is the chief marketing officer (CMO) at Visual IQ. He is a recognized expert in business-to-business lead generation and thought leadership on both the agency and brand sides of the industry. Prior to Visual IQ, he spent nine years as CMO at global performance marketing agency iProspect, where he helped grow the organization from startup to worldwide leader in its space. Bill has written articles for *CMO.com*, *Search Engine Land*, and *BtoB Magazine* and has spoken at the DMA Annual Conference, the CMO Club Summit, and the SES Conference, among others.



Twitter | Website



Most marketers recognize that data is the backbone of a successful marketing strategy, but building a data-driven marketing organization can be challenging. Putting your data to work for more effective, accountable, and predictable marketing requires a five-pronged approach:

- **Align marketing success to business results.** All too often, marketing comes under the gun because its tactics aren't perceived as having a direct impact on the company's bottom line. Successful data-driven marketing organizations prove their value by working closely with senior management, especially the CEO and CFO, to define, align, and prioritize the metrics that are most relevant to the company and its business objectives. Aligned metrics not only demonstrate marketing's contribution to the organization, but also provide marketers with more confidence in their decisions and more clarity on where to focus their efforts.
- **Eliminate data silos.** New opportunities lie in the massive amount of consumer interaction data that's generated every second. Unfortunately, most of this data lives in silos, leaving marketers with inconsistent and duplicate conversion data as well as an incomplete view of their customers' journeys. The most effective marketing organizations use sophisticated data aggregation techniques to integrate all their marketing data (from ad servers, email platforms, customer relationship management systems, data management platforms, real-time bidding, etc.) into a single data repository.

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 ADVANCED MARKETING ATTRIBUTION SOLUTIONS CAN COLLECT AND CONSOLIDATE DATA THAT ARE SPREAD ACROSS MANY DIFFERENT DATA SILOS AND TURN THEM INTO ACCURATE INSIGHTS.
- 2 A SUCCESSFUL DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING STRATEGY REQUIRES MORE THAN JUST HOLISTIC MEASUREMENT; IT ALSO NEEDS THE ABILITY TO CREATE OPTIMIZED MEDIA PLANS AND INSTANTLY TURN INSIGHT INTO ACTION.

“New opportunities lie in the massive amount of consumer interaction data that's generated every second.” ➡



# A FIVE-PRONGED APPROACH TO DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING

This consolidation and integration of disparate data not only reveals new insights, de-duplicates conversions, and uncovers hidden optimization opportunities, but also enables marketers to get the 360-degree view of their prospects and customers.

- **Turn data into insight.** Combining multiple data sources is one thing; intelligently interpreting that data into actionable insight is another. Successful marketing organizations arm themselves with advanced marketing attribution platforms that enable them to translate raw data into actionable insights. With advanced attribution, marketers can understand the performance of individual channels, campaigns, and tactics; the influence that each has on the other; and their overall performance as part of an integrated marketing strategy.
- **Predict performance.** To generate maximum return on investment, marketers need to know not only what has been working but also what is likely to work in the future. Using predictive analytics, marketers can perform a “what if” analysis to understand the potential impact of changes (price adjustments, discounts, budget reallocations, etc.) before they are made. Armed with this kind of forward-facing, data-driven insight, marketers can create and implement more effective cross-channel marketing strategies.
- **Automatically execute optimized buys.** To be truly successful, it’s critical that the optimization recommendations gleaned from the data are implemented in daily operations and spend decisions. The most effective data-driven marketing organizations have processes for implementing recommendations and automatically sending media buying instructions to execution platforms, including demand-side platforms, real-time bidding tools, and trading desks, for more effective optimization.

Embracing these five practices can empower marketers at any organization to put their data to work for more effective, accountable, and predictable marketing.

“

*Successful marketing organizations arm themselves with advanced marketing attribution platforms that enable them to translate raw data into actionable insights.*

”

# THROUGH THE CUSTOMER'S EYES



**JAMIE  
DARNOW**  
Founder,  
CXO Consulting

Jamie Darnow is the founder of CXO Consulting, a boutique consulting firm that offers strategic guidance to CEOs in the health care, security, retail, and publishing industries. Prior to founding his company in 2014, Jamie served as chief marketing officer at Consumer Reports for nine years, where he helped usher the organization into the digital world and achieved the highest level of growth in the storied organization's 75-year history. Jamie has more than 20 years of experience helping organizations define strategies for growth.



Being data driven starts with integrating all your customer data sources and using the art and science available to understand what that customer is telling you through data. I have always found that to be the easy part. Where there seems to be an epidemic problem is in organizations' failure to rearrange their businesses around a customer-centric business model to better leverage customer desires.

So, here's my high-level advice for becoming a data-driven marketing organization:

- **Become customer-centric.** You can't have a data-driven organization if you don't place customers at the forefront of your business model. On the technical side, becoming customer-centric means collecting all your customer touchpoints and integrating them into a knowledge base. Customers will offer up critical pieces of information through your various channels of business, but the data are useful only if you are tracking and weaving them together to understand your customer story. You can do that in a data repository, but likely that will not be enough. You also need to reorganize around your customer, if you want to leverage their data fully from all angles.
- **Reorganize.** If you don't transform your organization around your customer data, you will never become truly data driven. Customer touchpoints offer you information on everything from market research insights to new, revenue-generating product development opportunities.

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 BECOMING DATA DRIVEN MEANS BECOMING CUSTOMER-CENTRIC—BUT THAT REQUIRES REORGANIZATION.
- 2 THE GOAL OF BECOMING DATA-DRIVEN SHOULD BE TO DISCOVER WHO YOUR BEST CUSTOMERS ARE.

“On the technical side, becoming customer-centric means collecting all your customer touchpoints and integrating them into a knowledge base.”



# THROUGH THE CUSTOMER'S EYES

It becomes moot, however, if your organization treats valuable customer data as a cost center buried in, let's say, Operations. Forming a data-centric reorganization often will lead to clashes with traditional, hierarchical organizational structures. I think the traditional legacy hierarchical model is out: instead, I'm a big fan of cross-functional organization, albeit with clear goals and accountability.

- **Act on the data.** After you have incorporated your data, the onus shifts to acting on the data. Data will speak to you to a certain extent, but it is up to you to determine how best to act on it to move your organization forward. In part, this goes back to my organizational recommendation. We tend to look at data through our lenses as marketers rather than through the eyes of consumers. That's a fundamental problem. Consumers do not care about 90 percent of the things we fuss over internally. They just don't see the world we see. Marketers need to look from-the-outside-in vs. the-inside-out.

Attribution is absolutely critical to becoming data-centric, but you can go crazy trying to measure the impact of each interaction. You may know, for example, what the last touch was prior to a purchase, but you don't know what drove the customer into action. Maybe it was an offline marketing campaign or TV ad; SEM ad, SEO search; a newsletter, email, or online banner ad; or a remarketing campaign. It is difficult to sort out which of those channels was the crucial point of contact, particularly because consumer behaviors don't align neatly with our channel expectations.

To my mind, the best reason for attribution is to give you profit and loss (P&L) metrics on individual digital channels. Ultimately, you must make sure that the costs of your individual channels check out from your overall P&L perspective.

The goal of being data driven is understanding through your data who your best customers are. When you have that insight, so many positive things can happen for your business—unless the information is buried in organizational silos. Then, your ability to leverage customer data will be greatly inhibited.

“

*Ultimately, you must make sure that the costs of your individual channels check out from your overall P&L perspective.*

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— ★ ★ ★ —

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# Empower Your Staff to be Data-Driven

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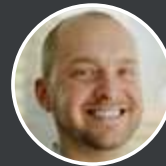
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**PETER  
HAMILTON**  
CEO,  
TUNE

A digital marketer by background, Peter Hamilton is CEO of TUNE, the enterprise platform for mobile marketing. Peter joined twin brothers and co-founders Lucas and Lee Brown in 2009 to unveil HasOffers, the first Software as a Service for performance marketers. As CEO, Peter took TUNE's first mobile products to market in 2012, raised \$36.4 million through two rounds of funding, and recently launched the TUNE® Marketing Console, a game-changing product for marketers looking to achieve unparalleled results from mobile.



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When it comes to building a data-driven organization, there are three elements I view as paramount.

**Data-driven people.** You are looking for the elusive unicorn—someone who loves to deep dive into data that explains things, but who also sees data's limits. It's no easy find, but teams can be built that balance those qualities.

At our annual mobile marketing conference this summer, Malcolm Gladwell delivered his keynote on everything data *can't* tell us. Like context. Data can tell us what happens, and maybe even how it happens, but it can't tell us why it happens. And that's where your team comes in.

Your marketing organization needs leaders that combine the analytical and intuitive mindsets: they understand how to use data to build and scale predictable results, but know that understanding the larger context has the greatest reward. A data-informed (but not data-bound) leader completes the data story with information from customers and the community, and develops the perspective to make better, bigger decisions.

**Data collection.** You need a strategy for collecting data that lets you learn how to best engage your customers. For TUNE's clients, that means identifying ways to gather all the key user information, from the app installation experience to registration to purchase—every meaningful engagement.

*“You must distill, find, and recognize how your marketing strategies are contributing to your goals.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1** YOUR MARKETING ORGANIZATION NEEDS TO THINK ABOUT WHICH DATA CAN HELP DRIVE ACTIONABLE DECISIONS.
- 2** BY MEASURING ALL ACTIONS PRIOR TO CONVERSION, YOU CAN UNDERSTAND OVERLAPPING CHANNELS THAT TOUCH THE SAME AUDIENCE, AND FIGURE OUT WHICH TEND TO DRIVE MORE AWARENESS VERSUS DIRECT SALES.



# BEYOND THE DATA

Data is a commodity. And today, a marketer isn't in the position to launch a campaign without knowing what results are generated. We have access to an incredible amount of information, from 30,000-foot views of how customers are interacting with campaigns down to insights on a single transaction. Your marketing organization needs to think about which data can help drive actionable decisions, and have systems in place to collect it in a privacy-conscious way.

The tricky thing about data collection is bringing it together in one place. If you have data from multiple sources in multiple places, your marketing team won't be able to make equal comparisons on what action drove a specific result.

**Data analysis.** This is the hard part. You must distill, find, and recognize how your marketing strategies are contributing to your goals, be it brand awareness and direct conversion or acquisition and retention.

This would be easy if you had only one marketing strategy, one channel, and one goal. But TUNE works with clients whose hugely robust omni-channel strategies require more than a deterministic attribution model (pure cause and effect).

For instance, you might know that a consumer saw your ad; clicked another, related ad; and viewed your Twitter post, all before downloading your mobile app. You have data to show that. But what if you were running a TV campaign at the same time? How could you assign fractional credit to the TV ad's potential impact in combination with your online exposures? Without probabilistically based algorithmic models to interpret the data, you couldn't.

Many marketers now use multi-touch attribution to better understand their customers' relationship to various channels. By measuring these "assists"—all actions prior to conversion—you can understand overlapping channels that touch the same audience, and figure out which channels tend to drive more awareness versus which are better at driving direct sales. Depending on your goals, both are vital. And by analyzing the patterns in each, you can decide what's working, what's not working, and how to scale your campaigns.

“

*Many marketers now use multi-touch attribution to better understand their customers' relationship to various channels.*

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# THERE'S MORE TO DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING THAN TECHNOLOGY



**DAVID S.  
TRADEWELL**

Senior Vice President,  
Americas, Econsultancy

David Tradewell is a media and marketing professional with almost 20 years of experience in digital platforms. He joined Econsultancy in 2011 following senior roles at News International, AltaVista, and iCrossing. In his role as senior vice president, Americas, David helps businesses build digital capabilities and implement transformation programs. He has worked with dozens of Fortune 500 businesses, including Google, eBay, Toyota, Verizon, Coca-Cola, and Bank of America. He lives in Brooklyn; plays guitar and drums; and loves SCUBA diving, rugby, cricket, and American football.



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Advertisers are always looking for more data about the effectiveness of their campaigns. Digital has accelerated that search and provides new, valuable sources of data and customer insight that organizations can act on in real time. Most of the companies that we work with are going through some level of digital transformation. Very few of them have a completely optimized, integrated marketing and analytics approach.

Many large companies still have a long way to go when it comes to accurate attribution. Lots of them are still relying on a last-click model. Earlier in my career, when I worked in search engine marketing and SEO, we were very fortunate to benefit from this. Clients spent a lot of money on the basis that the last click before the purchase was invariably driven from search. Clearly any modern marketing professional today knows that the real picture is more complex than that.

Rather worryingly, a lot of businesses don't take into account the real user journey. Many of the big technology and analytics suites come with the promise of delivering the Holy Grail of data-driven marketing—the single view of the customer—some with varying levels of success. Invariably the technology is very good, but the weak link is always human. Are people using the technology correctly? Are they properly trained to do so? Do they have the skills needed to make the right decisions? Often this is not the case.

*“Many large companies still have a long way to go when it comes to accurate attribution.”*



## KEY LESSONS

- 1 MANY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE YET TO ADOPT AN ADVANCED MARKETING AND ANALYTICS APPROACH THAT YIELDS A TRUE, SINGLE VIEW OF THE CUSTOMER.
- 2 KEEPING YOUR DATA ANALYSTS SEPARATE FROM THE MARKETING DEPARTMENT CAN HELP TO ENSURE DATA ARE NOT MANIPULATED SPECIFICALLY TO HIT TARGET METRICS.

# THERE'S MORE TO DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING THAN TECHNOLOGY

When I met Sir Martin Sorrell at Advertising Week, he talked about how the future belongs as much to the math men as it does to mad men. (When he's referring to *math men*, he's talking about all the data scientists and the need to analyze data in real time). I thought that was an interesting viewpoint, and it does give credence to the growing interest in the concept of "data-driven" marketing. This theme has now become so ubiquitous that it's hard to attend a conference or seminar that doesn't talk about it, but what I find most interesting is when data is actually used to drive the creative process.

For example, a French brewing company had long known that people prefer to drink cold beer in warm weather. (*Quelle surprise!*) They also found that in northern France, people considered it warm when the temperature was above 20°C (68°F). In the South, it was 25°C (77°F). Using those insights, the company created an algorithm that targeted and delivered advertisements only to Internet users based on the right location, at the right temperature, and at the right time of day for a cold beer. It's a good example of how data and technology are changing the way in which advertising is delivered.

My general advice, however, is that it's not just about the technology. As human beings we are hardwired to seek out shiny new tools that can perform tasks for us, yet an equally important and often-overlooked part of creating a data-driven organization is the processes that are in place within a business and the people who operate them.

To get started, you need to create a culture in which you can test and learn. You need to align the organization for using data specialists, and set them up so there's no punishment for telling the truth. It doesn't matter how good a technology is, if the people aren't trained to use it effectively and aren't given the processes or the structures to enable them to act on the information they're getting, then the results are going to be suboptimal.

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*Ideally, you need to have an independent function for data analytics that's separate from the marketing organization.*

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# THERE'S MORE TO DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING THAN TECHNOLOGY

The whole point of being a data-driven marketing organization is not just to analyze your data but also to be able to act upon it. Ideally, you need to have an independent function for data analytics that's separate from the marketing organization. If you don't, there's a tendency for the data to be misreported. Systems will be stretched and bent in terms of the level of truth they report, especially if your departmental budget or your personal compensation is tied into a measurement. If you don't want to report that a channel isn't effective, because your budget is going to be cut, then there is a temptation to manipulate the data. It's human nature to cheat the system when there are direct consequences to you of reporting bad news. That's one reason why so many organizations are not really as data-driven in their marketing as they think they are.

This is a similar concept to the principle of Goodhart's law: *if you take a measurement and turn it into a target, then it ceases to become an effective measurement*. Albeit a lesson from macroeconomics, it has some interesting parallels with the world of marketing. When companies keep data analytics functions separate from the marketing group, they tend to get more accurate information about the real business picture and what's actually happening.

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*The whole point of being a data-driven marketing organization is not just to analyze your data but also to be able to act upon it.*

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**ANTO  
CHITTILAPPILLY**  
Co-founder, President,  
and CTO,  
Visual IQ

Anto Chittilappilly is the co-founder, president, and chief technology officer of Visual IQ. He is a recognized expert in marketing mix modeling, marketing attribution management, and cross-channel marketing analytics. Prior to co-founding Visual IQ, Anto served in various technical and business roles at Sun Microsystems, representing Sun at several Java standards consortiums to develop industry standards for data analytics. Prior to Sun, Anto spent time at Oracle as well as IRI, where he was instrumental in building the world's first multi-dimensional database tools.

   
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Today, marketers are using an ever-increasing number of online, offline, and mobile channels to reach an ever-fragmented audience. These channels are creating an order of magnitude more siloed and disparate marketing performance data to collect, analyze, understand, and act upon. When running large, multi-channel campaigns, determining effectiveness and return on investment (ROI) can get complicated.

To prove marketing's value, companies need a data-driven, comprehensive, and actionable approach for measuring, predicting, and improving marketing's impact on revenue. Advanced attribution helps provide the answer, leveraging sophisticated science to quantify how every online and offline channel and tactic contributes to overall marketing objectives, so marketers can make smarter decisions that maximize ROI. As with any transformative technology, however, there are often sizeable cultural, procedural, and technical chasms to be crossed prior to adoption. Here are a few change management tips that have worked for many organizations:

- **Empower an evangelist.** Appoint someone within your organization to be the main point of contact with your attribution provider. Operationalization needs to come from within your organization. You can't rely on a third-party partner to tell you how your business should operate.

*“As with any transformative technology, there are often sizeable cultural, procedural, and technical chasms to be crossed prior to adoption.”*



## KEY LESSONS

- 1 TRULY SUCCESSFULLY MARKETING ATTRIBUTION ADOPTION AND OPERATIONALIZATION REQUIRES AN EQUALLY SUCCESSFUL CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.
- 2 EXTRACTING INCREMENTAL VALUE FROM AN ATTRIBUTION SOLUTION WILL GREATLY HELP ENCOURAGE ADOPTION AND LEAD TO BETTER LONG-TERM RESULTS.



# SUCCESSFUL DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING REQUIRES SUCCESSFUL CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The evangelist should understand your internal marketing organization's structure as well as each team's current objectives, key performance indicators (KPIs), planning schedules, and incentives. He should then identify the appropriate currency of measurement and optimization that will be used across teams. The evangelist should work with executives and team leads to adopt organizational change and ensure that the appropriate levels of training and platform access are provided.

- **Restructure incentives.** It's common for marketing teams to operate in silos, but this isolated approach leads to different KPIs and incentives for each team, which in turn leads to fragmented, ineffective, and local optimization. Rather than building an incentive program that encourages optimization only within channels, think about how to restructure incentives in a way that encourages optimization across channels. For example, it shouldn't be viewed as a negative if a portion of one team's budget needs to be reallocated to a different team to optimize most effectively across all channels.
- **Appoint platform experts.** Identify the right individuals within your organization to become the experts in the new technology. This should become part of their job responsibility so they have time to refine their expertise. It's not realistic to expect everyone within your organization to learn every detail of the new platform. Instead, the experts should be able to answer questions about how to use and interpret the data and share that knowledge more widely. They should also be aware of new features within the platform and determine how to leverage them within the organization.

Change doesn't happen overnight, but operationalizing a new marketing technology doesn't have to be so difficult if you remove friction from the process. Appointing an evangelist, restructuring incentives, and assigning platform experts will set you on a path to faster adoption and ultimately better business results.

“

*Appointing an evangelist, restructuring incentives, and assigning platform experts will set you on a path to faster adoption.*

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# DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING EMPOWERS CREATIVE MARKETING



**MICHAEL  
SCHNEIDER**

Head of Web Analytics &  
Trading,  
CTS Eventim AG & Co. KGaA

Michael Schneider is head of web analytics and trading at CTS Eventim AG & Co. KGaA, the market leader for the entertainment ticketing industry in Europe. Using an integrated, data-driven approach, he oversees the performance and efficiency of the company and its online marketing channels to optimize the user experience. Prior to that, Michael was with arvato Bertelsmann as head of Data Intelligence in charge of online marketing business intelligence, analytics, and optimization.



Website

The ultimate goal of marketing is to deliver the right message to the right person in the right place at the right time. Marketing organizations have been pursuing this goal for at least a century, but achieving it is no simple matter. As Henry Ford once said, he knew half of every dollar he spent on advertising was wasted. He just didn't know which half.

Marketing is not like other business operations. For instance, financial management is all about numbers. Everything that happens in finance can be quantified, so business managers clearly see what is happening. Traditional marketing is not like that. There are creative elements, and decisions are all too often based on a "gut feel" to incorporate the human factor. The challenge for a marketing organization is to find a way to become more measurable, so they can make more informed decisions. This is the goal of data-driven marketing, which uses tools to measure performance. How does a marketing organization become more data driven?

- **Collect as much data as possible.** Collecting and consolidating data is the first step, but doing so is a challenge, because the more systems you have for tracking data, the more answers you get. Two systems may tell two different stories. Collecting and analyzing large amounts of data in a meaningful way requires some kind of truth strategy, part of which involves putting all your data in one place, such as a data warehouse, so that it becomes a master data set equally accessible to all analytical tools.

“Collecting and analyzing large amounts of data in a meaningful way requires some kind of truth strategy.” ➡

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 MARKETING IS NOT LIKE OTHER BUSINESS OPERATIONS. THERE ARE CREATIVE ELEMENTS, AND DECISIONS ARE ALL TOO OFTEN BASED ON A “GUT FEEL” TO INCORPORATE THE HUMAN FACTOR.
- 2 THE DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING ORGANIZATION IS SUCCESSFUL WHEN IT IS TRULY ABLE TO DELIVER THE RIGHT MESSAGE TO THE RIGHT PERSON IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME.

# DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING EMPOWERS CREATIVE MARKETING

- **Adopt tools that enable the marketing department to use data without relying on the IT department.** The IT and marketing departments depend on each other, but they do not always serve each other's needs. IT is very process oriented. When the IT department changes a website, it tests everything to make sure that nothing is broken. It ensures security and stability. While important to the business, it's also time consuming. In today's environment, marketing needs to be highly responsive. If data say a touchpoint is underperforming and must be fixed or if the company needs to launch a new campaign next week, marketing must have the tools, such as a tag management system, to be flexible and respond quickly.
- **Become more relevant to your customers across their whole journey.** Increasingly, web analytics services that analyze and optimize the journey on your website are becoming commodity items, whereas marketing touchpoint analytics and optimization is rather new for most organizations. Analytics tools can help you understand the whole customer journey, while reducing the complexity of data sets at the same time. Scientific analytics and optimization strategies can massively improve decision-making processes, reduce risks, and reveal hidden insights of value. Analyzing the entire customer journey at a granular level requires scientific attribution models that properly weigh each customer touchpoint. Doing this work well is not easy, especially for companies that have a complex mix of online and offline touchpoints.
- **Invest in great data analysts with deep technical knowledge.** The main purpose of advanced analytics tools and algorithms isn't to replace humans, but to support their decision making. As marketing becomes more data-driven, more elements become automated. Segmenting populations of your customers for effective and targeted marketing requires technology that makes large amounts of data handy while reducing complexity. It takes a good data analyst to cope with this complexity and use these tools effectively so that you can leverage the data you collect. This also means you need people on your team with different skills than before: deep technical knowledge and an analytical mindset are the most important, as a fool with a tool is still a fool.

*You need people on your team with different skills than before: deep technical knowledge and an analytical mindset are the most important, as a fool with a tool is still a fool.*



# DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING EMPOWERS CREATIVE MARKETING

Collecting, understanding, and acting on data – and then using data to prove the results of those actions – constitute the role of a data-driven marketing organization. The promise, however, is a new working relationship between data-driven and creative marketing that makes both stronger. Marketing consists of both: creativity and data! Without great ideas, you still won't win the game! By tying both elements together, the data-driven marketing organization will truly be able to deliver the right message to the right person in the right place at the right time.

“

*Collecting, understanding, and acting on data – and then using data to prove the results of those actions – constitute the role of a data-driven marketing organization.*

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# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESSES AND THEIR DATA IS CHANGING



**KYLE  
LACY**

**Head of Marketing Strategy,**  
OpenView Venture Partners

Kyle Lacy is head of marketing strategy for OpenView, a venture capital firm based in Boston. His team is tasked with creating and distributing content that helps drive digital marketing and sales success in companies all over the world. Before joining OpenView, Kyle led the global content marketing team at ExactTarget and the Salesforce Marketing Cloud, managing content in five countries and more than \$15 million in the pipeline per quarter. He is also the author of three books, *Twitter Marketing for Dummies*, *Social CRM for Dummies*, and *Branding Yourself*.



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Although the ultimate goal of a marketing strategy hasn't changed, the ability to collect, analyze, and act on data quickly is changing everything. Regardless of your role in a marketing strategy, the only thing that really matters is your customers' experience with your brand. The important thing is not what you do for the brand, but whether the customer is having a good brand experience.

Data-driven marketing gives you information you can use to proactively optimize the customer experience. A brand marketer may not feel that data is his or her job, but if you are a brand marketer focused on the customer experience and you don't understand exactly why customers are interacting with your brand—something data will tell you—then you're likely to lose your job to a rocket scientist from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. That person may not know much about brand marketing, but he or she can figure from the data what's influencing customer behavior.

The ability to collect and analyze data is pushing businesses to use it differently. I often think of a quote from David Walmsley, a smart digital marketing guy in the retail space, who said, "We must move from numbers keeping score to numbers that drive better actions." The relationship between business managers and their data is one that's becoming less reactive and more proactive.

*“The relationship between business managers and their data is one that's becoming less reactive and more proactive.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1** DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING GIVES YOU INFORMATION YOU CAN USE TO PROACTIVELY OPTIMIZE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE.
- 2** THE BEST APPROACH IS JUST TO START DOING IT. IT MAY NOT BE PERFECT, BUT OVER TIME, YOU CAN MOVE TO A MORE SOPHISTICATED ATTRIBUTION MODEL THAT DRIVES BETTER RETURNS FOR YOUR BUSINESS.





# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESSES AND THEIR DATA IS CHANGING

To build a data-driven marketing organization, you must begin with two cornerstones:

- **Technology that works and that you can manage.** This includes business, process, and analytics technologies that are usable and provide practical benefit to daily operations.
- **Clean data.** Clean data in the context of marketing is current data. This can be current customer relationship management data and the most recent interactions your customers have with content assets. In a retail environment, it can be a customer's last 10 transactions, cart abandonment information, social data, and other touchpoint information.

You cannot do really great data-driven marketing without lead weighting and channel attribution. You need to be able to score what each referral and each persona is bringing into the business. Attribution not only helps from a content optimization perspective, but also provides valuable information for budgeting and deciding where to allocate marketing dollars.

For it really to work, however, you need something more than first- and last-click attribution. You need to be able to score all your channels. If someone visits a company blog, downloads an e-book and several white papers, and talks to a rep six different times, you need to be able to score all that, and you need to be able to scale that scoring across thousands or hundreds of thousands of customers. There's no standard approach to scoring all the different points of contact, and solutions may vary depending on what kind of business you are engaged in, whether it's business-to-business, business-to-consumer, or some hybrid model. The best approach is just to start doing it. It may not be perfect, but over time, you can move to a more sophisticated attribution model that drives better returns for your business.

“

*You cannot do really great data-driven marketing without lead weighting and channel attribution.*

”

# HIRE A GOOD ANALYST



**AMIY  
CHATLEY**

Marketing and Research  
Analytics Manager,  
Everline

Amiy Chatley is an attribution analyst who has a passion for marketing and data. With a background consisting of four years in attribution and three years in robotics research, she brings an interesting twist to everyday analysis. Working with visualization tools such as Adobe Analytics and Tableau, her data-driven arts degrees allow for creation of engaging methods of data communication. Amiy's stance is the more data you have, the bigger the gems you can find.



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Companies have been collecting and storing more and more data in recent years, and this trend is going to continue. Although analyzing all those data requires technology investment and effort, having more data is better than having less. Companies that track everything need to recognize that when they decide to analyze and use all those data, it will take time to develop the tools and techniques to do it well.

The first step in moving to more data-driven operations is to hire a really good analyst who can look at data from different angles to find patterns and connections. In my experience, the best analysts are people who have an operations or business background and learn analytics, rather than pure numbers people. Pure numbers people often have a set view about how they should look at the numbers, but people who have more diverse business backgrounds are more likely to ask different kinds of questions and look at the numbers in different ways. A good analyst can do a lot with less-than-ideal data sets or even lower-quality data. Many companies are inundated with data, but employing a good data analyst early will solve some fundamental data-collection problems. An analyst will be able to determine which data are valuable and how to look at them to answer important business questions. The goal is to be able to look at your data from a fresh perspective.

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 ALTHOUGH ANALYZING LARGE QUANTITIES OF DATA REQUIRES TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT AND EFFORT, HAVING MORE DATA IS BETTER THAN HAVING LESS.
- 2 MANY COMPANIES ARE INUNDATED WITH DATA, BUT ENGAGING A GOOD DATA ANALYST EARLY WILL SOLVE SOME FUNDAMENTAL DATA-COLLECTION PROBLEMS.

“In my experience, the best analysts are people who have an operations or business background and learn analytics, rather than pure numbers people.”



# HIRE A GOOD ANALYST

With a good analyst in place, the next challenge is to give the analyst good data. It is important to collect data into one place, such as a data warehouse, especially if the data are coming from different sources and tech platforms. A single repository makes it possible to use a single analytic tool to look at all the data, so you can gain a more holistic view of what is happening through the operations and all the different channels.

The most effective path to gaining this more holistic view of channel performance and customer touchpoints is adopting an attribution solution. Implementing attribution can be challenging: it typically involves creating a proof of concept, which means building a complete model and running it long enough to collect enough data to prove that it works. Reaching this point can take months.

In my business model, every customer creates an account as soon as that customer expresses interest in us (which is early in our engagement with him or her). This account enables us to create a perfect record of that customer engagement, whether it is occurring from a mobile device, a desktop computer, or a phone conversation. We always know exactly who logged in using what type of devices.

For us, when we have customer registration, we are able to track closely what they do, so tracking early engagement is not a high priority for us. Still, there is only so much data you can process manually. At some point, an attribution model will be useful for analyzing that activity. I prefer an algorithmic solution over a rules-based solution, as long as it is based on a defined algorithm so that I can see the precept. As an analyst, it makes me nervous when I don't know what my algorithm is doing for me.

There are many approaches to becoming a more data-driven organization. Finding the right way for any business begins with finding a good analyst.

“

*I prefer an algorithmic solution over a rules-based solution, as long as it is based on a defined algorithm so that I can see the precept.*

”

# HOW TO RAMP UP DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING THE RIGHT WAY



**MAXIMILIAN H. NIERHOFF**

Online Marketing Analyst,  
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Maximilian H. Nierhoff is an analyst who has more than 5 years of experience managing online marketing channels and digital analytics. After studying economics, cultural activities, and creative industries, he started building online marketing departments and realized quickly that future-marketing forces should also have programming knowledge. He has always been passionate about everything related to data, marketing, and customer journey analysis and specializes in using R, his first-choice language for programming, data science, and analysis capabilities.

    
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Data-driven marketing is on everyone's lips, but not every organization has jumped on the bandwagon, primarily because they do not know how to start. Data-oriented professionals who can design, implement, maintain, and analyze data-driven models are missing in these companies. In many cases, missing data (or the lack of data-mining skills) and data silos prevent them from getting on track. In fact, data-driven marketing is directly and unalterably linked with big data and analytics.

So, how can your organization start moving toward data-driven marketing and thus make the right decisions in the future? The answer: Ramp up and nurture a data-driven culture.

- **Find your way.** First, define your master plan. The essential building blocks are technically savvy, analytical employees; consolidated and meaningful data sets; and the right technology stack.
- **Put people first.** Shape a suitable marketing team. Your team comes before data processing and building your tool set. Most marketing departments are home to many creative people who mostly make intuitive decisions. To avoid biased decisions, institute a simple system of A/B testing, which delivers better, data-driven results.
- **Data beats intuition.** Now, it is time to hire the number crunchers. These people need to be able to gather and process data as well as recognize and interpret patterns. Most important, however, they need to ask the right questions. Furthermore, they should master an appropriate programming language, have base knowledge of statistics, and possess strong analytical skills.

“Data-driven marketing is directly and unalterably linked with big data and analytics.”

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 YOU MUST BUILD THE RIGHT TEAM BEFORE YOU CAN START WORRYING ABOUT PROCESSES AND TECHNOLOGY.
- 2 WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN PLACE, YOU CAN BEGIN TO MERGE YOUR DATA SILOS AND BUILD YOUR TECHNOLOGY STACK.



# HOW TO RAMP UP DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING THE RIGHT WAY

Combining the data workers with the present marketing staff, it is possible to make data-specific, creative decisions that will take your marketing performance to the next level:

- **Know your data.** Most companies are hoarding vast amounts of data. All too often, these continuously growing data mountains are in different silos and difficult to connect. In addition, because they have no data experts, many organizations do not know the real value of all the precious data they have. Therefore, merge your silos in a meaningful way in one place. Initially, you have only big data. To gather information, you need to ask the right questions. Discovering answers in your data leads to knowledge and new insights: this is acting data smart.
- **Build your technology stack.** You have come full circle. To analyze the data you have and gain deep insights from them, your new marketing team needs to work with the right tools. These tools need to generate a picture of the whole customer journey. No matter what the business model, marketers need to know which touchpoints have the greatest impact on the desired outcome.

Now, attribution comes into the game. Originally developed from the psychological attribution theory, marketing attribution tries to quantify the value of each touchpoint in the customer journey. Last touch wins was the prevailing attribution model for a long time, meaning that the last touchpoint was therefore most important. This is absolutely not contemporary. With the right tool, complete data, and the marketing number crunchers, modern attribution models like probabilistic or even dynamically weighed attribution are in reach.

With this knowledge, you can optimize your marketing efforts to create the best return and make your marketing organization truly data driven.

“

*No matter what the business model, marketers need to know which touchpoints have the greatest impact on the desired outcome.*

”





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# Move Beyond Last-Click Attribution

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**ARJUN DEV  
ARORA**

Co-founder,  
Immediately

Arjun Dev Arora is the co-founder of Immediately, a mobile application that enables sales people to focus on building meaningful relationships. Previously, he founded ReTargeter, an Inc. 500 fastest-growing company in 2013 that was acquired in 2015. He has also worked as the head of business development for Yahoo! Real Estate and was an investment banker as well. He is a notable angel investor and advisor to various startups.

    
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A few years ago, my former company created a display ad retargeting solution. The company wanted it to track impressions, clicks that indicated interest, and conversions. It wanted the metrics it shared to align with those goals.

Attribution was absolutely core to measuring the effectiveness of those efforts. The organization tracked everything—where site traffic came from, what drove it, etc. The company put a premium on insights that could actually change the way it did things. It was aware that there were numerous points of possible attribution: a single channel rarely leads to a conversion. Therefore, understanding the influences within and across multiple channels was critical.

At the time, of course, marketers did not have as much technology to track and measure all the multi-channel interactions they would have liked, but that's changing. Today, as organizations move beyond basic last-click and other traditional attribution methods, marketers are growing much more comfortable with algorithmic and probabilistic attribution models.

If I were to give someone advice about creating a data-driven marketing organization, it would be:

- **Get organizational commitment.** Philosophical alignment from the top down is the first order of business.

“One goal of data-driven marketing is to ensure that data are captured and shared with the organization at large and with its partners.” 

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 FOCUS ON INSIGHTS THAT WILL LEAD TO OPERATIONAL CHANGE.
- 2 DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING IS ABOUT TRANSPARENCY. IF YOU DON'T SHARE DATA AND LET IT DRIVE BUSINESS RESULTS, YOU MIGHT AS WELL NOT EVEN COLLECT IT.

# ANALYSIS TO ACTION

- **Set up the infrastructure.** Implement the right tools and solutions for data capture in a way that is as frictionless as possible for the end user. Make the effort up front to select the right tools and solutions to capture data as effortlessly as possible.
- **Determine your core metrics.** Figure out what you most want to measure and understand. Instrument your systems such that you can track all the way through monthly recurring revenue, average customer lifetime value, or whatever else is important. Non-obvious or tangentially important metrics—Twitter engagements, for example—can also be crucial. Avoid gathering non-actionable data.

One goal of data-driven marketing is to ensure that data are captured and shared with the organization at large and its partners. Data transparency is vital. Dashboards are one way to achieve that; weekly meetings and other kinds of structured points of communication also are important.

Be creative. We actually installed TV screens throughout the building, displaying various metrics that the organization tracks for anyone to see.

Ultimately, data-driven marketing is about transparency and letting the organization synthesize data to drive business results. If you aren't sharing your data, you might as well not even collect it.

“

*Philosophical alignment from the top down is the first order of business.*

”



# FINDING YOUR DATA'S TRUE STORY WITH THE RIGHT ATTRIBUTION METHOD



**WOODY  
MEACHUM**

Group Director,  
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Woody Meachum serves as group director, digital strategy at OMD, where he is responsible for leading the planning and execution of programs focused on impactful and measurable results to positively affect his client's brands and overall business. Woody has overseen the digital strategies for State Farm, H&R Block, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, BMO Harris Bank, and the Illinois Lottery. He also oversaw the digital analytics practice for three years at OMD-Chicago, creating measurement strategies for multiple clients.



Website

To build a data-driven marketing organization, you have to grant marketing full access to the data systems it needs. This way, marketing staff can put the correct tracking in place, collect their data in a central repository, and access the necessary information to do their work. One way to do this is by implementing new internal operational systems that can provide access to a broader set of people in the company.

Another way is to restructure your organizational key performance indicators (KPIs). First, you have to establish the goals for your organization, which will then lead to the actual metrics and KPIs that are used to measure progress toward those organizational goals. Start with a set of hypotheses that then will inform the data structure so that the data you're capturing is useful and serves your goals. This provides holistic business alignment.

Attribution also plays a huge role in adopting a data-driven marketing strategy. There are essentially four attribution methods. The first is *last-ad*, which is widely used. When you get into the multi-touch attribution space, you have the *even method*, in which you give the same amount of weight to every touchpoint. Then, you have *rules-based weighting*, in which you arbitrarily assign a weight to each touchpoint.

The last method, which a lot of the major software platforms in our industry use, is *algorithmic*. I find the algorithmic method of attribution the most accurate because it uses science to assign fractional credit to all of the touchpoints that contribute to a conversion.

“I find the algorithmic method of attribution the most accurate.”

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 YOU MUST START BY DEFINING YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS; KPIS CAN FLOW FROM THOSE GOALS.
- 2 THE ATTRIBUTION METHOD YOU CHOOSE CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE IN HOW WELL YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR DATA.





# FINDING YOUR DATA'S TRUE STORY WITH THE RIGHT ATTRIBUTION METHOD

Five years ago, we were working with a client that embraced last ad, so it put a lot of weight into the last touch that led a customer into the conversion. The client was spending a lot of money on paid search. I noticed the TV weight and asked why we weren't buying digital video as well, so we bought digital video.

When we created our first set of dashboards for the client, they thought the digital video wasn't driving any conversions. I pointed out that our engagement rates showed that a lot of people were watching the ads and clicking through to our site. I explained that this trend was likely influencing conversions, but the client insisted that our analytics told us none of those people were converting. They cut digital video from the plan.

The next year, I recommended that we buy digital video again but that this time, we should also bring in an algorithmic attribution system to show the true results of our efforts. We were able to show that people who were exposed to digital video had a four times greater likelihood of converting than people who did not. This proved to the client that there was top-of-funnel benefit to running the digital video. From this experience, we learned that if you only look at the last touchpoint, you're missing the whole story.

We kept digital video on the plan and started using it as an incremental reach channel above TV, because we also found that the demographics of the people who were responding to the videos were a lot younger than those people who responded to TV. We said, "Those are your new customers. That's where your new customer base is coming from. It's this digital video exposure." That helped us drive the overall macro-strategy that, as far as I know, is still in use today.

“

*From this experience, we learned that if you only look at the last touchpoint, you're missing the whole story.*

”

# AN EXCITING TIME FOR MARKETERS



**MICHELE  
ELROD**

Head of Marketing,  
Regions Bank

Michele Elrod provides strategic marketing direction and management as the head of marketing for Regions Bank. A graduate of MOMENTUM, the Birmingham Women's Leadership Program, and The J. Mack Robinson College of Business Executive Program for Advanced Leadership Development, she is the recipient of the 2014 Outstanding Alumna Award in Advertising from the University of Alabama and was recognized by the *Birmingham Business Journal* as a top CMO in the C-Suite Awards.

My company has been talking internally with our IT and data people, strategists, product operations manager, and a host of others about the customer journey. How, we've been asking, can advanced data-driven marketing help us better engage our banking customers?

The discussions have led to a complete rebuild of our marketing technology stack. We've rethought how our database is organized and what should be in it. We are building a new business intelligence database, known as our *insights platform*. We've added new campaign management and optimization tools to coordinate and broker campaigns across our channels.

In addition, we've hired an outside firm to analyze our marketing, sales, and media investment data. That firm does a lot of work around algorithmic modeling that helps us understand how our media mix is performing, giving us insights for adjusting within campaigns.

The goal of all these efforts is to understand, incrementally, which of our investments are contributing most to conversions. Obviously, this goes well beyond the traditional last-click attribution model. We know that when a customer clicks a display ad, and then opens an account, it's not the whole story. That customer might be exposed to three other marketing touchpoints before that. If so, we need to know.

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 THE PRIMARY GOAL IS UNDERSTANDING WHICH INVESTMENTS CONTRIBUTE MOST TO CONVERSIONS.
- 2 THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A TIME WHEN MARKETING WAS BETTER POSITIONED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

“Fundamentally, a scientific attribution-based marketing strategy eliminates a lot of guesswork.” ➡

# AN EXCITING TIME FOR MARKETERS

Fundamentally, a scientific attribution-based marketing strategy eliminates a lot of guesswork. If we understand conversion factors earlier in the event stream, we become more effective and efficient at assembling our media mix. And we probably save money.

Capturing and using the right pieces of data to measure your sales impacts and incremental contributions is imperative. This is especially true if your organization is shifting marketing from an expense to a revenue generator.

In summary, here's my advice for becoming more data driven:

- **Think incrementally.** First, quantify and assess the data you already have. Then, focus your early efforts on improving things you're already doing. From there, move on.
- **Engage customers.** We are very customer-centric and believe strongly that developing trusted customer relationships is more important than simply selling services. That attitude has a powerful influence on our marketing approach.
- **Don't think it's all about data.** Becoming data driven isn't just about collecting ever-increasing depths of information. It is about using data intelligently to conduct more frequent and in-depth measurements. In the end, it's about better strategies.

This is a challenging time for marketers. Consumers have instant access to many alternatives. If your company is to become a consumer's top choice, marketing will be the difference maker, but you will have to constantly examine and reexamine your data set and adjust your strategic priorities. There simply is no end to this in the digital world.

Conversely, I think this probably is the most exciting period in history to be a marketer. The data, the science, and the new approaches to marketing that we can bring to bear today give us greater opportunities than ever to really make a difference.

*The opinions expressed in the essay are statements of the author's opinion, are intended only for informational purposes, and are not formal opinions of, nor binding on Regions Bank, its parent company, Regions Financial Corporation and their subsidiaries, and any representation to the contrary is expressly disclaimed.*

“

*Becoming data driven is not just about collecting ever-increasing depths of information. It's about using data intelligently to conduct more frequent and in-depth measurements.*

”

# YOU MUST RULE BY THE NUMBERS



**JEROME  
SUTTER**

**VP Marketing, Acquisition  
and CRM Europe,  
Weekendsk**

Jerome Sutter is vice president of Marketing, Acquisition & CRM Europe at Weekendsk. He has 15 years of experience in marketing, media, and e-commerce in Europe and Latin America for such brands as Nokia, Nestlé, Microsoft, Diageo, Lacoste, and SFR. Jerome is also a professor and conference speaker.

    
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Since joining Weekendsk, my mission has been to optimize customer acquisition by strengthening our digital marketing strategy. To accomplish that, I have taken the following steps:

## **1. Develop a data-centric approach to decision making.**

When optimizing your engagement strategy, you must rule by the numbers. In other words, you must understand the numbers from your analytic solution as well as the numbers from each acquisition channel. You have to clean your data, which may be coming from older web analytics and customer relationship management solutions that predate your marketing analytics solution. You must make sure that your data are clean before you can gain deep visibility into the numbers related to all your channels, even if you are not managing every channel internally.

**2. Dive into each acquisition channel.** When you have visibility into the metrics from all your channels, you must conduct a deep-dive analysis of each acquisition channel to understand click-through rates, conversion rates, attribution values, and channel costs through metrics such as cost per mille, cost per click, and cost per action. Such an analysis of each acquisition channel gives you a clear view of the actual cost and effectiveness of each channel.

**3. Stop using last-click attribution.** When you have the data for each channel and a deep analytical understanding of the data, you must stop using last-click attribution. Based on a recent survey conducted in the French markets, 79 percent of advertisers are using last click.

## KEY LESSONS

- 1** WHEN OPTIMIZING YOUR ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY, YOU MUST RULE BY THE NUMBERS.
- 2** WHEN YOU HAVE THE DATA FOR EACH CHANNEL AND A DEEP ANALYTICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE DATA, YOU MUST STOP USING LAST-CLICK ATTRIBUTION.

*“Develop a data-centric approach to decision making.”*



# YOU MUST RULE BY THE NUMBERS

This rate is comparable to other European countries and countries around the world, including the United States. Last click does not allow you to see the different touchpoints that lead up to final conversion. To do that, you have to follow from the first touchpoint to the last touchpoint. Many web analytics solutions, such as Google Analytics, do not allow you to track this information. You need to have multi-touchpoint attribution so you can understand the contribution of each channel and how display advertising affects it.

Many kinds of attribution models exist. I favor a U model, which allows you to assign weights to the first and last clicks and lesser weights to the many different touchpoints in between. This model seems to work well for many businesses because it is easy to personalize for different business practices. We are also testing an algorithmic attribution solution side by side with our current model to see how it performs.

It takes time to become more data driven in this way. When my organization decided to implement an attribution model, it took three or four months for us to really understand the data we needed and to build the model to the point where we could make decisions based on the attribution analysis. Then, it took another two or three months to refine the model and become fully functional. In the end, it took us about six months from the time we started to the time we were using the attribution model day to day.

“

*In the end, it took us about six months from the time we started to the time we were using the attribution model day to day.*

”





**ADAM  
CAHILL**  
Founder,  
Anagram

Adam Cahill is the founder of Anagram, a marketing technology company purpose built to help brands and publishers win in a programmatic world. Adam was previously the chief digital officer at Hill Holliday and is a recognized industry thought leader who has appeared in such publications as *Advertising Age*, *AdExchanger*, and *ClickZ*. He has been named a Media AllStar by *Adweek* and a Media Maven by The Ad Club. Under his leadership, Hill Holliday's media team was twice named Media Agency of the Year.

   
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If you knew exactly to whom you were talking, what would you say?

That question sits at the heart of a data-driven marketing strategy.

You certainly wouldn't say the same thing to everyone or the same thing over and over to the same person. Yet that's just what happens when marketing lacks a foundation in data. With a proper data foundation in place, the potential for crafting communications and experiences that people actually enjoy is limitless.

As a person who has spent his career working on the agency side of the business, I have been part of countless presentations that revealed and explained a beautiful customer journey diagram detailing how a mythical set of personas interacted with a brand over time. Here's the thing, though: those diagrams were all thought exercises, grounded in not much more than syndicated research and a few interviews. They were directionally true but not at all actionable. We were describing an ideal outcome we hoped would happen with no way to actually *make* it happen.

“With a proper data foundation in place, the potential for crafting communications and experiences that people actually enjoy is limitless.”

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 USE A DATA-LED UNDERSTANDING OF THE REAL INTERACTIONS PEOPLE HAVE WITH YOUR BRAND TO CREATE A FLUID, SEQUENCED SET OF MESSAGES THAT ARE INTELLIGENTLY DELIVERED BASED ON WHERE THE USER IS IN HIS OR HER JOURNEY.
- 2 THE ONLY WAY TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF A SEQUENCED JOURNEY IS TO HAVE A HOLISTIC ATTRIBUTION SOLUTION IN PLACE THAT HELPS YOU VALUE THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS IN YOUR PORTFOLIO.



Just a few years later, it's entirely possible to use a data-led understanding of the real interactions people have with your brand to create a fluid, sequenced set of messages that are intelligently delivered based on where the user is in his or her journey. We strive to create a system that aspires to deliver the next right piece of communication based on what we know about the person receiving the message.

This approach means that as marketers, we're making many more creative assets than we used to and relying on ever more targeted forms of media distribution. Simply determining what "worked" is too simple: the truth is that many things are working together over time—the sequence of messages, the media environment, the context of the user at any moment in time. The only way to improve the performance of a sequenced journey is to have a holistic attribution solution in place that helps you value the contribution of the elements in your portfolio.

“  
*Simply  
determining  
what “worked”  
is too simple:  
the truth is that  
many things are  
working together  
over time.*

”

# GOODBYE BIG DATA, HELLO SMART DATA



**JAN CARSTEN  
KUHNKE**

Co-Founder and CEO,  
catchyou® GmbH

A true digital native, Jan Carsten Kuhnke entered the online world in Germany in 1988. When the Internet started to boom, he discovered his true passion for online marketing. Jan is the Co-Founder and CEO of catchyou® GmbH, and has previously held roles at cOmVoice NetSolutions, Philipp und Keuntje GmbH, and lawinenstift GmbH.

    
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In data-driven marketing, the biggest challenge is not collecting data as much as it is effectively using and monetizing the data you have. In addition, much of the data that marketing organizations gather are either incomplete or incorrect and channel specific, with each marketing channel considered individually. To get the big picture of all marketing activities and a detailed performance overview, marketing attribution is essential. In short, goodbye big data, hello smart data!

Last-click attribution is still one of the most commonly used types of marketing attribution. With it, the entire conversion value is attributed to the last touch, with all other touchpoints ignored. In the search channel, for example, this approach places virtually no value on generic keywords because such keywords are more expensive than branded keywords and often do not generate conversions. Studies show, however, that these generic keywords pave the way for conversions that eventually take place. Through more advanced marketing attribution methodologies, brands can recognize the importance of these extremely valuable keywords in the entire conversion process.

Going a step further to look at a company's marketing mix, attribution should be at the center of all marketing activities. By analyzing the synergies among all your marketing channels and tactics within the conversion process and assigning a certain value to each, more efficient budget allocation is made possible, resulting in the generation of more leads, sales, and revenue.

*“In data-driven marketing, the biggest challenge is not collecting data as much as it is effectively using and monetizing the data you have.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1** APPROPRIATE MARKETING ATTRIBUTION IS ESSENTIAL FOR ANALYZING USER BEHAVIOR, WHICH CAN BE USED TO PREDICT HOW TO ENGAGE WITH YOUR PROSPECTS AND INCREASE PERFORMANCE.
- 2** CLEARLY DEFINE YOUR GOALS, AND CHOOSE YOUR RELEVANT DATA SEGMENTS, ATTRIBUTION MODEL, AND INFORMATION WISELY.



# GOODBYE BIG DATA, HELLO SMART DATA

Marketing attribution is a discipline that shows the combination of channels and tactics that works for the audience that is relevant for your business model. The attribution model analyzes user behavior, and your goal should be to use the output of that analysis to predict how to engage with your prospects.

The core task in becoming a data-driven marketing organization is to analyze your data to determine which are actually applicable to helping achieve your defined goals. Quantity is not quality. Through the right attribution model, you can target smaller, more defined segments that give individually defined key performance indicators (KPIs) a substantial growth spurt. Based on the results and your experience, you can build new sources of information step by step. That way, you can comprehend and, more importantly, prove which data would lead to increased performance at any time.

From my experience, I know how tempting it can be to try to use all possible data from your analytical tools to try to get a boost in marketing performance, but this approach is not advisable.

My advice? Clearly define your goals, and choose your relevant data segments, attribution model, and information wisely.

“

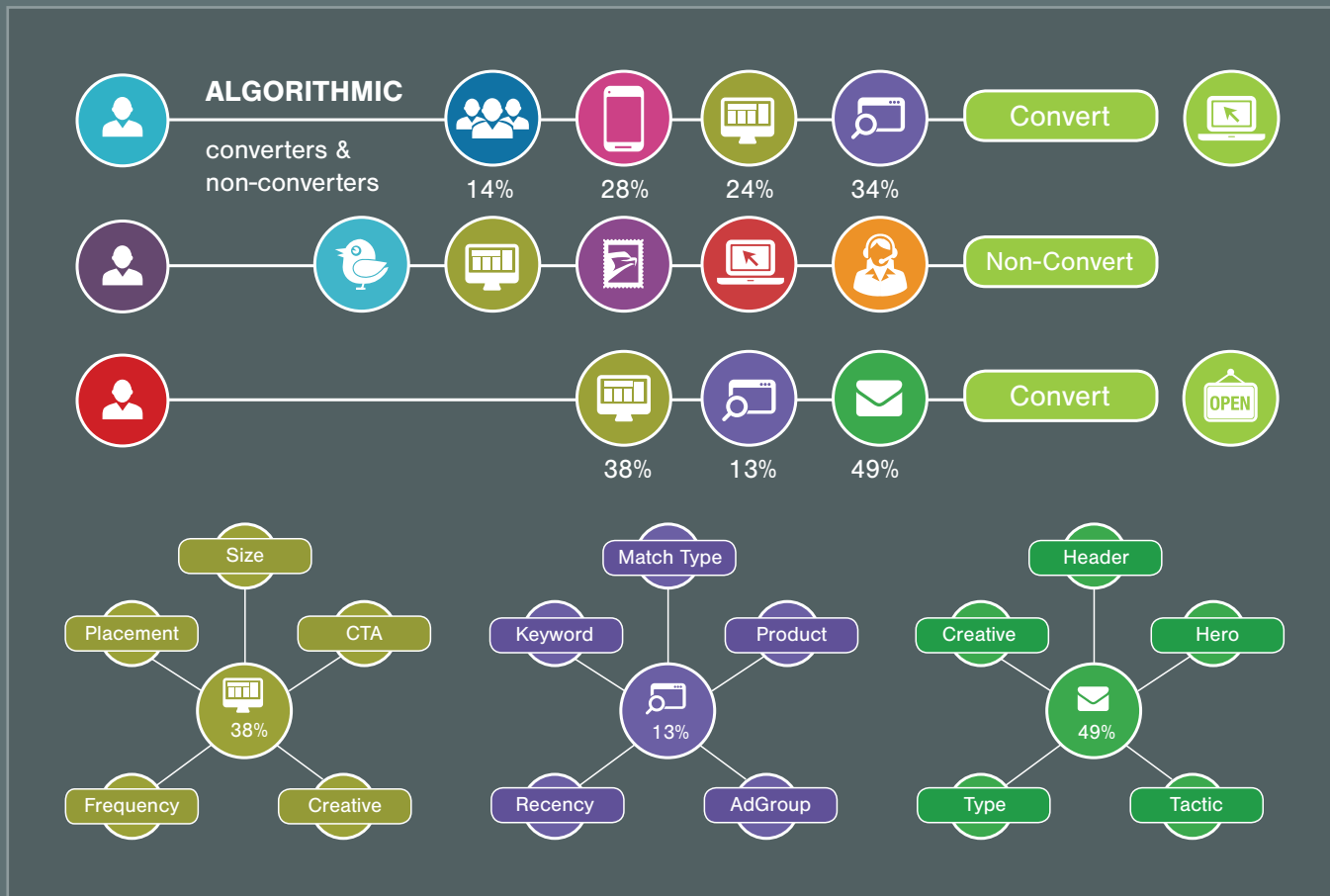
*The core task in becoming a data-driven marketing organization is to analyze your data to determine which are actually applicable to helping achieve your defined goals.*

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# ADVANCED MARKETING ATTRIBUTION DEFINED

Default marketing measurement standards rely on last click or subjective, rules-based methods that handicap marketers by giving all the conversion credit to the last touchpoint, or by arbitrarily assigning weights to each interaction based on chronology alone.

Advanced attribution offers a far superior approach. Using sophisticated mathematical models, advanced attribution scientifically calculates and fractionally assigns conversion credit to every touchpoint and attribute (ad size, placement, publisher, chronology, etc.) experienced by every converter and non-converter across all channels. The result: a truly holistic, accurate view of marketing performance.



## ADVANCED ATTRIBUTION:

- Includes every available touchpoint (online, offline & across devices)
- Calculates the impact of every single touchpoint & attribute
- Measures & predicts high-value audience segments
- Delivers actionable insight, as well as tactical & strategic recommendations for optimization
- Integrates seamlessly with media buying platforms