

THE ART & SCIENCE OF CONNECTING WITH CONSUMERS

MARKETING

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Redefining Marketing

KEEPING UP WITH THE INCREASINGLY
SMARTER AND CONNECTED CUSTOMER

Discussion paper and agenda

13 March 2019, Wednesday

FLUTES@NATIONAL MUSEUM
93 STAMFORD ROAD
THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SINGAPORE
(S) 178897

Marketing Roundtables: Because it's important to share opinions

Agenda

- 12:00pm – Arrival of discussants, networking
- 12.25pm – Welcome from Rezwana Manjur, Regional Editor of *Marketing* magazine
- 12:30pm – All seated. Introductions from participants
- 12:35pm – Commencement of discussion over lunch
- 14:30pm – End of lunch and networking

Discussion points

The following points are good indicators of what will be discussed over the luncheon. However, we are not restricted to these – constructive and spontaneous discussions are welcome.

Definitions

1. In your opinion, what defines your target consumers today?
2. How have your customers' standards and expectations evolved over the past 5 years?
3. How do you see your customer evolving in the short and mid-term? How must brands change to adapt?

Customer Experience and the Marketing Function

1. Who is responsible for leading customer experience initiatives across your organisation?
2. How are you ensuring that your customers see one company, not several departments, when they interact with your organisation?
3. How aligned are your marketing and sales teams when it comes to communication, objectives and customer data?
4. When it comes to bridging customer journey gaps, how is marketing aligning with your business' service teams

Managing Data

1. What are your intrinsic data sources now and in the future?
2. Does your team have a completely unified view of customer data sources?
3. What are the most common technologies you use for customer identity purposes? (Marketing database, CRM system, ESP system, Data management platforms, customer data platforms, etc.)
4. How much of a problem do you face with data being stuck in silos?

Personalisation

1. Do your customers expect you to *anticipate* their needs?
2. Has your organisation adopted AI or other advanced technologies as part of your marketing arsenal. Why or why not? And if yes, how is it being deployed?
3. How are you balancing expectations regarding personalisation with concerns over data privacy protection.
4. Does your company automate any customer interactions, and how are you bridging the online/offline divide?

Real Time Engagement

1. What does real time engagement mean to your business?
2. How do you establish and maintain a relationship across each stage of the customer journey?
3. Which channels are producing the highest ROI across the customer journey?
4. Can you give us an example where your strategy and tactics changed based on customer feedback?

Metrics & Measurement

1. What metrics does your company swear by? Are there any you feel are over-rated or under appreciated?
2. What customer satisfaction metrics are you currently tracking?
3. What are you doing to identify and engage with your best customers?
4. How do you keep up with new technologies and evolving best-practices?

All discussants and highlights of the discussion will be featured in a subsequent print edition of *Marketing Magazine*. Of course, all off-the-record, sensitive, and confidential information will not be published.

To have an idea of how you will be featured, here's a past article for your reference:

MARKETING EVENTS



SUCCESS STARTS WITH ALIGNING YOUR SALES AND MARKETING TEAMS

With numbers and measurement playing a more crucial role for a marketer's KPIs, more are under the spotlight to contribute to the company's pipeline and sales. During a recent roundtable discussion hosted by *Marketing*, marketers in the room discussed how this focus on numbers has driven a greater demand for a deeper alignment between marketing and sales.

"Sales and marketing need to figure out which part [of the customer journey] is their responsibility and hold each other accountable. The alignment is critical in generating the results because no matter how genius your marketing is, if the sales alignment is not there you won't get the result," said Lynn Huang, head of Asia Pacific marketing at Honeywell.

The relationship between sales and marketing, however, has not always been the most integrated. Karen Kaur, senior digital strategist for Asia at Motorola Solutions, said this challenge has been around for decades, despite all the technology available today.

"It's still the same issue where marketing is generating leads, but sales is not progressing even though marketing has the insight," she said. What is missing in terms of measurement is that no one seems to own the customer insights or

adding that these are major challenges for most B2B businesses.

"[Getting sales] is not a linear process, but we are generating it under a linear model although we know people are not linear," she explained. This could potentially lead to a wastage of 70% to 80% of budgets for many companies, she added.

"That being said, this challenge should be viewed as an opportunity which marketing can take on. For Kaur, if a marketer's metrics changes from just being about revenue growth to more about how she or he has taken the data and created marketing content that's relevant and helpful to the customer – this might be more effective from a branding and positioning standpoint.

Also weighing in on the topic was Martin Mackay, former president of APAC and Japan at CA Technologies, who said having too much of a focus on the numbers can also put marketers at risk of falling into the trap of chasing numbers.

"You end up ensuring that your marketing metrics are in the green because of the amount of pipeline or sales leads being generated. However, sales may not be great because these leads may not have necessarily been converted or were not appropriate for sales," he explained,

EMBRACING NUMBERS

Despite the challenges to focus on metrics-based, Shweta Prasadharani, head of marketing (ASEAN and ANZ – Middle East) at Avast, Technologies, said having numbers has forced marketers to have conversations with their sales teams. This allows marketers to find out how exactly their sales teams are going out to sell and what is working well. In turn, enabling marketing to be more programmatic which is the salesperson's style.

"Many a times, I see a disconnect between

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 Venue: Raffles CHMS
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marketing and sales which have two different styles. In many cases, marketing was running a superb programme which brought in many leads, but no closed deals. However, you can't say the salesperson wasn't good [at their job] because maybe the way the marketing was handled was just not their preferred style," she said.

As such, it is all about having a good relationship with the sales team, which also means finding out what the sales team is prioritising as well as its numbers, then building the marketing strategy around it.

"This ensures sales teams are not looking at marketers as their assistant, but rather as a function which is there to help them close the deal. It also allows them to reach out to marketing a lot more after that," she said.

Meanwhile, another important part of the equation is also allowing marketers – both senior and junior – in the process. Josiah Chong, head of marketing for Singapore at Trend Micro, said this is the key to having an extended arm of marketing which sits between both sales and marketing called the "opportunity discovery team". This opportunity discovery team is responsible for looking into two different areas – existing customers with upselling opportunities and new lead opportunities. As such, there are

two different strategies going into each different type of prospect in which the team works closely with sales leaders to figure out.

"The team works closely to align sales and marketing and also help our sales team be more educated about marketing initiatives and how they can leverage marketing in their jobs," she explained.

The opportunity discovery team also plays an important role in qualifying the leads and understanding whether potential customers have the right budget, needs and timelines. This team is also tasked with identifying prospects who are only looking to do more two-years down the road.

"Although these prospects aren't looking right now, we still need to influence them at the present time because they might be doing research online to find out how to improve their own cybersecurity approach," she said.

The earlier this is done, the more chances to influence decision makers.

Similarly for Motorola's Kaur, given the right budget, she would also ideally set up a team called the "customer experience management team" to take on the customer relationship management as part of its long-term strategy and not on an ad hoc basis. This includes talking to customers, understanding them and their pain points without selling them anything.

After analysing customer behaviours and understanding which channels they are on and the content they are consuming, this dedicated team can feed the insights to both the marketing and sales teams. This would allow them to better identify their customer and how to help them.

"If a conversion happens, great. But if you

are not being tracked on leads, you don't have that pressure, allowing you to focus on creating a personalised experience for the customer," she said.

She added that this is what is missing right now in marketing because everyone is pressured with KPIs and deadlines.

"Everyone is focused on that right now and trying to cut corners with the mindset of 'putting out content and hoping customers download it'," she explained.

At the end of the day, it is about going back to basics when it comes to meeting the customer's goals with your solutions. Ashish Nair, managing partner at GetIT Comms, said it is also time to go back to a "boutique-style" of operations when it comes to the B2B space and involve everyone in the company.

"Try and break down some of these artificial barriers which are there and go back to meeting the customer in person and identifying their needs," he said.

But, at the end of the day, be it in sales or marketing, what is crucial is to have the right attitude and know what you are looking for in an era of data overload.

According to Stacy Seah, head of marketing at CenturyLink, with the huge amount of unstructured data to work with, if marketers don't know what they are looking for – it is pointless.

"Start with the outcome in mind, then go back, look at the data and figure out a solution from there," she said.

She added that insights can also be mined from across the organisation, mapped out and given to sales to help them better identify the triggers which cause action, as well as the "compelling events" (which closes deals). If your target persona is a financial executive, why not talk to your CFO and your financial controller to understand what are their pain points and what jobs need to be done. One could obtain insights from within their own organisation and apply that.



Doing so also helps the sales teams pre-empt what could potentially happen in a prospect meeting as well as the various customer challenges and common encounters.

"It is all about more collaborating with the information that is there," she added.

This includes helping them understand the different content being produced by marketing and how they can leverage that in their sales pitch. At the end of the day, success requires the two to work in tandem.

40 MARKETING JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2019

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JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2019 MARKETING 41

MARKETING EVENTS

DOES PERSONALISATION NEED TO BE ONE-ON-ONE?



It comes as no surprise that consumer expectations are increasing. This is especially because, today, with more data being shared with brands, consumers expect a more superior experience. Nonetheless, finding the right balance between being there when the customer wants you, and being creepy, is a challenge which keeps most marketers up at night.

Moreover, while one-on-one personalisation is important in ensuring a brand fosters a connection with its customers, personalisation is also costly. During a recent roundtable discussion hosted by *Marketing*, marketers in the room agreed that while one-on-one experiences are important, they shouldn't be the only end goal.

Speaking about personalised messaging, Niamh Byrne, head of customer and digital experience for APAC and EMEA at Citibank, said that while developing personalised messaging is extremely important, grouping people according to similar preferences based on specific needs or lifestyles, is still acceptable. For example, people on a certain learning scale tend to have similar demands, albeit not exactly the same.

"There will be people in banking who can offer products to based on their lifestyle, so I do think that 'localises' are very important. If you always wait for one-on-one you will be waiting a long time," she said.

Agreeing with her was Avia Easted, regional head of consumer at Luxasia. She added that in her role, a lot of marketing is done to get customers to the store – especially if the customer is someone who looks like they will visit the store, but haven't as yet.

"Of course, you need to personalise, but you don't have to personalise everything because if you get the person to the store – and that is where the real personalisation starts," he said.

IMPORTANCE OF A FEEDBACK LOOP

Another important component when it comes to personalisation is having a feedback loop, said Tomasz Kurczyk, digital transformation director at AXA insurance. Creating this loop will ensure an understanding of the customer, which in turn, improves how a brand advertises and communicates. It also ensures a brand is able

to go back to the product's design. "One of the biggest priorities for us is not just a personalised communication, but also personalised products and services," he said.

He explained that for a long time, she was quite difficult for the insurance segment as insurance traditionally was about having policies with a standard set of benefits and allowing customers to read it or leave it.

But, in today's day and age, it is important for the brand to make it relevant and relevant as possible to ensure the customer doesn't get bored or annoyed. Providing something relevant to consumers is paramount, he explained.

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 Venue: Raffles National Museum
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"You can personalise your message as much as you want, but at the end of the day, once the purchase experience is a disappointment, it will be gone over," he said.

For Clarence Lin, vice-president, regional bancassurance at DBS Bank, personalisation when done right results in a positive customer experience. "It increases engagement, builds loyalty and enhances the lives of our customers so they can live more, and bank less," he said.

There are many ways to personalise depending on the industry or segment the brand operates in. In the insurance business, for example, it may mean having a bespoke, yet flexible, financial solution that allows customers to choose their preferred type of cover, premiums to be paid and payment frequency based on their budgets and needs. "Brands need not be excessively concerned about whether personalisation is always achieved to the power of one," Lin said. He added what is important is ensuring a continuous feedback loop, which can be achieved with data and analytics. "The customer needs to walk away feeling like they have had the best experience, and no one else in the market being able to provide that same level of satisfaction. That is the holy grail of personalisation."

Also weighing in was Jeff Evans, vice-president of technology and digital experience for APAC at Epsilon, who said that marketers

who are able to leverage technology to drive a personal connection are the ones who will get far.

With personalisation at scale with technology, messages need to still have a purpose for technology to be effectively leveraged to create more engaging experiences," he said, adding it also comes down to localisation and how brands are able to leverage on that.

UNIFIED VIEW OF THE CUSTOMER

On top of personalisation, having a unified view of the customer was also a common problem discussed. "In the discussion, struggled with Jennifer Loke, head of marketing at DirectAsia, said although having a single view of the customer is much easier today compared with the past, not every organisation is blessed to have that view – while denying insights and data from it.

"Data is useless if you don't apply it. Marketers have lots of data, but the question is how we actually amalgamate the data and synthesise it to make sense for our work on a day to day basis – I think that's one of the biggest challenges," she explained.

Echoing the sentiment was Sonali Verma, head of customer experience and innovation, regional bancassurance, at Manulife, who added that working with data in such a manner is easier said than done. This is especially when personal data protection is taken into account.

She added that given the amount of data present in every company now, the right management of data is the only way to create that personalised connection.

For Verma, it's "virtually impossible" to not use data categories in order to connect with customers.

Also speaking about the importance of data privacy was Evelyn Jing, head of operations at Sanofi Pasteur.

"In the case of the healthcare industry, data security is high on the priority agenda of most, if not all companies, so marketing teams are extremely mindful and legal and compliance teams are always consulted so that comprehensive precautions are taken to protect the privacy of our clients, their patients and consumers," she said.

She added that marketers are now in an era where things are evolving rapidly with the help of technology to enhance personalised patient education, disease management and strengthen engagement between healthcare providers, patients and their caregivers.

"In the healthcare industry while all of us are gaining momentum in using digital offerings to bring innovation and customerised solutions to patients, we are all facing the same challenges. Moving forward, strong partnerships are even more critical," she added.



42 MARKETING NOVEMBER 2018

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NOVEMBER 2018 MARKETING 43