

THE ART & SCIENCE OF CONNECTING WITH CONSUMERS

MARKETING

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Striking the Balance

Differentiating customer-centric vs. channel-centric marketing

Discussion paper and agenda

24 July 2020

3:00pm -4:45pm

**TO BE HELD AS A VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE
(LOGIN DETAILS WILL BE SENT TO YOU PRIOR TO THE EVENT)**

Marketing Roundtables: Because it's important to share opinions

Agenda

3:00pm – Login and welcome from Rezwana Manjur, Regional Editor of *Marketing* magazine

3:05pm - Around the (virtual) table participant introductions

3:15pm – Commencement of discussion proper

4:30pm – Final thoughts

4:45pm – End of discussion

Discussion points

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

Definitions

1. What do 'customer-centric' and 'channel centric' marketing mean to your business, respectively?
2. Is one more important than the other?
3. Can you give any examples where you might prioritise one approach over the other?
4. Is being customer-centric the same as having an omnichannel marketing strategy?

Customer vs. Channel: A closer look

5. What is the key difference between customer centric and channel centric organisations? Are teams and incentives structured differently, etc.?
6. How does having a customer-centric approach affect one's use of marketing channels and vice-versa?
7. What channels lends themselves best to supporting a positive customer experience for your audience?
8. What are the main challenges you face in balancing customer-centric and channel centric marketing?

Looking at your business through the customer's lense

9. Digital marketing makes it easy for companies to deliver tailored communications but often brands struggle to deliver truly personalised experiences. Your thoughts?
10. In general, how do customers experience these personalised engagements, and how successful do you think brands are at delivering genuinely valued experiences in the Asia market?
11. Can we leverage a comprehensive view of the customer's brand experience, with a complete history across all touch points? And what can we do with the data?
12. How successful are organisations these days at managing and orchestrating content as a single entity across their brands and channels?
13. Is it too easy to over rely on Google and Facebook as your key strategy for reaching your target audience? What can brands do to diversify beyond these walled gardens?

Engagement and Personalisation

14. In addition to technology that empowers consumers, intelligent systems that will enhance our lives, and the continued blurring of digital and physical mediums, what other trends are you looking out for? What are some common challenges that marketers can encounter when attempting to humanise their brands?
15. As a marketer, how are you assessing the impact that new technologies and trends have on consumer behaviour? How does it manifest itself in your marketing practices?
16. What challenges do you face when it comes to implementation and scale? What's your brand journey when you're delivering on customer's gold-rated standards? And is there such a thing as over-personalisation?

Metrics & Measurement

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

Thanks to our Partner:

This Roundtable would not be possible without our partner [Epsilon](#), the Industry's Most Advanced Data-Driven Marketing company, delivering managed marketing solutions that deliver demonstrable and sustainable results for some of the world's most sophisticated brands..

All discussants and highlights of the discussion will be featured in a digital article on www.marketing-interactive.com. 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



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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 guaranteeing the result 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 Motorola Solutions, said the 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 data sets. This leads to a lack of understanding of a business' customer as no one seems to be talking to customers except the sales guys.

"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 change from just being about revenue growth to more about how he or she 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 origin at CA Technologies, who said having too much of a focus on numbers can also put the marketer 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, adding that these are major challenges for most B2B businesses.

EMBRACING NUMBERS
Despite the challenges focus on metrics brings, Shweta Phiyadrasahi, head of marketing at ANZ – Media at Jaguar Land Rover, 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 for them. In turn, creating marketing programmes which fit the salesperson's style.

"Many a time, I see a disconnect between 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 [if 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 helping themselves – both senior and junior – in the process. Jessie Chong, head of marketing for Singapore at Trend Micro, said this means going beyond training junior marketers to look care of the timing of events and providing communications activities to have the consistency to communicate with the sales teams and be on the same page as them.

A DEDICATED COLLABORATION UNIT
Organisations include having a dedicated team driving the alignment between sales and marketing, Chong said. For the case of Trend Micro, the company has 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 up-selling opportunities and new local 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 preoccupied with KPIs and deadlines.

"Everyone is focused on that right now and praying for customers, 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 official 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 CompuLink, 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 finance 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 accountants.

"It's a lot more about 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 use that content in their sales pitch. At the end of the day, success requires the two to work in tandem.

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40 MARKETING JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2019

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MARKETING EVENTS



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DOES PERSONALISATION NEED TO BE ONE-ON-ONE?

"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 Liu, 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, insurance solution that allows customers to choose their preferred type of cover, premiums to be paid and payment frequency based on their budget and needs.

"Brands need not be excessively concerned about whether personalisation is always achieved to the power of one," he said. He added what's important is ensuring a continuous feedback loop which can be achieved with data and analytics. The customer needs to walk away saying 'they've thought of 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.'

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

But, in today's day and age, it is important for the brand to make it personalised and relevant so that the customer doesn't get buyer's remorse, providing something relevant to come along to personalise, he explained.

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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.

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42 MARKETING NOVEMBER 2018

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NOVEMBER 2018 MARKETING 43