

SALES, MARKETING & IT:

YOUR CROSS DEPARTMENTAL GUIDE TO DESIGNING A MARKETING OPERATIONS STRATEGY



In order to create a successful Marketing Operations strategy you need to align your departments and get them working towards the same goal.

There is no question that the buyer's journey has changed. Marketing and Sales are no longer the gatekeepers of information, telling the consumer what they want and how to buy it. Consumers have wrested control of this information, educating themselves about your brand and products, through channels of their choosing, long before they ever talk to Sales. In fact 67% of the buyer's journey is now online.

As a result of this shifting buyer's journey, marketing departments are producing content designed to engage the buyer in ever increasing volumes: 70% of marketing departments having produced 'more' or 'significantly more' content last year than they did the previous year.

In this environment, Marketing Operations, the metric driven backbone of the Marketing department, has grown out the marketing coalface and gained traction across B2B and B2C markets. Craig Moore, a director at SiriusDecisions argues that Marketing Operations may have now usurped Marketing to become king of the strategic business world.

The Marketing Operations function is now the primary driver of business growth, ensuring total campaign execution across multiple channels in the most efficient manner possible.

“I see Marketing Operations as more than managing processes and systems; it's an up and coming function that uses data, analytics and technology to enhance how and when a company targets and markets to prospects and customers.”

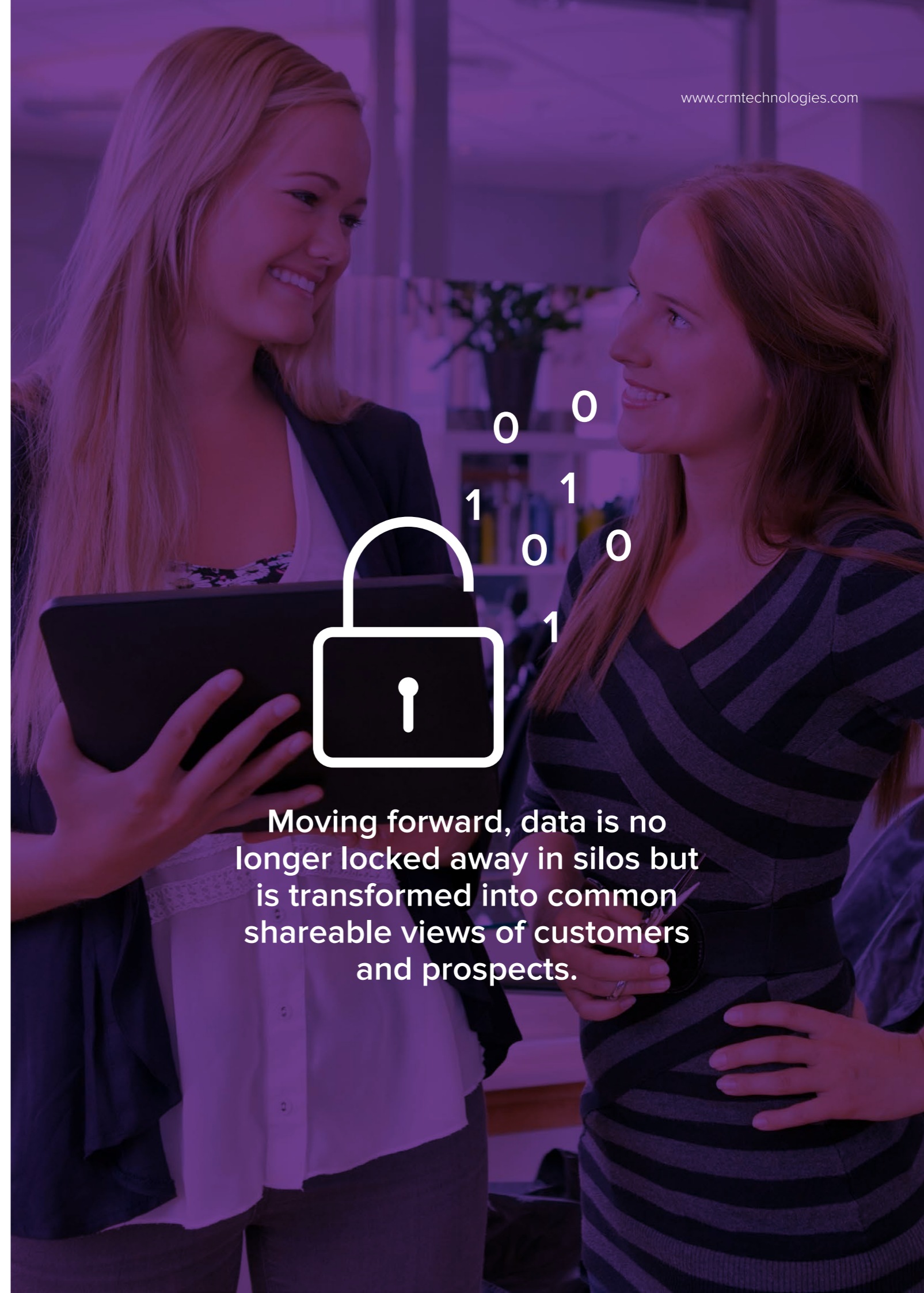
Allison McLeod, Sr. Director of Lead Generation and Marketing Operations at Rapid7

However in order for Marketing Operations to function successfully as a driver of business growth, cross departmental buy-in to strategy design is vital. This involves not only the primary individuals responsible for increasing the efficiency of campaigns, but also the Sales and Development teams along with senior involvement to ensure global campaign coordination. Marketing Operations acts to streamline the interaction between these departments and ensure the efficiency of cross departmental collaboration.

The key components to consider when designing a cross departmental Marketing Operations strategy are:

PROCESS DESIGN

Understanding, implementing, measuring and continually improving processes through routine evaluation and refinement is one of the key responsibilities of the Marketing Operations team. Process definition and refinement should be based around alignment to top level strategic goals, as well as cross-departmental best-fit. The implementation or refinement of any marketing operations strategy must consider, and align, the way the individual processes within various business functions - for example, Sales and Marketing - interface with one and other. This alignment of processes enables an increasing degree of collaboration resulting in the successful execution of any marketing operations strategy. Moving forward, data is no longer locked away in silos but is transformed into common shareable views of customers and prospects. These can be turned into actionable insights across the entire organisation, resulting in the eventual transformation of the user experience through continual process driven customer experience optimisation.



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PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project management, a defined role in more than 60 percent of high-performance marketing teams, is vital when designing a cross departmental Marketing Operations strategy. Any project management role assigned should stem from within Marketing Operations itself. The project manager must ensure that the marketing strategy is aligned to the wider strategic goals and revenue targets of the business; goals defined with the input of, and measured by, the Marketing Operations team. With performance being increasingly measurable at a granular level and big data collection leading to increasing optimisation of the user experience, project management is likely to become an increasingly prevalent role within the already multi-disciplinary marketing operations field.

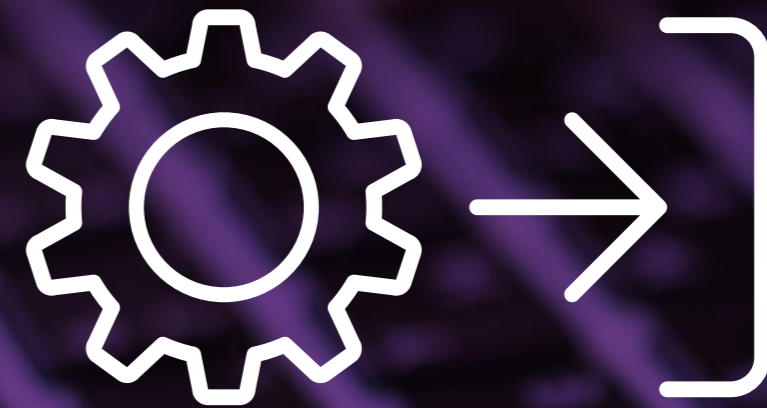


“38% of marketers cite time constraints as one of their top content marketing challenges.”

Content Marketing Institute

DATABASE MANAGEMENT

Any cross departmental marketing operations strategy must consider database management, as its successful execution and transformation relies on the validity and the completeness of the data on which it is driven. Previously data has been [seen as an IT issue](#), however the IT side of data management merely relates to its capture and storage, not its quality; this is the responsibility of marketing. In a true cross-departmental strategy, it is Marketing Ops who must step up and once again bridge this gap where IT and Marketing only partially intersect.



As Dave Frankland of Forrester Research once said
“The goal is not to collect data,
but to develop insights.”

The design of a cross-departmental marketing operations strategy should consider the following three aspects of database management in order to ensure successful execution.



Quality



Compliance



Integration





QUALITY:

Data-driven insights are only actionable if the data collected is of a high quality. Previous practices of data collection - summarising a prospect in terms of name, job title, company, phone number and other such basic fields are no longer sufficient. Now competitive edge stems from the collection of data regarding a prospect's behavioural and historical data. Behavioural data includes information on web traffic, downloads, page views, content views, time on the site, repeat visits and interactions with emails such as opens and click-throughs. Historical data includes information on the prospect's past purchases, and any previous issues or requests that they might have raised. For a full 360 degree view of the prospect, any data should encompass information across all sales channels and all interactions with your sales teams.





COMPLIANCE:

When considering data compliance in terms of marketing's needs, any strategy has to ask the following question: is the existing data of high quality, consistent and suited to your marketing needs? When including these points in your marketing operations strategy it is important to also consider the requirement for data quality assurance tools that allow you and your team to implement your own rules in your data management systems, ensuring that all data being collected is relevant to your marketing needs.





INTEGRATION:

Data integrations across departments involve ensuring that the most relevant pieces of data about prospects are, first, in existence and secondly brought together in an easily accessible and centralised database that is understood by the key revenue contributors across the business - primarily Sales, Marketing and IT.



DISTRIBUTION

In both the B2B and B2C arenas a successful cross departmental marketing operations has to dovetail with the wider customer experience that you're aiming to deliver. The increased use of automation technology within marketing operations helps to not only ensure the cross-channel experience is consistent and coordinated, but is also a massive contributor to improving efficiency and effectiveness.

“90% of consumers expect a consistent customer experience across all marketing channels.”

Channel Marketer Report

“46% of channel marketers said their team members do not have adequate access to the program and partner data they need to make informed decisions on a daily basis.”

Channel Marketer Report

SALES ENABLEMENT

Sales enablement is a key point of business function in the new, and increasingly challenging, consumer environment, ensuring that every seller has the data, skills and processes to optimise every buyer interaction. When creating your marketing operations strategy it is essential that sales enablement is considered. In terms of operations this will be focused around the [mass automation of lead qualification](#) and the creation of processes that can shortcut 'hot' leads, qualified through buying behaviours, straight to sales - giving them the opportunity to close deals faster.



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CHANNEL ENABLEMENT

A marketing operations strategy must work with the insight gleaned from data gathered and analysed, to use channel enablement to engage successfully with customers who, have largely already made a purchase decision. This can be accomplished by creating insightful content that has a clear point of view, offering thought leadership that provides knowledge and opinions to prospective customers, or successfully transforming leads into sales. The combined knowledge contained within a Marketing Operations team will drive the success of sales enablement as the team can use insights from data to ensure that channel messaging is reaching the right people at the right time increasing ROI for the wider company.



The combined knowledge contained within a Marketing Operations team will drive the success of sales enablement.

TAKEAWAYS



Remember, the goal is not to collect data but develop insights



Marketing Operations must act as a bridge between business functions



Marketing Operations must rise to the challenge of project management

Contact CRMT, the marketing operations experts, to discover how we can help you strategise, execute and transform your marketing activities, whatever your stage of marketing maturity.

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