

SUCCESSFUL EXECUTION OF YOUR MARKETING OPERATIONS STRATEGY

THROUGH CROSS
ENTERPRISE
COLLABORATION



To successfully implement and execute a marketing operations strategy, the process has to start with getting the right people from multiple departments behind a project. You then need to decide if there are enough skills in your organisation to create a marketing operations team, and if not, where the skills required to carry out day to day responsibilities will be found. Once established, your organisation should seek to drive home cross-departmental collaboration through a marketing operations strategy. It will be Marketing Operations' role to re-evaluate the customer journey and improve lead generation, re-examine automated marketing tools, and embed governance and process responsibilities.



GET THE CEO AND EVANGELISTS INVOLVED

It's perhaps the oldest cliché in management but it is particularly true when it comes to any new strategy which is going to rely on cross departmental collaboration.

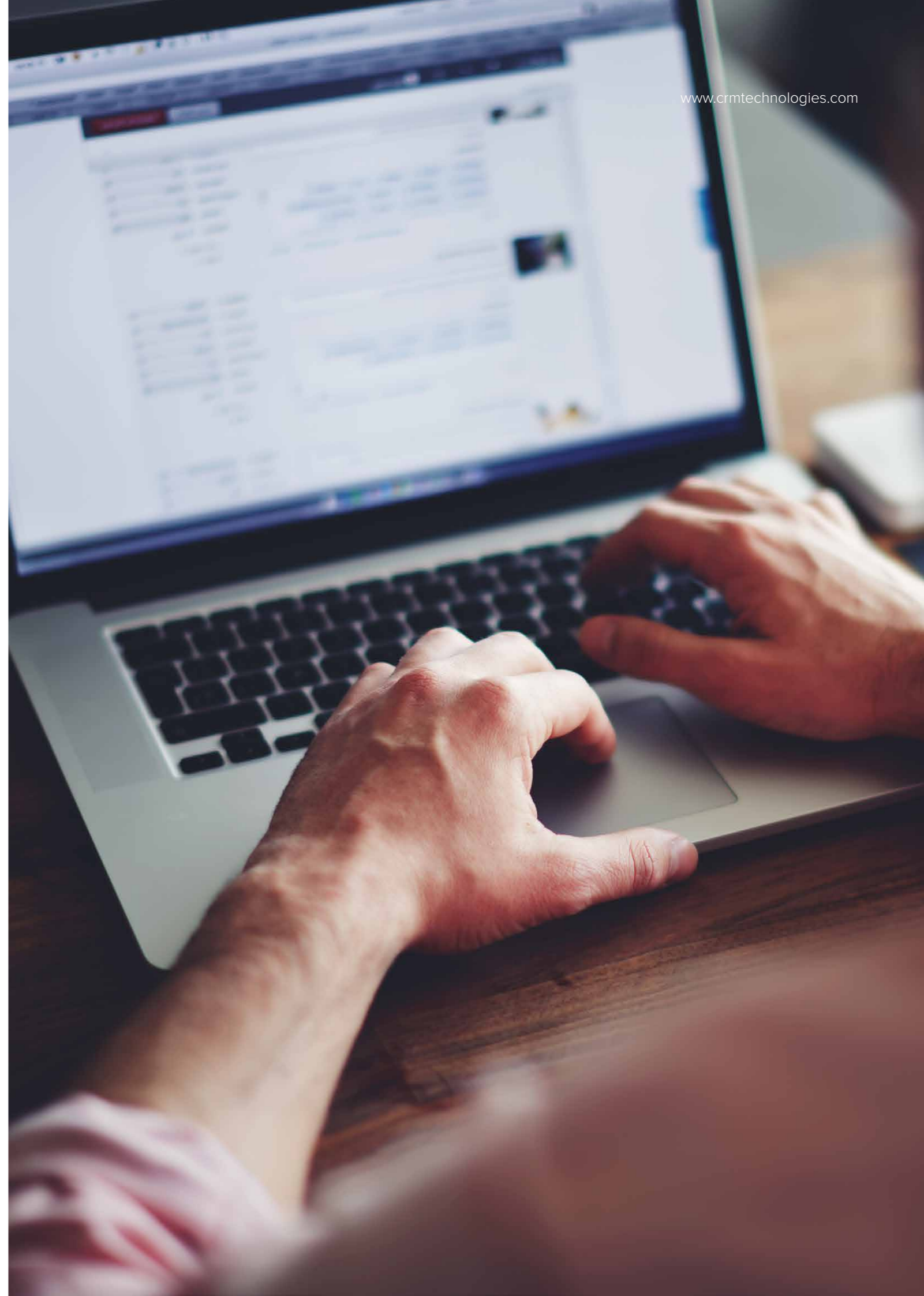
Unless there is buy-in from the very top, the rest of the organisation will find excuses to avoid collaboration. Without the leaders in the organisation buying into new strategies, employees will have little faith in processes and technologies that are introduced.



BUY-IN FROM CHAMPIONS

Setting up a marketing operations team may require cultural changes within your organisation. It's a social shift that may cause divisions between teams. Where a 'never the twain shall meet' mentality ruled, collaboration between Marketing, IT and Sales now has to prevail.

For that to be truly embedded, champions in each department should be encouraged to spread positivity and promote adoption. There are several ways of identifying who your top evangelists are likely to be. Managers can pass on recommendations and another good method is to look at which staff in IT, Sales and Marketing contribute to [social media debates](#), or perhaps blog on subjects surrounding marketing automation. This kind of passion is essential to spread enthusiasm and understanding within an enterprise.



IDENTIFY THE RUNNING ROUTE

It is highly unlikely that any business is going to already have all the right technology and people it requires to implement a successful marketing operations team and strategy. Gartner estimates that 70% of companies retain a Chief Marketing Technologist, but four in five of those require the Chief Marketing Technologist to report to Marketing rather than IT. Marketing Operations will create an essential link between Marketing and IT, meaning that all information is shared appropriately throughout the company.

Gartner also calculates that digital marketing production in the average company is often outsourced - between a quarter (company blogging) and a half (search marketing) of activities, for example.

Evidently the skills, personnel and tools are not immediately available in-house when an organisation starts its marketing operations journey. There are three routes that can be taken to overcome this challenge.



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HOW TO OVERCOME THIS CHALLENGE



HIRE THE STAFF YOU NEED

Some organisations will feel confident enough when building their marketing operations to identify the missing skills they need to recruit and where they can find high quality candidates. You only need to [look at marketing job sites](#) to see the rise in demand for roles related to automated marketing technology.

This route has the benefit that skills are 'owned' by the organisation and can be retained. Knowledge can be shared across the marketing operations team, strengthening their position.

The potential downside of recruiting all the staff needed is the cost involved. Further to this, Marketing Operations is still a new, exciting area for marketers and IT staff, but its role can often be misunderstood. Hiring the right people for the team is crucial to executing a successful strategy.



PARTNERSHIP

Many organisations are going for a blended form of training internal resources while also partnering with a company that can provide marketing operations services. Typically, a partner's previous expertise will be tapped into so automated marketing platforms can be set up to perform to a company's requirements. Employees will be trained in running the system day to day.

The benefit is that a company still hosts the platform and tools without the need to find specialist staff. Staff can be internally trained or supplied by a partner for specific parts of the set-up process. The client is also shielded from issues of wage inflation and high turnover rates among staff with highly desirable skills.



OUTSOURCE

Some organisations may choose to have their entire Marketing Operations outsourced to an external provider. The benefit can be that the company does not have to run its own platform and can instead focus on what it does best.

The downside is that the company has to go through a third party to run campaigns and can feel distanced from the insight data can bring. It also means the company is limited in its ability to develop internal skills to improve marketing automation and, at the same time, is doing little to overcome the internal barriers between Marketing, IT and Sales.

EMBED COLLABORATION THROUGH STRATEGY DELIVERY

To implement a strategy you will have previously agreed on how to [communicate and establish KPIs](#) to measure its success. That will have required Marketing, Sales and IT coming together to establish exactly [what the company offers](#), which niches it sits in, what its unique selling points are and how to deliver a consistent, credible customer experience.

Bear in mind that nearly two in three CMOs have no, or only informal, training around marketing tools and so the execution of a strategy cannot, and should not, be dictated by the budget holder.

The marketing operations team needs to have a say, not just in what the strategy is, but in how it is carried out.

The best way to start the successful execution of a marketing operations strategy is to get the multidisciplinary team collaborating on mapping out the customer journey. This is the first of a four part plan that will help embed a marketing operations strategy within your organisation.



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THE FOUR STRATEGY EXECUTION STEPS





THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

This should be the prime objective of any marketing operations strategy because it is only by understanding the customer's journey that an organisation can chart how people become aware of their offering, at what stage they consider it, what impacts a decision to buy and, just as crucially, what influences them to become a brand advocate.

The process of unravelling the journey can pinpoint the touch points at which the customer comes into contact with the brand and its messaging. It is particularly useful to find [which messages](#) had the highest likelihood of delivering the desired outcomes and to prioritise them, perhaps through promoting related content on relevant platforms where key customers congregate, for example.



EARLY WINS

IMPROVING THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Here's where collaboration between Marketing, IT and Sales can start to drive results. Once the user journey is tracked to a finer degree, it can be improved.

The big things to watch out for here are the touchpoints that appear to be working well and those which aren't having a positive impact. The results will vary greatly from one type of customer, product, or service to another.

However, the marketing operations team needs to be tasked with securing some 'early wins'. Which campaigns have worked well, on which channels, with which customers? How has this impacted conversion levels? Have purchasing decision been brought forward?

Ultimately the early wins will need to be turned into better prospecting. There needs to be improved transit through the purchase funnel until a customer purchases direct online or can be passed onto Sales as a qualified lead. Gartner estimates that companies that use automated lead management technology receive a [10% boost in revenue](#) within six to nine months.

This is a stage where Marketing and, in particular, Sales can show to the rest of the organisation the power of what can be achieved through marketing operations.



PERFECTING THE TECHNOLOGY

This stage should be running throughout the first two execution steps and is obviously one where IT can take a step forwards and consult with Marketing Operations colleagues over what technology decisions need to be made.

Assessments of available marketing automation tools should be carried out and once those that have been selected for the roll out have been utilised, you should evaluate them for performance and cost-effectiveness. Crucially, the market will have moved on and teams need to be aware of new tools and whether they should replace or, perhaps, complement existing platforms.



PROCESS AND GOVERNANCE

This is when a company knows it is starting to successfully implement its marketing operations strategy because it is not a case of the fundamental question of what should it should be doing, but rather how it manages Marketing Operations going forwards.

It is about embedding responsibilities within sub teams and individuals, deciding who is going to regularly process which data and report to which executives within the marketing operations team and beyond. Who's going to ensure data collected has been stored, handled and processed properly in compliance with local law?

Successfully executing your Marketing Operations strategy means hiring the right people for the role, or internally training your current employees to have both marketing and technical knowledge. Once this marketing operations team has been established, you will need to promote a collaborative and communicative culture across your enterprise, sharing knowledge, wins and successes across the board.

TAKEAWAYS



Having the right people, trained with the right skills, is essential to embarking on your Marketing Operations journey.



A successful strategy relies on full collaboration between different departments.



Execution doesn't mean you can just stop, governance of processes is just as essential.

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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