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5 WAYS THAT A SOLID MARKETING AUTOMATION SOLUTION CAN HELP SMALL TEAMS SUCCEED

Marketing automation equips small teams with the tools they need to convert more customers and address the bottom line. Here are five capabilities of marketing automation that small marketing teams will find the most benefit:

1. CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Marketing automation helps small teams to implement the strategy of engagement marketing, which is about marketers creating meaningful interactions with people throughout their customer journey. This type of relationship building is important in today's fast-moving and quickly-changing digital marketing landscape. Further, marketing automation helps to automate the ABCDEs of engagement marketing, meaning marketers are able to connect with people: **a**s individuals, **b**ased on what they do, **c**ontinuously over time, **d**irected towards an outcome, and **e**verywhere they are. See, ABCDE! Small teams can quickly acquire new customers and properly nurture them until they're ready to convert. All-in-all, marketing automation facilitates every marketer's dream: the development of durable, long-lasting customer relationships.

2. SALES AND MARKETING ALIGNMENT

We all know that for our organizations to be successful, sales and marketing alignment is crucial. When sales and marketing unite around a single revenue cycle, this dramatically improves marketing ROI, sales productivity, and top-line growth. In particular, scoring, a mutually agreed upon system for ranking potential buyers based on their sales-readiness and a critical feature in a marketing automation platform, is an important part of alignment—and one from which small teams reap much value.

Through scoring, small marketing teams can ensure that their sales counterparts are spending time working on only the hottest leads—closing more deals across the board.

Another important aspect of sales and marketing alignment comes in the form of nurturing—the process of building relationships with potential customers before they are ready to buy. Through this process in your marketing automation solution, marketing can help nurture potential customers until they are sales-ready. This enables the sales team to spend less time prospecting and more time doing what they do best—selling!

Additionally, sales teams, no matter the size, can benefit from a solid marketing automation platform, equipping them with the following capabilities:

- Highlighting the best potential customers and opportunities

- Defining potential customers by quality and urgency

- Tracking potential customers' behavior and activities, in order to indicate their level of buying interest

- Sending emails and entire campaigns with the click of a button

- Revealing which contacts are contributing to opportunities

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Thus, marketing automation gives the sales team full insight into the playing field, allowing them to convert more prospects into real customers. As a small marketing team with limited resources, an automated solution is therefore the best option for achieving sales and marketing alignment. And your sales team will thank you for it!

3. PRODUCTIVITY

Marketing automation provides small marketing teams the relief of automating manual tasks (such as sending multiple emails for multiple simultaneous campaigns). This is a definite time-saver (and boredom-reliever!) With more time under their belt, small teams can get more done! Whether that's exploring new potential programs to garner new customers or crossing off items that have been sitting on their to-do list for months.

For instance, let's take the process of sending out a webinar event invite. Typically you will have the same email structure for every webinar—title, abstract, bio, and so on. You also probably have landing pages and forms.

Through the use of tokens in your marketing automation platform you can easily clone these programs—only updating what needs to be updated—versus re-creating entire email flows and programs over and over again. This leads to much more productivity and time savings!

In addition, based on clear and accurate metrics and analytics provided by an automated platform, small teams can easily understand which of their programs are working best to convert customers and which ones aren't working at all. With marketing automation, small teams remain efficient since their time is focused on the efforts that yield the highest ROI. With time being a valuable resource of small teams, there's nothing better than being able to identify where not to spend time.

4. ROI

According to The Annuitas Group, after implementing a marketing automation tool, the average company gets a 77% increase in revenue and a 53% higher customer conversion rate. Clearly, marketing automation helps small teams to increase the ROI on their efforts, since they are no longer trapped in manual, unsynchronized, and inconsistent processes. The bonus here? If they can prove ROI for their programs, they are likely to be allotted more budget in the future, which could be used towards taking advantage of more features of their marketing automation system, expanding their programs, and adding additional manpower to the team.

5. SCALE

It is crucial for small marketing teams to select a marketing automation platform that not only helps them be more efficient, but also allows them to scale over time. Scalability is one of the most important features of a solid marketing automation platform. Clearly, teams shouldn't settle for a simple solution that doesn't consider the possibility of growth. Who knows what the future holds! The worst scenario for a small team would be to implement a marketing automation tool that works for now but is not robust enough to satisfy future needs. Eventually, this would negatively affect ROI and impede making progress with potential customers. On top of this, small teams would have to take time they don't have to search for and integrate a new, more robust solution down the road. Avoid future headaches by locating and implementing a scalable solution from the start.

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