

Sales and Marketing: Creating the Ideal Customer Experience



A guide to how the right tools can align and benefit both marketing and sales efforts, leading to increased lead generation, more closed deals, and more satisfied customers.



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Introduction

One Guru, Two Teams

Most know that marketing & sales teams are supposed to work closely together (i.e. lead hand off) but what they may not know is that both of these teams have the same guru - and that guru is the customer.

The customer should always inform both marketing and sales strategies.

Ask yourself:
Are your customers having the best possible experience with your company that they can possibly have ?

If they're not, what can your marketing and sales teams do differently ?



Effective strategies begin by creating the best possible experience for the potential customer.



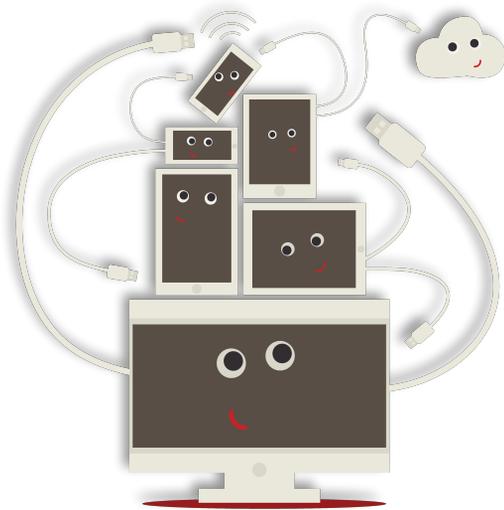
We've predicted that by 2016, enterprises will spend up to **30%** more on tools and content to successfully train both new hires and current sales staff. We've also predicted through 2018, the CMO role will be the primary driver of technology purchases and the primary influencer of customer engagement strategies. Both of these predictions tell us that technology is the strategic link between your customer and your marketing and sales teams.

This eBook will show you which technologies and strategies to pay attention to in order to generate the most effective levels of customer engagement, which will lead to increased lead generation and more closed deals.

Creating Better Digital Experiences

Social and Mobile Are the New Face-to-Face

Most of us would prefer face-to-face communication when meeting someone for the first time or when recruiting or hiring. However, in today's remote world, this is not always the case. This same environment applies to your interactions with potential customers.



Excluding trade shows and office visits, the majority of your potential customers' experiences with your enterprise will be in the realm of the social and mobile enterprise environment.

How do you create a positive Digital Experience?

It's important to create positive Digital Experiences for your customers because this is the primary way your customers will interact with your enterprise. A positive Digital Experience starts with the right content. **Is your customer receiving the content they desire at the time they desire it?**

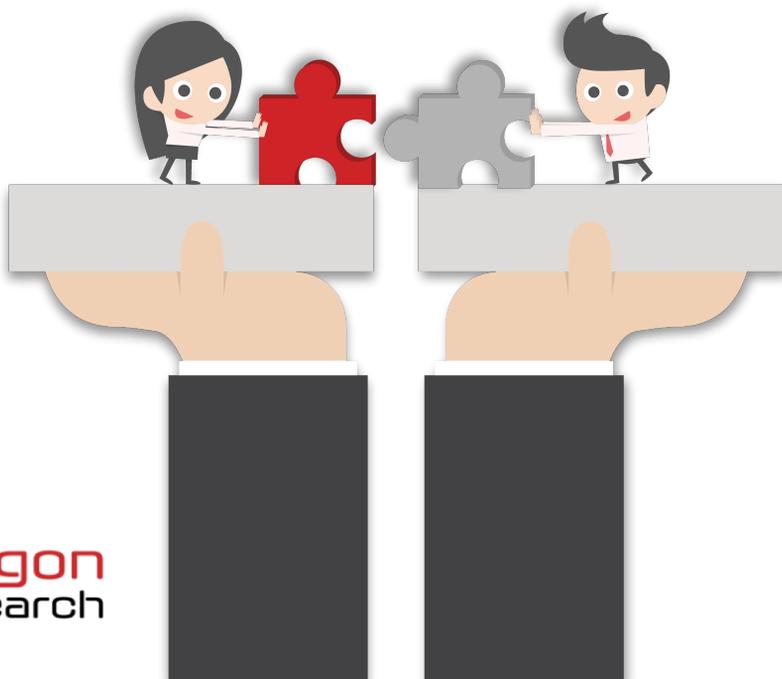
Digital Experience Platforms

For marketers, managing each and every customer's Digital Experience is impossible without the right tools, and this is why having the right technology is imperative. Digital Experience Management platforms help marketers deliver a consistent and engaging experience for their potential customers across multiple channels and devices. DXM Platforms work by integrating web content management, e-commerce, social media, and sales communications.

In turn, this creates better Digital Experiences for customers by enabling the customer to seek out what they need, such as information or the ability to purchase a desired item. DXM platforms should be used in conjunction with Marketing Suites (some Marketing Suites also have DXM capabilities – see our Research Note [“The Rise of the Marketing Suite”](#) to learn more.)

The question is: **which Digital Experience Management platform is right for your enterprise goals?**

Our special report on [Hot Vendors in Digital Experience Management](#) highlights the vendors that we believe are helping companies develop better Digital Experiences.

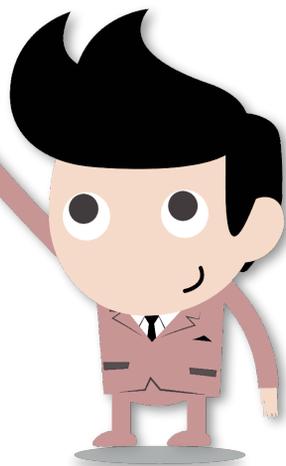


Content is Key for Customers

Make the Digital Experience Worth it for Your Customers

We said that in order to create the best Digital Experience for your customer, relevant content is key. **What does this mean?** It means getting the most applicable content to your customer when they want it.

An example of great content marketing is the video tutorial, which can show your customers important how-to's, such as how to access your community. This gives your customer the information they need in a personable format. Marketing suites have realized that campaigns, e-mails, and landing pages can be enhanced by using videos. See our research note, [Creating a Video Tutorial: Six Steps to Success](#), for more how-to on creating a great piece of video content.



An example of poor content delivery would be giving an IT Developer a guide to effective social media strategy. This is not only not useful to the IT Developer, it might actually be harmful: doling out inappropriate content creates a poor social and mobile reputation for an enterprise, and it should be avoided across all channels, whether that channel is social media or email marketing.

Relevant content is all about giving the customer something that:

A) is helpful to them

or

B) that they are interested in learning more about

We've identified Content Marketing as an emerging area that makes the Digital Experience worth it for customers because they are getting free knowledge with essentially no accompanying risk (such as downloading a white paper by giving their name and email).



Hint: this eBook is a form of Content Marketing!

Content Marketing has already proved to be such an effective tool for enterprises that it's poised to overtake traditional enterprise content management approaches over the next three years. This is because Content Marketing gives a potential customer a much clearer, more informed picture of what a certain enterprise can do versus a traditional advertisement.

How Can Content Marketing Tools Help Improve a Digital Experience?

Content Marketing tools help marketers find and tailor content. In some cases, these tools bleed over into Marketing Automation capabilities by actually distributing the content to end users. There are many vendors that help marketers accomplish this. We highlight some that we believe do this especially well in our [Technology Arc for Sales and Marketing](#).

Go The Extra Mile with Predictive Applications

Take the Guesswork Out of Marketing and Sales

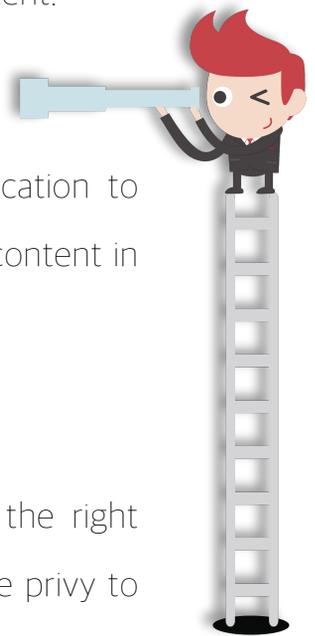
You've learned that in conjunction with Digital Experience Management platforms, Content Marketing is key for positively engaging with potential customers and keeping current customers happy. Another component of this marketing strategy makes it even more effective: Predictive Content.

What is it?

Predictive Content is the ability of a software application to recognize what the user is doing and select the right content in the context of the work that's being done.

Why is it helpful?

Delivering the right content to the right person at the right time is easier said than done – you may not always be privy to what a potential customer is looking for. This can cause problems for marketing and sales teams – marketers might feel that their content is not getting to the right people, and sales representatives might not know whether to deliver **x** white paper or **z** webinar invitation to **Y** potential client.



This is where Predictive Applications come into play. Predictive Applications take the guesswork out of content delivery and by doing so, save marketers and sales representatives valuable time.



How does Predictive Content apply to Sales?

Predictive Applications will show or recommend the right content (brochures, eBooks, videos) to show a potential client. This satisfies marketers because the content they created has now reached the right person. Sales representatives are also satisfied because their potential customer has received what they needed, in turn making them a more qualified lead. Predictive applications are also a part of the [Sales Enablement process \(see Chapter 5\)](#).

Social Selling: The Digitization of the Sales Force

Social Media is for Sales, too.



Social Media is an easy way to interact with potential customers throughout the customer acquisition lifecycle. Although it has been traditionally associated with marketing because of its capability for advertising campaigns, Social Media can connect sales reps to potential buyers.

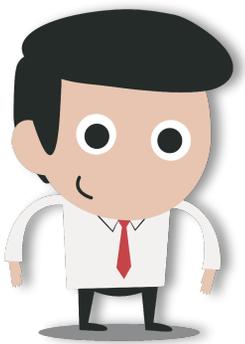
What is Social Selling?

Social Selling is the process of engaging with prospects and customers via social channels, either standalone or as an embedded app within the CRM. It's quickly becoming a must-have way to engage, namely because it is the most common place where potential customers can be found.



Why should you be Social Selling?

Social Selling is advantageous because it speeds up the sales process and increases the accuracy of lead scoring and the likelihood of closing deals. As we said in chapter 1, the majority of your potential customers' experiences stem from the social and mobile environment. Social Selling engages with potential customers where they are most likely to be found - on Social Media.



That being said, there are a multitude of Social Media channels. Which ones are the best to engage with potential customers?

The Right Tools to Use When Selling Socially



Social Selling Platforms take the guesswork out of using multiple engagement channels. Many of these platforms can also guide a sales rep by making prescriptive suggestions on who to engage with and when. We highlight 3 of these platforms in our Research Note: [Hot Vendors for Social Selling](#).

Sales Enablement Beyond CRM

Let's take a deeper dive into what we talked about in chapters 3 and 4. Specifically, let's take a look at how Predictive Technologies are shaping sales strategies.



What is Sales Enablement?

Sales Enablement gives your sales team what it needs need to be effective in today's ever-changing, social, mobile, and remote-work market, and it touches on every aspect of a sale. Sales Enablement involves using the new applications available (namely, predictive analytics and applications) to help salespeople get to a desired outcome. The new era of predictive analytics is revolutionizing the sales process, allowing salespeople to make better decisions based on insights derived from the analytics.

While CRM is still an important part of the Sales Ecosystem, there are new tools that allow sales representatives to actively connect, communicate, collaborate, and create and share content at the right point of engagement. These new tools are crucial because, like Content Marketing tools, they listen to what the potential customers want and then deliver the content to them when they want it.

What tools make up a strong Sales Enablement strategy?

- ❑ **Predictive Lead Scoring Applications:** predict whether or not a sales lead will close by establishing a profile for buyer behavior based on past deals. They then compare leads against the attributes of past deals to assign a probability that a lead will close.
- ❑ **Sales Communications:** an emerging business application that enables sales professionals to send content to contacts and track their interactions. The growing need to understand what prospects are doing before they get into the proposal stage is what sales communications is all about.
- ❑ [Social Selling Platforms \(see Chapter 4\)](#)
- ❑ **Digital Transaction Management Tools:** speed up the contract process by allowing proposals and contracts to all be managed digitally.



Learn more about these technologies and how to begin implementing them by viewing our [Predictions for Sales, 2015](#).



Take Away

Why Does All of This Matter?

Using the right sales and marketing tools will not only make your current & potential customers happy, but will make your job easier by allowing you to work smarter.

However, with so many technologies available, it can be difficult to choose which ones are the best to use. We hope you've learned which tools to focus on - the tools that are making a powerful difference in Sales and Marketing results. Though many of these technologies are still in emerging markets, you should consider deploying these tools if you want to generate a significant growth in lead generation and amount of closed deals.

At their core, all of the technologies mentioned in this eBook revolve around the customer. When planning and executing new strategies, marketers and sales people need to keep the customer at the forefront.

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