Marketing Resource Management
Implementing strategic and tactical initiatives
to achieve best-in-class performance

White Paper

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Executive Summary

Best-in-Class marketing departments are saving time, resources and budget by managing and measuring their marketing as never before. They are driving leads to the sales pipeline at nearly 5 times the rate of average performers while speeding time to market and reducing costs. Not surprisingly, they’re also the leading adopters of enabling technologies.

These technologies help accomplish an amazingly diverse set of objectives including driving central strategy through diverse distribution channels, workflow automation, and management of integrated marketing. Effective implementation requires a focused and determined effort from everyone involved, but the benefits are immediate and quantifiable.

Better processes and better marketing are not the only benefits enabling technologies bring. As part of the demand chain, marketing’s mission is to grow revenue. As part of the supply chain, procurement’s mission is to reduce costs. By effectively using technology to run cost-efficient departments and fulfillment processes, marketing can maintain its autonomy from supply chain procurement departments; and by doing so, they are in the best position to succeed.

The Importance of the Value Chain

This whitepaper delves into some of the technologies and practices that can lead to dramatic and measurable improvements in marketing process and performance.

To understand business environment context and how technology ties into the equation, it is important to understand the principals of value chain economics. Figure 1 below is an overview of how the value chain is linked. Marketing and sales are part of the demand chain.

Demand chain refers to the resources allocated to creating demand for a company’s goods and services, while supply chain focuses on the resources required to produce and deliver a company’s goods and services.

Over the last decade many companies have prioritized updating and upgrading their supply chain management in an effort to streamline process, enhance quality and save costs. Demand chain has
been slower to follow suit, but with increasing pressure across the board to justify spending and to achieve results with lower and lower head count, this has begun to change.

As reported by Gartner, “All too often, large enterprises lack documented or standardized marketing processes — resulting in misalignments, inconsistencies and wasted effort. Marketing personnel frequently rotate job responsibilities. Along with thwarting progress toward best practices and processes, this disarray contributes to a loss of corporate memory and key lessons learned. The elongated learning curve affects new or transferred employees as they struggle to find information or have to relearn what the organization, in effect, already knows.” (Gartner 2004)

Best-in-Class marketing teams have defined and documented their practices and moved to more efficient demand-chain models. However, many companies still struggle with attaining that level of organization and automation, or don't recognize the need for it.

CEO’s and CFO’s do recognize this need. Some companies have shifted some procurement duties from demand chain to supply chain procurement because they are perceived to lead the demand chain in adoption of the latest business and purchasing practices. However, this is a tactical mistake. Supply and demand chains are inherently different, and therefore the criteria used to drive and evaluate performance solutions need to be different.

Specifically, supply chain management’s core function is strictly about efficiency and cost containment in delivering a company’s goods or services at the very best value. In demand chain management, efficiency and cost are penultimate to delivering marketing impact. The ultimate quantitative measure is revenue growth. Return on Marketing Investment (ROMI) remains the most widely accepted measure of success.

In fact, according to a survey by Aberdeen Group, 60% of marketing executives indicated unequivocally that marketing-generated leads that converted to the sales pipeline is the measurement that matters most; and Best-in-Class companies delivered 44% of the sales forecasted pipeline generated by marketing. (Haupis 2010)

Marketers must embrace the challenge of creating a demand chain model that addresses the needs of their organization, or risk losing autonomy to a supply chain team ill-equipped to make decisions about what will work best in driving demand.

Enabling Technologies – Industry Terms.

Let’s get our acronyms straight.

To help marketers meet these challenges, a variety of interested vendors have created a host of enabling technologies giving rise to a number of different terms and acronyms. Yet they represent solutions or practices that collectively share many of the same goals or have significant overlap. Sorting through the growing myriad of solutions can seem a hopeless task.

This paper focuses on the considerations needed to improve marketing efficiency and effectiveness within an organization. For simplicity, we refer to the methodology and technology in this paper as Marketing Resource Management. However they’re described, some of the world’s leading companies integrate multiple, cloud-based technologies for seamless marketing workflow automation and execution.
Marketing Resource Management (MRM)

“MRM is a set of processes and capabilities that aim to enhance your ability to orchestrate and optimize the use of internal and external marketing resources...The desire to deal with increased marketing complexity, along with a mandate to do more with less, are the primary drivers behind the growth of MRM.” (Kimberly Collins 2012)

MRM requires a holistic and pragmatic approach in order to create an environment of continuous improvement. Factors like culture, personnel dynamics, business rules and distribution models make every company’s situation unique. Therefore, each has unique criteria driving their marketing systems.

The key to excellence in marketing processes starts with the hard work of analyzing, organizing and aligning marketing systems with business objectives. While there are software “solutions” for nearly every business process, they all face two principal challenges: meeting specific needs and attaining complete adoption by all stakeholders.

Achieving process excellence and efficiency is far from a pure technology play. The efforts of your team and partners in planning and systematic implementation have more to do with your success than your choice of process technologies.

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<tr>
<th>EMM</th>
<th>ENTERPRISE MARKETING MANAGEMENT</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Defines a category of software used by marketing operations to manage their end-to-end internal processes. Is a subset of Marketing Technologies consisting of other categories such as Web Analytics, Digital Asset Management, and Lead Management.</td>
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<td>(Enterprise marketing management 2015)</td>
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<th>MRM</th>
<th>MARKETING RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</th>
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<td>A term used when discussing marketing management end-to-end. It generally refers to systems and technology for the optimization and automation of resources and processes that go into the planning, design, production, execution and analysis of marketing.</td>
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<th>MAM</th>
<th>MARKETING ASSET MANAGEMENT</th>
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<td>MAM solutions typically include a number of capabilities such as digital and physical asset management, template-based customization, online ordering and workflow automation.</td>
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<th>DAM</th>
<th>DIGITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT</th>
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<td>Consists of management tasks and decisions surrounding the ingestion, annotation, cataloguing, storage, retrieval and distribution of digital assets. (Digital asset management 2015)</td>
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<th>MOM</th>
<th>MARKETING OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT</th>
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<td>Technology similar to MRM, MOM is a version of end-to-end marketing optimization, from planning and budgeting, through marketing content management, to global marketing execution and analysis. (Marketing operations management 2015)</td>
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When creating your plan, focus on your core processes first, not the technology. Other factors, including integration and third-party applications, also shape your solution. But let’s start with the basics.

**Key areas for consideration**
- Relationship between Central and Local Marketing
- Marketing Workflow
- Digital Asset Management
- Content Creation and Campaign Management
- Procurement and Distribution

**The Relationship between Central and Local Marketing**

A good starting point for the MRM process is to define the relationship between the creators of strategy and brand content, the end users, and anyone in between. Some examples of different structures are corporate to regional marketers; corporate to agency affiliates; manufacturers to distributors; franchisors to franchisees; etc.

These relationships are often intricate in terms of content, control, privileges, and a myriad of other factors. Clearly defining how each stakeholder is connected to the process is critical to creating an automated system that works for your company.

Taking into account all stakeholder needs will enable you to create a system that makes adoption easier. By making the process simpler and more efficient, most will become willing partners. Well-planned solutions are particularly important in gaining adoption of technology laggards.

**Marketing Workflow**

Uncovering opportunities to streamline operations and free up precious time for more creative use requires careful examination of marketing workflow.

*The best automation solutions start with a clear vision of flow and responsibilities.*

All busy marketing groups are plagued by bottlenecks of logistics and processes that consume time and energy better spent contributing to new initiatives and content. Automation can eliminate delays and errors and thereby improve speed and quality. These tools also capture and account for every detail of the process.

The best automation solutions start with a clear vision of flow and responsibilities. Start by looking carefully at your existing workflow systems for bottlenecks. Areas where they typically occur include approvals, project management, asset collection, collaboration, budgeting, and cost allocation. However, any function causing delays should be evaluated for potential automation. Most companies are able to easily identify these problem areas once they step back to evaluate.

In the referenced Aberdeen survey, the top marketers were more than twice as likely to employ MRM technologies as average or laggard performers. The following highlights an excellent use of MRM as a marketing workflow solution.
Case In Point

Streamlining, Speeding and Simplifying Campaign Execution and Content Creation

A nationwide network of home health care agencies employs about 40 recruiters across the U.S. charged with staffing 600 locations. These recruiters struggled to manage campaigns, advertising and events while also resolving the interests of the many connected stakeholders such as local management, corporate management, corporate marketing, and recruitment management. These stakeholders had various responsibilities in the process, including brand and content creation and compliance as well as complex content and budget approval processes that involved multiple individuals.

The resulting administrative processes were cutting into recruiter productivity and causing delays in time-to-market. In addition, large amounts of creative and project management resources were consumed in recreating similar items over and over again. The company needed to improve the productivity of their recruiters, allowing them to focus their energies on attracting and retaining top talent, as well as reduce the demands on corporate marketing, administration and management.

Initially, the client partnered with an MRM service provider to help manage their recruiting functions manually, who in turn used their hands-on experience to help the client reengineer their business process.

An MRM application was designed to minimize the recruiters’ workload and execute campaigns and support requirements throughout the company. The automated workflow enabled recruiters to select and create preapproved content, execute recruitment campaigns, manage assets, and automate approvals.

The new solution, because it eased the process for everyone involved and improved the quality and timeliness of recruitment efforts, secured quick adoption from all recruiters and stakeholders. This cloud application saved the company an estimated $160,000 annually. It cut time-to-market from weeks to as little as a day or two and improved recruiters’ productivity by more than 15%. The solution gave the company the bandwidth to grow their agency network without increasing recruiting staff.

Marketing Asset Management

A survey of marketing executives revealed that 49% felt they lacked the staff to manage assets while 32% felt the complexity and growth of content leads to information overload. (Wikipedia)

Traditionally, asset management has been thought of as the collection and organization of “branded” assets into accessible and consistent form. Several factors have added complexity and expanded asset management’s role in the marketing process.

The number of marketing channels has increased dramatically. As a result, assets must be more flexible. File type, size, resolution and other physical characteristics have all become more complex.

Simply finding the right asset that might fill a specific need requires asset-management architecture with a clear set of rules. Strong meta tags are critical to returning the right search results and avoiding either overwhelming choices or failing to return prime assets. Equal attention needs to be
spent on the rules behind how the system is implemented and administered. It may sound difficult, but systems that effectively leverage automation are easy to maintain.

The term “asset” has also become more complex. Simple one-layer assets are now often combined with other variable content. A basic example of this is a photograph with a headline that names a location. The intention is that the location can be changed to meet local requirements.

Video, television and radio assets may not be new, but traditionally they were managed almost exclusively at the national level. Not anymore. Local access and customization of broadcast assets is now the norm. Additionally, smaller and smaller size organizations are creating and managing these assets, and require a system to maximize their potential.

**Content Creation and Campaign Management**

Content creation deserves its own examination. Here again, the relationships between central or national marketing organizations and local marketing are paramount. This is where a strong system and defined responsibilities can pay big dividends.

Start by considering how your creative processes work today and how you expect them to work in the future. If you publish a lot of content meant to be customized at the local level, then portals that allow easy access and customization are key to your solution.

On the other hand, if you centralize the creative effort and run campaigns on behalf of local sales channels, streamlining workflow and eliminating approval bottlenecks are most essential.

Many times these two different circumstances can be addressed in one integrated solution covering all the bases around content creation, management and distribution.

**Procurement, Distribution and Measurement**

Recent research through the CMO council suggests that for every dollar spent on creation and production of promotional items, point-of-sale displays and other collateral materials, another dollar is spent on related management and product obsolescence.

Most companies have been slow to recognize these hidden costs because they are fragmented and difficult to pinpoint. Inventory management and storage costs, fulfillment, and waste are all major factors. Every hour or dollar spent on these activities means fewer resources available for marketing initiatives.

MRM systems present an opportunity to recapture these resources in several ways. Automation of ordering, inventory and fulfillment dramatically reduces time spent managing field requests. In a well-organized system, these efficiencies will extend to all process stakeholders, such as administration and accounting.

With tighter inventory control and recent changes in production technology of physical media such as print, point-of-purchase displays and packaging, opportunities to reduce waste and cost are significant. Asset management systems are equipped to manage production and distribution in the most efficient, cost-effective ways, with minimal human resources.

*Best-in-Class companies deliver 44% of the sales forecasted pipeline generated by marketing*

Source: Aberdeen Group
Timely distribution of relevant digital content is a growing requirement in the evolving marketing landscape. Email marketing, personalized web content and landing pages and SMS messaging are a few examples. Integrated MRM systems facilitate their instant delivery.

Marketing is increasingly measured by how many leads are converted into the sales pipeline. MRM provides the answer through automation of emails, “drip” marketing, personal landing pages and on-demand content distribution, generating indispensable value and measurable results.

In the final analysis, to maximize return, an MRM solution must be wrapped around the exact needs of the company deploying it.

**Summary**

In an uncertain economic environment, the pressure on CMO’s to cut costs and grow performance is propelling them toward more transparent, efficient and accountable marketing. The mandate to effectively tie marketing programs to organizational goals is driving the demand for process automation.

Best-in-Class companies use enabling MRM technologies to achieve marketing and operational excellence. Automating both internal processes such as asset management, workflow, collaboration, procurement and distribution, and external customer-engagement processes, such as direct marketing, digital marketing, and multi-channel marketing, greatly enhance marketing ROI.

MRM delivered through a web portal creates immediate, quantifiable benefits that are limited only by the goals and vision of the deploying company.

**References**


**About Strata Company**

Strata Company provides marketing, communications and technology solutions that enable companies to increase effectiveness and revenue for their business. By leveraging industry expertise and relevant technologies, we deliver solutions that resolve process, execution and logistics challenges for our clients. Our specialties include cloud-based marketing and communications management solutions, data-driven marketing, and full service production services. For more than 20 years top performing companies have chosen Strata for complete turnkey solutions and individualized services that help them save time, money and resources – enabling their success in an increasingly competitive and ever-changing business landscape. Visit [www.gostrata.com](http://www.gostrata.com) to learn more.