BIZCOMMUNITY

Why enterprise martech implementations fail

By Johan Walters

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One of the biggest stumbling blocks when trying to harness the power of cloud marketing technology is a fundamental disconnect between marketing, business and technology leaders. If unaddressed, this chasm between departments can not only impede the journey towards digital transformation but could stop it dead in its tracks.

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In this first instalment, I look at how the breakdown in cohesion can happen and lays the groundwork for how CMOs and CTOs can work together to achieve real digital maturity.

The nature of the beast

Incubeta has been working with enterprise clients, both local and international, for more than 15 years. We have seen how CMOs and other marketing leaders have struggled to take their rightful seat at the boardroom table.

More than this, as technology has progressed and moved off-premises and into the cloud, we have seen how CMOs have battled to secure the buy-in and support of the rest of the organisation. And, even if CMOs win the battle to implement cloud solutions, Gartner Inc has shown in a 2019 study that only 58% of the martech stack's potential is being utilised by global organisations.

So why is it so difficult to get martech implemented and then to properly tap into its power?

Silos are silent killers

One of the biggest problems is that the development and business intelligence departments often work in isolation from all the other departments within the enterprise – and most certainly in isolation of the marketing department.

This great divide is evidenced not just in the physical space, but in the meeting of the minds. The tech team often see themselves as a service provider to the marketing team and they seldom work towards common goals.

This becomes even more challenging for the big enterprise companies when the marketing leader – in most cases a CMO – will take on the role as project sponsor, develop the use case and hand over the specs to the technology teams.

This, of course, is exacerbated when the budget comes from the marketing department and not from the tech team, further entrenching the perception of a service provider/client relationship.

How can you manage what you can't measure?

When it comes to marketing initiatives like connecting offline to online data and analytics, this chasm between the departments can impact severely on delivery. You can see the damage this can do when the marketing team are measuring results in a completely different way than the rest of the business units.

Website leads and fulfilment are tracked by the legacy processes and systems in a completely different way than how the marketing teams are measuring the leads. This further disconnect will mean that how the marketing department is reporting is viewed with suspicion and already makes it far more difficult to get buy-in from the business and tech departments when it comes to apportioning budget for new initiatives.

Unfortunately, all companies that have been operating for some time, or have reached enterprise size, will have some form of legacy infrastructure and some form of offline human interventions in their process. To expect them to suddenly install a marketing stack, like Google Marketing 360, and suddenly have everything in place to track, measure and attribute correctly is simply wishful thinking.

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Red tape hell

Refining business rules and processes is a big part of any new implementation. It is also the part where things often come unstuck.

If it were just the technical challenges that held the implementations back, this could be overcome with a good dose of consultancy time, guidance and change management. However, most enterprise companies are also battling an environment swamped with compliance requirements and steer committees.

Too often when we look at cloud implementations we hit walls of steercos who, understandably, want to know about security and compliance issues – especially when it comes to protecting the company and their customer data – but there have been instances where progress get locked in a never-ending stall and the new implementation is lost in a quagmire of red tape.

More often than not, people in the steerco don't understand martech and so once your implementation approval hits a block, you need to wait for the next steerco to come along, often only in a month or two's time. In the meanwhile, the CTO has more than enough on his or her plate and this will drop off their radar.

Finding a solution

There are so many benefits to working with enterprise companies. More often than not they have the resources (both human and cash) to genuinely digitally transform. Once the benefit of harnessing the power of cloud computing is understood, however, getting the implementation over the finish line – and setting up the means to harness that power – requires careful, group-wide management.

In the next instalment, I delve into how to set your company up for success through the creation of a Centre of Excellence as well as a process of crafting bite-size use cases to build up to true digital maturity.

ABOUT JOHAN WALTERS

Johan is a digital marketing transformation specialist helping brands on their transformation towards digital marketing maturity.

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