

OPTIMIZE YOUR MARKETING AUTOMATION

Mastering Marketing Automation with a Quality Data Foundation





Introduction

As modern marketers, we are faced with juggling multiple technologies and achieving a vast array of objectives every day. We must make the most of our investments and rely on automated platforms whenever possible in order to reach our goals.

When it comes to marketing technology (MarTech), there are numerous factors that play into the success or failure of your efforts. One of the main factors is the quality of the data you use to fuel your systems.

According to the 2016 B2B Marketing Data Report from Dun & Bradstreet, when it comes to maximizing the return on investment in MarTech, "41% of B2B marketers surveyed cite inconsistent data across technologies as their biggest challenge." Further, according to industry expert David Raab, "almost 70% of marketers are either unhappy or only marginally happy with their

marketing automation software. There's a lot of fragmentation and dissatisfaction in this category despite the huge potential benefits of automating marketing."¹

In partnership with Dun & Bradstreet, Ascend2 surveyed 200+ marketing influencers to find out why B2B marketers are struggling to optimize marketing automation systems and how they see the impact of marketing automation as it pertains to their organization and objectives.

In the following sections we'll share the results of this study and share the ways in which marketers are both struggling with and succeeding at improving their use of MarTech. More importantly, we'll provide you with tips and tricks for implementing a top-notch data management strategy that will improve your MarTech capabilities.

SECTION 1

The Current Impact of Marketing Automation Across B2B Organizations

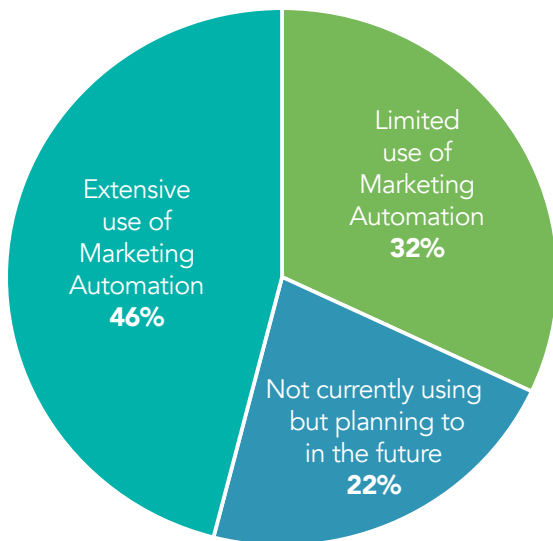
The majority of B2B marketing leaders believe marketing automation is a critical element in their departments' effectiveness. Our survey results show that 78% of B2B organizations use marketing automation to some extent to streamline complex marketing processes and data across channels. Those same respondents consider it "very important" to the overall performance of the marketing machine.

If marketing automation is so important, why are some marketers only using it to a limited extent, as opposed to optimizing it to its fullest potential? The answer lies in the quality of the data that marketers are using to fuel their marketing automation systems.

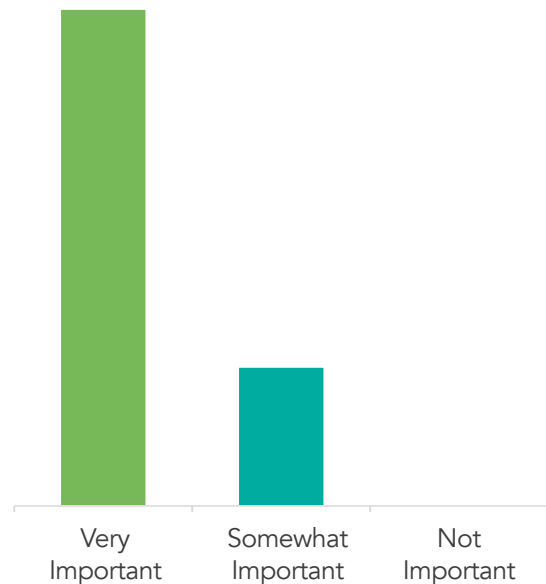
The truth is, many marketers feel lost at sea when it comes to implementing a marketing data management strategy that will improve their marketing automation system performance.

A data management solution (a platform that provides marketers with an automated way to cleanse, enrich and manage marketing data) helps marketers optimize and better understand their buyer data — demographic, firmographic and behavioral information that bolsters campaign results. The data can then be used to improve marketing automation performance in areas such as email deliverability and content relevance.

To what extent does your company use marketing automation?



What is the importance of marketing automation to the overall performance of marketing?



SECTION 2

Data's Role in Resolving Marketing Automation Challenges

According to our survey results, the top two barriers to achieving marketing automation success are a lack of effective strategy (49%) and inadequate contact data quality (39%).

The [B2B Marketing Data Report from Dun & Bradstreet](#) also revealed that the average marketing database is missing complete and accurate information, such as job title (45%), phone number (62%), website domain (82%), industry info (77%) and more.

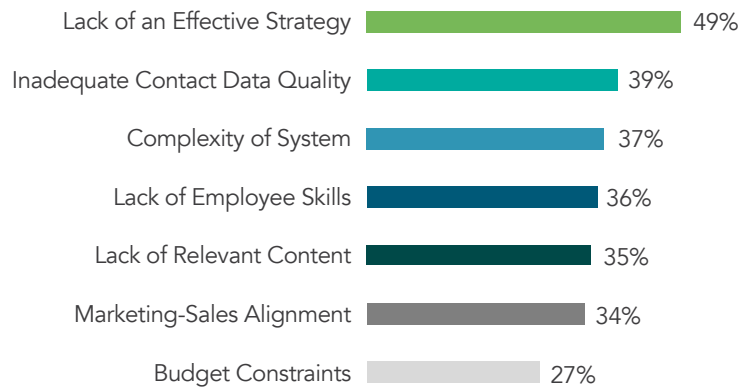
Pumping incomplete data into your marketing automation platform will only undermine your campaign effectiveness. Instead, take the time to make sure your records are clean, complete and actionable. Your marketing automation system will then work better to address the needs of your target audience when you use relevant, complete and accurate data to optimize your content and email marketing campaigns.

Optimizing your database can be difficult when left to your own devices. Yet, 41% of survey respondents still rely solely on in-house resources to strengthen their marketing automation strategies. Don't be afraid to ask for help when it comes to your marketing automation strategy — especially when it comes to improving the quality of your data. Once you've optimized your data and have a clear view of your customers, you can begin creating an effective strategy that will enable you to reach the right customers and achieve your overall goals and objectives.

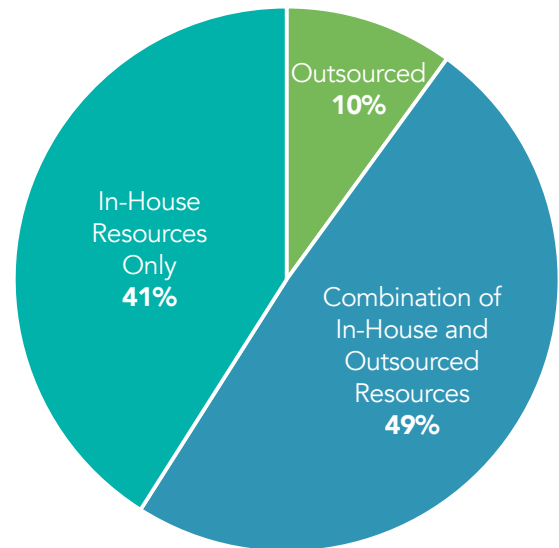
Your strategy must involve quality content that addresses the issues your audience cares about most. A thoughtfully crafted email nurture campaign that educates and guides prospects through the buyer's journey, as well as social and paid advertising campaigns that create brand and solution awareness, are also key aspects of a successful strategy.

Without these elements, your team will struggle to succeed and will be wasting valuable dollars on an automation system that is not supported by a strong foundation of engaging content and targeted campaigns.

What are the most significant barriers to marketing automation success?



What best describes the resources used for planning a marketing automation strategy?



SECTION 3

Marketers Need Better Data to Reach Their Most Critical Goals

When we asked our survey participants what their most critical marketing automation goals are this year, they agreed that improved lead nurturing (63%) and increased lead generation (59%) reigned supreme. There's just one problem though: 64% of respondents agreed that they are only "somewhat" effective in achieving these goals.

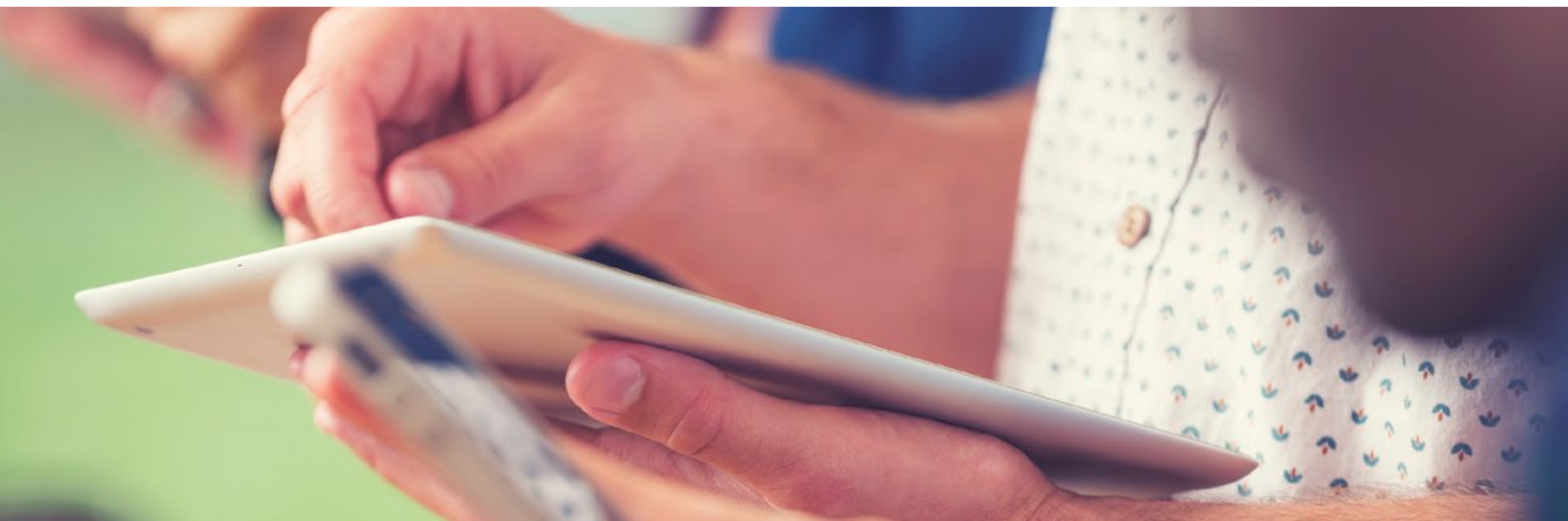
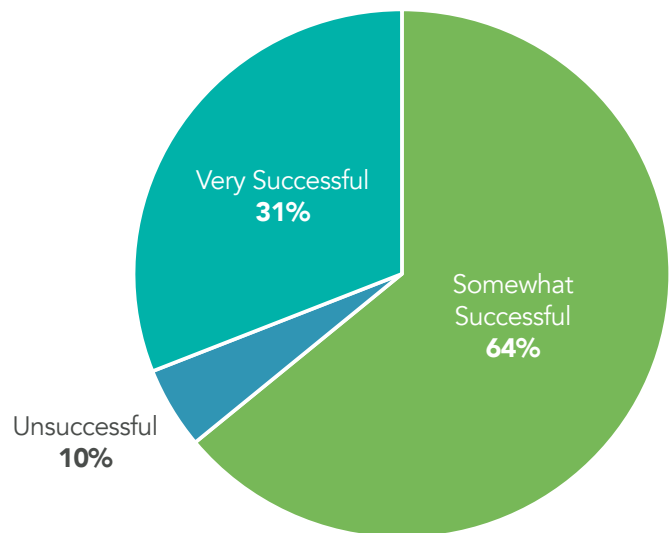
So what's a surefire way to turn your "somewhat" effective marketing automation strategy into a very effective one? Simple: Build a complete and accurate marketing database that will lead to more actionable insights about target audience segments.

With a sound database, and insightful analytics, you can stop wasting time on poorly qualified leads and spend more time focusing on high-priority prospects that match your ideal buyer profiles. As such, you can achieve both of your most critical objectives — lead nurturing and lead generation — because you'll know which prospects are marketing and sales-qualified and which are the highest value.

What are the most important goals of a marketing automation strategy?



How successful is marketing automation at achieving important goals?



SECTION 4

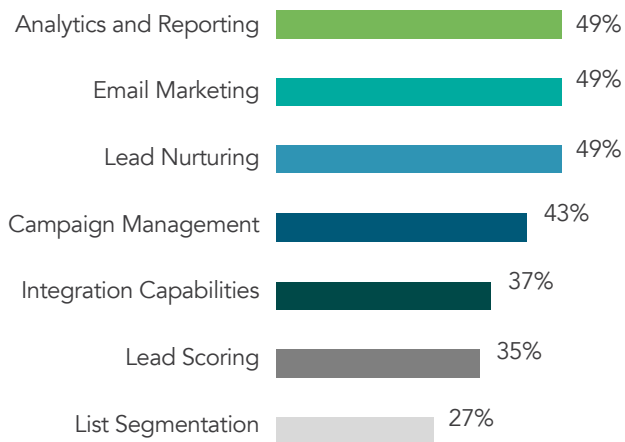
How Analytics and Reporting Can Help Uncover Untapped Potential

Whether or not marketers are currently using marketing automation to its fullest potential, they've voiced their opinions about which features are most important to their marketing strategies. Our survey results show that marketers find analytics and reporting (49%) to be one of the most beneficial features of their MarTech systems.

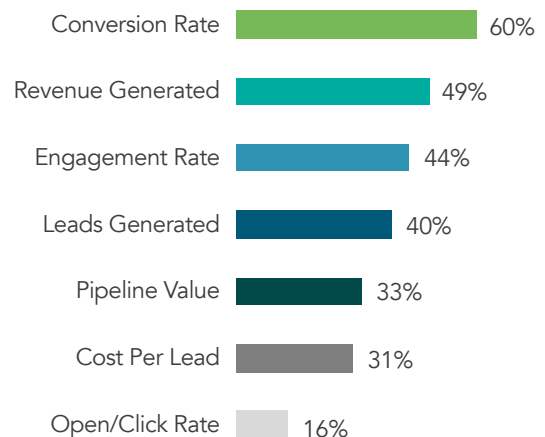
With deeper analytics and reporting on the performance of campaigns, marketers can better understand the successes (or failures) of their programs. They can also discover more actionable insights about niche audiences that may represent untapped potential.

The more you know about your audiences and their engagement (or lack there of) with your content and messaging, the easier it will become to optimize your campaigns and replicate your success. You'll also have the insights necessary to clearly map out and improve the quality and length of your buyer's journey.

What are the most important goals of a marketing automation strategy?



What are the most useful metrics for measuring marketing automation performance?



SECTION 5

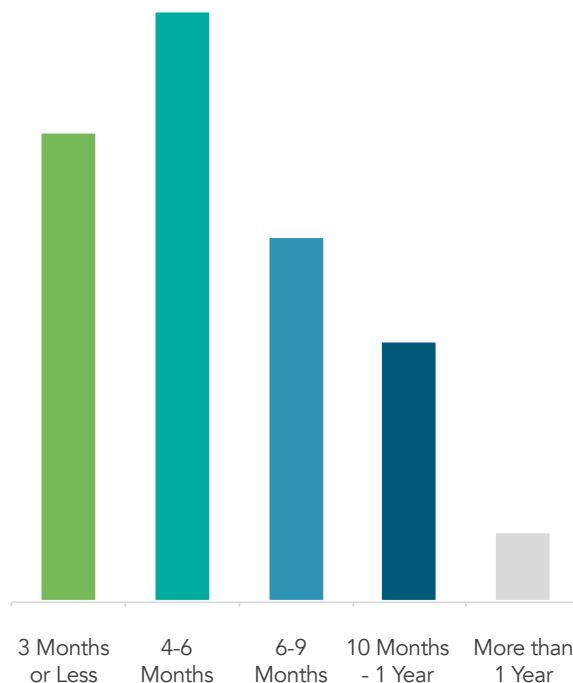
How Data Accelerates the Implementation-to-Realization Timeline

In a perfect world, marketers would see instant results from their marketing automation systems. According to our survey results, B2B marketers would like to realize results within six to nine months of implementing a marketing automation solution. This, however, isn't usually how it plays out — especially if marketers are adding less-than-satisfactory data into their marketing automation platforms. You can experience positive business results faster by properly maintaining the data you put into your system.

Think of your automation system like a water pipe: Gunk and mess that don't belong there create a clog and slow down the water flow, or process. You can accelerate the implementation-to-realization timeline by ensuring that the data going into your MarTech system is squeaky clean.

While data isn't the only contributing factor to campaign success, it is the foundational element that guides your overall demand strategy and drives your value proposition to your target audience.

What is a reasonable timeframe from system implementation to benefits realization?



CONCLUSION

Turn Your Marketing Automation System into a Lean, Mean Conversion Machine

Managing your database may sound like a grueling and overwhelming task but there are experts who can help ensure your systems are setup for success, including the team at Dun & Bradstreet. Implementing an solution like [Workbench Data Optimizer](#) can definitely make a big impact.

You'll save time dealing with the hold-ups and manual workarounds that are associated with poor-quality data and you'll be able to target the right audiences with more relevant content — reducing friction, increasing conversion rates and achieving your marketing and sales goals faster.

Once you've mastered the basics, you'll be able expand your activities into areas like personalization and AdTech. For example, 280+ firmographic data segments from Dun & Bradstreet are now available within social advertising platforms, including Facebook and Twitter, allowing you to target your campaigns like never before.

By modernizing your strategy, and your activities, you will secure your place at the head of the marketing pack. Most importantly, you'll be spending your valuable budget on the right audience. It's time to turn your marketing automation system into a lean, mean conversion machine!

About the Ascend2 Survey

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of popular digital marketing practices using a standardized questionnaire and proprietary 3-minute survey format. The survey featured in this piece was fielded to a panel of subscribers to research on marketing topics. Here is a breakout of the B2B organizations and marketing influencers completing this survey:

Number of Employees

More than 500: 27%

50 to 500: 23%

Fewer than 50: 50%

Role in the Company

Owner / Partner / C-Level: 44%

VP / Director / Manager: 48%

Non-Management Pro: 8%

About Dun & Bradstreet

Dun & Bradstreet (NYSE: DNB) grows the most valuable relationships in business. By uncovering truth and meaning from data, we connect customers with the prospects, suppliers, clients and partners that matter most, and have since 1841. Nearly ninety percent of the Fortune 500, and companies of every size around the world, rely on our data, insights and analytics. We help marketers develop and manage their B2B data. Our multi-faceted data quality processes — backed by the world's largest commercial database and seamless integration into your marketing systems — enables you to identify the best opportunities, build stronger relationships and accelerate growth for your company.

Visit [DNB.com/Workbench](https://www.dnb.com/Workbench) to learn how you can create a long-lasting data management strategy that will improve the return you get from your marketing automation platform. Remember, great marketing starts with great data!

Source

1. Singh, Vik. "The Future Of Marketing Automation." TechCrunch.com. 2015. Web.

