The Current State Of Marketing Automation Platforms

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I am almost finished with my next Vendor Selection Matrix™ on Marketing Automation Platforms (MAP) – the draft is with the vendors for fact checking. Here are some highlights that will, hopefully, make you more curious about the full report.

Our method of asking business managers to name software vendor(s) they associate with a certain topic collects the list of all vendors that are currently top of mind on the practitioner side. In this case we provided a definition and asked about their "Marketing Automation Platform" and the vendor landscape discovered will surprise some people and vendor staff will see new competitors they had not yet considered. Perception is reality. Most vendors were also scored highly, a sign of a mature market, but the survey results also make it clear that expectations from marketing executives of MAP vendors have now changed dramatically.

More and more companies are now focusing on digital marketing programs as society and business reacts to the COVID-19 crisis. In parallel, the focus of digital marketing itself is moving from the simple realization of new business leads to a more engaging and relationship model, raising questions on MAP functions now needed, questions such as: is lead management or engagement management the main function required now?

Nearly three quarters of companies are using the MAP more than previously with over half of those companies are leveraging it for more products and services than before and/or for greater market coverage. The crisis has accelerated the inevitable and the increased dependency on digital marketing has exposed weaknesses in many MAP installations. So, it is no surprise that our survey found that 83% of the companies who have a MAP are actively reassessing the suitability of their current installation.

- 11% are already replacing their MAP. Another 24% of the respondents know they must migrate to something new and 50% know this will be the case for them soon.
- 63% claim that they are not getting the promised return from their MAP (46% citing that as a BIG problem).
- 91% have issues integrating the MAP to other systems with, again, the share citing that issue as a BIG challenge is well over 40%.

The re-assessment wave varies across the key regions of the world with North American enterprises already well into the replacement phase. Although there are 12 market leaders, ONLY 13% of companies are satisfied with their current MAP functionality – or just 10% in North America and in Europe.

Two thirds of companies lack the time/resources to use their MAP effectively while a similar proportion complain about lack of support, or over-promising, from the vendors (40% call this is a BIG challenge).

So, watch this space at the end of this month for more data and insights.

Always keeping you informed!

Peter