Transforming Customer Experiences When Business Conditions Suddenly Change

A DEEP DIVE INTO HOW MARKETING TEAMS ARE LEVERAGING THE ADOBE EXPERIENCE CLOUD.

r2i

Adobe Solution Partner
PLATINUM

Dramatic Changes to Marketing World Creating CMO Opportunities

The COVID pandemic changed how consumers want to conduct business—it's now a faster-pace, virtual, customer-centric time for marketing teams. That makes digital engagement a business-critical objective as opposed to a nice-to-have feature.

As a result, increasingly new CMO jobs have been posted this year than ever before, and many CMO positions are taking a seat at the C-suite table. Customer experiences and customer communications have evolved into high corporate priorities.

In the effort to drive customer experiences and communications, early adopters that embraced content agility and distributed workflows before the pandemic hit were the fortunate ones. As IDC's Jyoti Lalchandani, commented, "The widespread disruption caused by the global COVID-19 outbreak has reinforced the critical importance of businesses being agile enough to scale up or down with fluctuations in demand."

However, many businesses shrugged off such initiatives altogether, or the steps they took to implement them were not carried out fully. But with the pandemic resulting in travel restrictions, lockdowns, social distancing, and health risks, these side-lined business approaches and technologies became mainstream. The world was forced to adjust to the new normal, and companies suddenly fast-tracked their migration to cloud environments and virtual private networks to enable remote working for smoother running operations.

But forward-thinking organizations realize the effort to digitally transform to improve customer experiences is not a destination; it's a journey that must continuously evolve. Marketing teams continue to face cost reduction, efficiency and agility challenges. In this white paper, we examine those challenges and how Adobe Experience Manager (AEM) and R2i expertise can help you overcome them

Driving Customer Experiences While Meeting Organizational Demands

As marketing teams strive to digitally transform to improve their ability to connect with customers, pressures from the corporate level add to the challenge:

REDUCE MARKETING COSTS

Organizations want to continue staying top-of-mind with their target markets, but they also need to change how they spend money and monitor their costs. This requires decreasing expenses by converting large capital expenditures to operating expenses and by utilizing applications as services in the cloud, rather than relying on on-premises technologies.

Marketing must also reclassify team functions and look at areas where they can improve efficiency. Web redesigns, personalization, and segmentation alone are not enough. Senior management needs to show fiscal responsibility due to the uncertainty of the market and a reduction in operational costs. By reducing costs, marketing can transform into a corporate steward during uncertain times.

DO MORE WITH LESS

To do more with less while continuing to improve customer experiences, marketing teams must work more efficiently. It starts by assessing and identifying gaps across four areas: technology, system integrations, data, and people skills. Integrating marketing technologies properly will initially close some gaps and accelerate decision points to identify ways to close other gaps.

It's also important to optimize existing resources and skills to get more out of what you already have. Also prioritize which gap closures will give you the best bang for your buck and create a short-term reactive road map along with a long-term proactive road map to know when to focus on each gap.

GAIN GREATER AGILITY

Agility gives marketing teams the ability to immediately meet quickly-emerging customer needs. It's not just about providing products and services during a pandemic situation, it's also about delivering information across multiple channels to keep customers informed on how you will change operations to protect your customers as well as your employees.

React quickly, but do so with sensitivity to the situation regarding your stance on how issues like COVID impact your customers and your employees. Also be mindful of what's going on in different parts of the world. You may need to change existing campaigns or develop new campaigns that align your messaging to the new normal.

PROVING THE ROI OF SOLUTIONS

In addition to these corporate pressures, marketing should factor in how ROI is now coming under closer scrutiny than ever before. Marketing spend needs to be validated and justified.

ROI measurements require data. If you don't have sufficient data, work with what you have to estimate as close as possible, and then determine how to collect the data you need to achieve an accurate ROI of all of your marketing solutions.

Many organizations have the data but could use help tapping into it and then turning the data into usable information. By building an ROI data model that generates the necessary analytics in real time, you will improve your ability to drive decisions on what to do if the ROI of a particular solution is not sufficient.

Closing the Technology and Integration Gaps

2021 will be the year the cloud truly takes off, and Adobe has transitioned the Adobe Experience Manager (AEM) offering to help marketing teams take on these challenges and improve customer relationships. With solutions for data insights, content personalization, customer journey management, e-commerce, and advertising, [Adobe solutions drive customer experience management](#) across B2B and B2C companies of every size.

By providing the globally-renowned AEM content management suite in the cloud, Adobe has reduced the cost of deploying customer experience solutions by nearly 75%. It's also now simpler to deliver online experiences to the right customers.

For example, marketing teams can easily leverage dynamic digital asset capabilities for asset management, social engagement, and community connections. They can also manage user-generated content, website content, and other marketing assets across the spectrum of devices used by customers.

✓ **REDUCED COSTS**

AEM allows marketing teams to invest smartly in their marketing technology stack by eliminating the operational costs of on-premises solutions and making it possible to retire hardware and support contracts. At the same time, marketing can avoid the long and costly upgrades that are necessary to stay current with feature functionality parity. Additional cost savings come from the ability to combine branding from multiple business units into a single core framework. This makes it possible to scale content management and re-use assets across the organization.

✓ **GREATER EFFICIENCY**

AEM enables marketing teams to do more with less by tapping into content fragments to re-use content. Marketing can also create more robust workflows for distributed teams, and leverage an easy-to-use tool that enables in-line and drag-and-drop functionality.

✓ **IMPROVED AGILITY**

Organizations can quickly launch campaigns and react swiftly to campaign results without having to pay new vendors or hire more people. They can also ramp up messaging faster to improve their ability to connect with customers and react to changing needs. This creates long-term customer value and incremental revenue.

When integrated with other marketing tools in the cloud, AEM enables organizations to achieve The Holy Grail of Marketing—automating processes for managing content and web leads, monitoring customer journeys, building profiles, and creating personalized experiences. By building a marketing ecosystem with AEM as the foundation, you can go beyond one-off marketing campaigns to launch initiatives in sync with the bigger picture.

In essence, you can develop a multi-tiered, integrated digital program that targets your ideal prospects. This approach is critical because the goals that marketing needs to achieve are much broader than ROI and OpEx savings. Putting the right digital foundation in place enables marketing to build towards a more mature, closed-loop platform that achieve marketing goals while also solving cost challenges.

Augmenting Internal Skills and Closing Process Gaps

In addition to closing your technology and integration gaps, you may need to fine-tune your marketing processes or augment your in-house skillsets at a brand level to do the work. In both cases, that's where R2i can help. We assist marketing organizations in working more efficiently by analyzing how effectively data is used, which systems are properly integrated, and if you have the necessary processes in place and skills on staff to drive digital transformation.

At W.R. Grace, for example—from the CEO down to the management level—the company is maintaining marketing spend but also justifying the spend. The marketing team thus proactively identifies the data they needed to prove the need for each marketing program. They also believe in the "do more with less" and "do more with what we have" mantras, which led to R2i's value proposition: optimization and maximization of MarTech investments.

By taking a similar approach and getting data from your CRM and marketing platforms to talk to your website and your communication channels, you can effectively manage customer experiences and make decisions on how well your awareness campaigns are working and whether leads are handled correctly. Our experts can show you the way.

We are a customer experience agency—where it's all about helping clients deliver comprehensive, evolved, unexpected encounters to their customers. We can help you to not only focus on digital transformation, but also drive that transformation through organizational cost reduction during times of fiscal uncertainty.
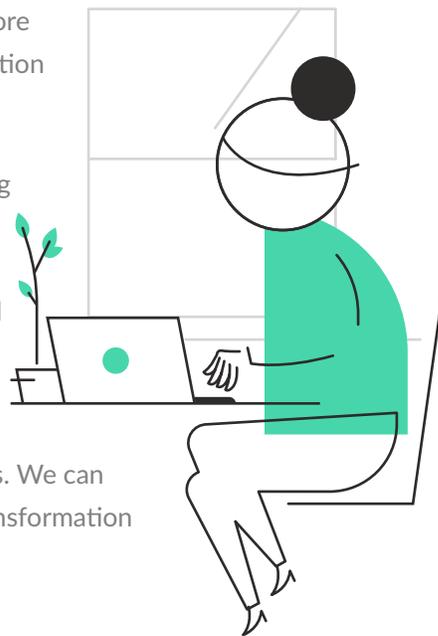
Capitalizing On the Silver Lining

2020 has largely been a reactive year for marketers, focusing on how to pivot their organizations in light of the COVID pandemic and how to do more with less. This means delivering better content that is timely and more focused on communications in the right channel, rather than focusing on sales and lead generation.

The silver lining that comes out of this is that organizations now know their gaps that must be addressed in technology, people and data, and they are integrating product suites to a greater extent to solve these challenges. They are also accelerating their decision points on those gaps and are now beginning their acceptance of virtual environments; they no longer feel the need for large, expansive in-house IT infrastructures.

This has led to hiring personnel in different locations more so than in the past. With an expansive remote network of employees, this then trickles down to cloud solutions needing to be more effective in managing data and communications. Some companies are trending in this direction and working to get their systems to talk to each other. Or they are focusing on making their marketing processes more efficient so that it's easier to make decisions on the right content to deliver.

If your company is facing a similar situation, contact R2i today to find out more about our expertise and Adobe technologies. Combined, we can help you close your marketing gaps to enable fast transformations that continue to drive positive customer experiences when your business conditions suddenly change.