

FINANCIAL SERVICES

DIGITAL MARKETING REPORT

INSIGHTS AND USE CASES TO PROPEL YOUR BUSINESS FORWARD.



Few decisions are more personal than trusting someone to manage your money.

However a recent survey conducted by Gallup on customer satisfaction of their bank found that 42% of all conversations happening daily are considered net-negative and 47% are considered just average. So how much trust can be engendered when nearly 89% of communications are rated as average at best?

Just think about all of the important moments that banking plays in a customer's life. Unforgettable events like buying a home, welcoming a new baby, saving for retirement or sending a child off to college are almost always, in part, connected to a financial institution of their choice. Now imagine the value to your customers, if as a financial institution you are able to nail personalization and build trust at every touchpoint. What if your loan officer knew when to make a timely call to a customer? Or sent the right communication at the right moment? How valuable would it be to place the right offer in front of a customer at one of these key life inflection points?

As consumers we all understand the value of personalized communications. Remember those times we received a timely email from our financial advisor on changing financial conditions, got notified of a better interest rate or were just called to set up a regular check-in. Those correspondences made us feel safe, secure and valued.

In our increasingly digital world, personalization in the banking industry has taken on a different flavor than it has in the past. Visiting your banker in person is less likely than in the past, meaning that for banks to humanize their relationships with customers requires them to build out integrated customer experiences across all digital marketing channels including web, email, online chat, mobile and call centers.

This can be especially complicated in the highly regulated financial services industry where fragmented core banking databases don't integrate seamlessly with key marketing and sales applications like CRM, marketing automation and ad platforms. Recent findings by the Boston Consulting Group found that this leads to "marketing strategies that tend to be stuck in the past, adhering to a calendar-based framework or featuring competing product lines that have to jostle for virtual shelf space. Moreover, legacy IT systems are often unable to measure responses or recommend next-best actions, while complex organization structures and silos undermine coherence and focus."

That same research found that "Ultimately, if done well, personalization at scale can provide a direct route to lower rates of customer churn and higher sales. Conservatively speaking, it can lead to annual revenue uplifts of 10% for banks."

So how do leading financial institutions, money managers, credit unions and community banks set themselves apart from their competitors? We spoke with a variety of experts both inside the financial services sector and with those who support their marketing and demand generation efforts to outline challenges faced in the industry and ways to overcome those barriers through the use of technology, new strategies and processes.



The Problem

While all financial institutions are unique and have their own challenges. Generally speaking the challenge was summed up by Adobe/Marketo Account Executive David Hinkle, who works with senior marketing executives within banks and credit unions to solve these challenges.

“In the financial services industry it’s very taxing to be a marketer,” Hinkle said. “I see customers that have a difficult time proving their worth to the organization as they are forced to rely on disconnected systems, limited analytics and are really forced to do their jobs in a very piecemeal way due to limited technology and non-existent data integration across the tools at their disposal. I rarely get an affirmative answer when asking new prospects if ‘your systems are capable of delivering the right customer journey.’”

Furthermore, the ability to see a complete 360 picture of banking customers can be especially difficult. Part of this is due to regulation, however much of it is related to disparate systems that manage a customer’s lifecycle. For example, just like other industries financial institutions rely on a variety of channels to attract new customers and upsell existing customers. Those include buying targeted lists of key targets, email marketing, paid advertising, personal banking interactions (sales or more likely a loan officer), SEO and hosting events. Add to that the transactional nature of banking, which is almost always housed in core banking systems or niche CRM-like systems (for example Jack Henry, Fiserv or a third party administrators), which further complicates the lives of marketers looking to personalize customer experiences.

Lastly, the synergy between marketing and sales (ie. loan officers) as well as their counterparts in IT, can be lacking. While this is a barrier in every organization, it can be magnified in this industry with the complex nature of security vs. customer experience concerns and the distribution of resources in regional and local banks. In many cases sales is “decentralized” at local branches while marketing might be more centralized.

These challenges don’t have to stop best in class marketing leaders from being creative. Ryan Shaughnessy, Director of Planning, at the Midwest-based Trinity Financial Group said his firm has grown by 10X over the past five years adhering to customer personalization strategies.

“We’ve been very successful at using paid events to grow our customer base,” Shaughnessy said. “We micro-target prospects nearing retirement age and then invite them to paid learning sessions at local universities that reoccur each month covering topics like tax planning, social security and investment strategies. That gets them in front of our experts to start a conversation. From there we are able to begin building relationships with them over time to earn their business using automation and old fashioned hard work.”

Let’s detail how your financial firm can bring automation, customer data integration, new processes and employee development together to propel your business forward.





Automation

Best-in-class marketers establish the processes, technology and culture that revolve around their customers. In an increasingly digital world, this means generating interest using multiple tools to create a seamless journey, regardless of how customers choose to interact with your brand. Banking institutions must develop the ability to:

- Create higher quality customer journeys.
- Personalize content to users in all marketing channels.
- Enhance the value of products to customers.
- Scale communications across multiple platforms on the customer's schedule.

Putting together a comprehensive, synergistic automation ecosystem is the first step.

Recently Zirus partnered with a growing investment management firm, Campbell Newman Asset Management, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin that required a new marketing automation solution that would unify their customer data to create a competitive advantage.

This investment management firm that works with institutional and high net worth clients required a marketing automation solution to go hand in hand with their growing business. This client did not previously have a marketing automation tool which caused marketing campaigns to require additional time to create, monitor, and adapt.

With their new world-class demand generation machine, Marketo Engage from Adobe, their sales and marketing teams are now aligning on leads and are connected directly with their data in their CRM system. They are able to nail personalization at scale and optimize the sales funnel while keeping up with growth giving them a competitive advantage over their competitors.

Marketo allows them to compete in an increasingly digital world, said John Bonnell, Director of Business Development at Campbell Newman Asset Management.

“We didn’t previously have a marketing automation tool which caused marketing campaigns to require additional time to create, monitor, and adapt,” Bonnell said.

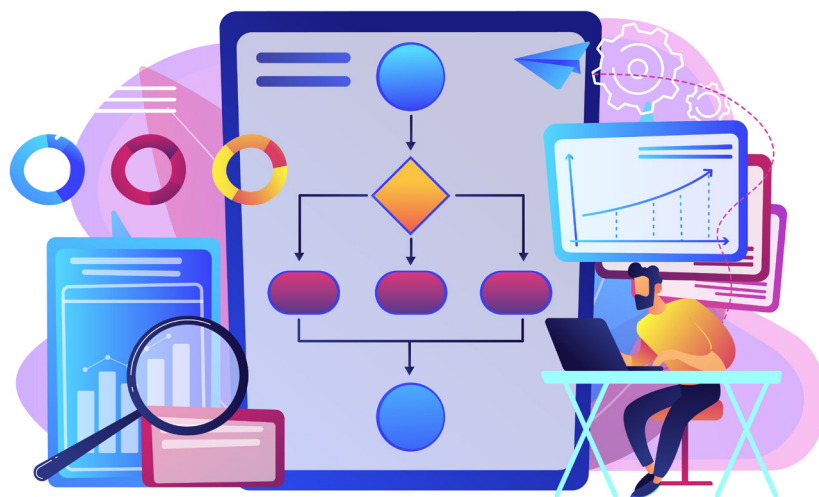
Your firm’s ability to lead your customer through the buying process is paramount to your success. Customers rarely fall in love with your products at first sight. Usually, they go through several stages—awareness, consideration and decision—when making a purchase.



“WITH OUR NEW WORLD-CLASS DEMAND GENERATION MACHINE, MARKETO, OUR SALES AND MARKETING TEAMS ARE NOW ALIGNING ON LEADS AND ARE CONNECTED DIRECTLY WITH THEIR DATA IN OUR CRM SYSTEM. WE ARE ABLE TO NAIL PERSONALIZATION AT SCALE AND **OPTIMIZE THE SALES FUNNEL** WHILE KEEPING UP WITH GROWTH GIVING US A **COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE**.”

- JOHN BONNELL, CAMPBELL NEWMAN

It's the marketer's job to move the customer down the path as efficiently as possible to close the sale. Your marketing automation system is the tool used to scale this journey for each customer across your entire customer portfolio. While email is the primary channel used for these nurture programs, marketing automation isn't just a system that “batches and blasts” emails. It should harness customer data based on customer interactions to create relevant messages to users. Marketing automation systems have the ability to capture leads, score those leads and then pass these leads onto your sales (personal banking) team (via an integration with the CRM system or core banking application).





Customer Data Integration

According to new research by Accenture, nearly 87% percent of organizations feel that traditional experiences no longer satisfy the customer- yesterday's plan of action won't win tomorrow's game. The same study found, 90% of organizations view marketing as the connective tissue between different lines of business—sales, technology, service and product. Marketers are uniquely positioned as the quarterback- with a view of the whole field as well as the execution and communication strategy needed for each user wherever they are in the customer journey. If marketing connects a company to its customers, then marketing automation is the engine driving customer value. A unified view of your customer data can lead to better outcomes. Many financial companies utilize multiple applications, like CRM, marketing automation, internal transactional databases, customer service platforms, digital ad platforms and more, to manage customer interactions.

But together these applications create a Frankenstein-like marketing technology stack with disconnected core systems, causing data inaccuracy, challenges, and inefficiencies that impact the customer experience and ultimately revenue potential. There is a better way to harness customer data—one of the greatest assets your company owns. Let's review how a successful data integration strategy and the right technology can turn your data into a competitive advantage.

We've found that there are four key ways integrating customer data sources can drive value for your organization:

1. Data Integration for Improving the Customer Experience
2. Data Integration for Sales and Marketing Alignment
3. Data Integration for Compliance
4. Data Integration for Analytics

Lee Potts, Vice President and Senior Credit Officer, at Security Bank serving Northeast Nebraska said banks can see strong growth even if they might not have the lowest rates by knowing more about their customers than the competition and using a personalized approach to banking.

"In banking all of your systems tend to be disparate," Potts said. We have one core banking system, another for lending, a third managing late payments and a fourth for sending out marketing communications. Our goal has been to reduce the clunkiness of these different systems and to automate data flowing between them so we can produce actionable reports/dashboards on those who could be good candidates for other products or to reach out when an account is past due. This has allowed us to better personalize our service to our customers and been a key driver of growth."

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Process Improvement

According to a study by CSO Insights, only 42% of respondents said that their company had an agreed-upon definition of a lead.

While a similar survey of the financial services industry doesn't exist, we've heard many times from clients in this industry that there is frustration around how seamlessly new prospects move between marketing and sales (personal banking or loan officers).

We've found that sales and marketing leadership must collaboratively identify the criteria that constitute a marketing qualified lead and when to assign it to sales. Marketing should then continue to nurture prospects who don't meet these criteria with the goal of moving them through the funnel.

Best practice include:

- 1.** Go through each product or service, considering demographic and engagement metrics to determine what types of prospects your sales team wants to see. You should also employ data analytics to see how the sales team's perceptions match actual lead and opportunity data.
- 2.** Success metrics need to be aligned between sales and marketing. This means sharing key financial targets—like the number of marketing-qualified leads, the percentage of leads that qualify into an opportunity, the amount of pipeline generated, the closed-won rate and, ultimately, the topline revenue number.
- 3.** The two units must agree on a customer hand-off process. Here's an example:
 - Once a lead is created, sales either accepts or rejects it within a specified time frame.
 - If accepted, a sales rep attempts to contact the lead within an agreed upon period and at least a certain number of times using various methods (phone, email, social, etc.).
 - If rejected, marketing evaluates leads to learn why they weren't productive. Should they be put into a re-engagement campaign? Or are they simply not a fit?
 - Marketing tracks sales progress to determine if the marketing messages and nurture streams adequately prepare prospects for a sales engagement and adjusts the campaign as needed.

Marketo customer Kevin Farley, the VP of Experience and Engagement at United Heritage Credit Union said that marketing automation has helped them target new customers and nurture existing ones in new ways.

“Marketo gives us visibility into individual needs and then enables us to engage people by zeroing in on those needs,” Farley explained. “For example, our initial thrust has been targeting prospects for auto loans. If a person’s behavior matches that of people who have gotten auto loans from us, we then target them with email, ads, direct mail, and other communications. We highlight our competitive auto loan rates and flexible payment options.”

This not only impacts the bottom line but has also improved the working relationship between marketing and its sales counterparts while also demonstrating the value of marketing to the organization.



Employee Development

When it comes to getting the most out of your new or existing technologies the main thing that hinders companies from seeing the greatest possible return on their investment comes down to the delta between what a tool can do and what your marketing team actually knows how to do with the tool.

Many leaders report a skills gap between the talent they need to reach their goals and what their current workforce offers. In fact, two-thirds of companies report that they don’t have the right skills or talent to effectively use marketing technology.

Purchasing and integrating marketing technologies only gets an organization so far. To truly maximize the benefits of these investments your staff must become experts on not only the technology but also how these tools transform processes for your users. Training leads to tangential benefits like higher employee engagement and succession planning. In fact, Coursera found that 87% of people learning for professional development report career benefits, like a promotion or a raise. And when your employees succeed, so do you and your company.

Buying a new tool also doesn’t just involve training your team how to use it, but in many cases the new tool means new processes and changes to how your team members do their job. This results in change management discussions that can be just as important as learning tool functionality.

Luckily, Zirous and best-in-class vendors like Adobe, provide training on the theory and practice of using this new technology. This includes resources like a community portal, user manual and developer documentation as offered by Adobe/Marketo. Zirous offers training to all of its new customers standard as part of implementation packages. In many cases this is two days of training split over six to eight sessions.

Hayley Pettey, Revenue Operations at Labster, said the training they received when rolling out Marketo was top notch.

“I just want to thank you so much and tell you how impressed everyone at (Labster) has been,” Pettey said. “After every (training) session, someone new Slacks me to express how wonderful your support is. Your communication, your clarity, your willingness to adapt and support in various ways - we are so grateful.”

Closing

As we've discussed, marketing leaders at financial institutions have more complexity than many other industries, however that complexity doesn't mean that they should settle for substandard customer journeys or taxing manual processes.

We hope you use these insights and our newly created financial services marketing roundtables to help you avoid these pitfalls and capitalize on new opportunities. Regardless of whether you are a senior executive, new to marketing or somewhere in between, Zirous is here to help you every step of the way.

With decades of experience we enable clients to overcome the paradigm shift in marketing driven by new technology and customer demands and thrive in the new marketing landscape. Our expertise in technology, data, performance marketing, analytics and marketing automation helps create customer-first organizations — resulting in faster revenue growth, higher return on investment and improved operational efficiency for our clients. We leverage our expertise to drive value for clients.

- Uncover Hidden Demand – Increase revenue by unlocking the potential of your customers.
- Attribute Revenue to Spend – Connect activities to dollars to generate the highest rate of return on your investment.
- Scale Communications Cross Channel – Follow customer experience strategy best practices to drive brand loyalty.
- Optimize Marketing Effectiveness – Remove barriers to unleash the effectiveness of your team and message.

Contact us today to see how we can help your organization maximize its marketing automation investment.



MEET THE AUTHOR



brandon.schulte@zirus.com



[linkedin.com/in/brandon-schulte](https://www.linkedin.com/in/brandon-schulte)

Brandon Schulte, MBA

Director of Marketing Technology Services

Brandon is a marketing technology expert with more than 15 years of experience. He understands the challenges faced by marketing and sales leaders to grow revenue while optimizing channel efficiency, external spend and employee productivity. As a results-focused professional he is known for growing highly scalable sales pipeline and e-commerce revenue utilizing technology solutions, process enhancements and customer analytics. He holds an MBA degree from Northern Illinois University and teaches Strategic Leadership in the Concordia University MBA program.

EXPERTISE

- CRM & Marketing Automation
- Demand Generation / Lead Scoring
- Unified Customer Data Management / Integration
- Digital Marketing
- Analytics / Forecasting

INTRODUCTION

WHO IS ZIROUS?

WHO IS ZIROUS? For over 35 years, Zirus has been the solutions partner of choice for marketing technology, machine learning, artificial intelligence, identity and access management, application integration, cloud and development in North America.

Our marketing technology practice specializes in crafting customer centricity through data and insights. We enable clients to overcome the paradigm shift in marketing driven by new technology and customer demands to thrive in the new marketing landscape. Our expertise in technology, data, performance marketing, analytics and marketing automation helps create customer-first organizations. This results in faster growth, higher return on investment and improved operational efficiency for our clients.

We leverage our expertise to drive value for clients:

- Uncover Hidden Demand
- Attribute Revenue to Spend
- Scale Communication Across Channels
- Optimize Marketing Effectiveness

MARKETO ENGAGE

Marketo Engage, part of the Adobe Experience Cloud, specializes in customer engagement for complex B2B buying journeys. As a complete solution for lead management, it brings marketing and sales together to nurture leads, orchestrate personalized experiences, optimize content, and measure business impact across every channel. It natively supports both demand and account-based marketing strategies, providing a single, integrated lead management platform from acquisition to advocacy. Build engaging, personalized experiences at scale and prove impact with Marketo Engage.

