

Re-examining the Modern Marketing Structure

A MarTech Conference eBook



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Introduction

When someone said “martech” in the past, they were likely referring only to the technology that enabled marketing campaigns to turn into reality. This technology was typically handled by a separate group from marketing, and the organizational structure usually reflected this separateness. However, in today’s marketing landscape, the technology portion of martech is just the tip of the iceberg. Successful companies are now taking a closer look at how to structure their marketing organization in light of the rapid integration of technology into marketing functions. For many, this calls for a complete evaluation and restructuring of existing organizational practices.

Note: This eBook is based on a webinar featuring Scott Brinker, Editor of chiefmartec.com and Program Chair of MarTech Conference; Rishi Dave, CMO, Dun & Bradstreet; and Erica Seidel, CEO, The Connective Good. To view the on-demand version of this webcast, please visit <https://digitalmarketingdepot.com/webcast/organizing-martech-re-examining-modern-marketing-structure>

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Re-examining the Modern Marketing Structure

While technology has changed dramatically in recent decades, organizational structure and how companies operate hasn't evolved to relate to how people want to work. Companies looking to stay competitive in today's environment are reorganizing their marketing organizational structure to use technology to meet the complex needs of customers, employees and the overall organization. According to a MarTech Conference survey, 75 percent of the companies polled have either reorganized around marketing technology or plan to do so within the next 12 months. Companies are focusing on creating a culture that can successfully operate in the modern, changing and technology-driven growth culture.

“Re-frame career ladders as branches of a tree, where each branch gives you a different view of the customer.”

**Kieran Hannon
CMO, Belkin**

The solution involves creating a marketing structure that focuses on organizational capital. This means taking a broader view of the concept of human capital and thinking beyond the individual. Organization capital is how a business creates systems, processes and structure – the unique knowledge of how it operates and leverages the combination and talent and technology.

3 Key Elements for Organizing Around martech

When Dun & Bradstreet began looking at its organizational approach to martech more than three years ago, it focused on three key areas – marketing strategy, people and technology. As a result, the company has seen growth in areas that were previously stagnant, and its Net Promoter Scores increased higher than any previous benchmark. Additionally, culture metrics and employee engagement have increased. Employees, customers and potential customers feel more connected to the company, have a higher level of understanding of the company's business, and have a better idea of who the company is targeting.

By focusing on the following key areas and strategies used by Dun & Bradstreet, your martech organizational structure will be positioned to help grow your company:

1: Consistent Marketing Strategy Expressing Your Purpose and Values

It's tempting to jump right into the technology and people component when creating your martech organizational structure, but you must first make sure that you have a consistent marketing strategy. It's not enough to have the best technological execution, thought leadership and data execution. If everyone in your organization is not using similar messaging to talk about how your products are different from the competition, your martech strategy will not be successful and will quickly become part of today's digital noise.

The first step is to focus on your company's brand and culture by defining your purpose and values. Why do you exist? What do you stand for? Why do customers choose your company over the competition? Once you have a clear picture, you can then make sure all your company's creative expressions – website, social media and print materials – reflect your purpose and values.

The next step in updating your marketing strategy is to look at your go-to market approach. Move from talking about what your company does, your products and technologies, to orienting your marketing about the personas buying your products. This may require a change in your existing go-to marketing strategy – the way you enable your sales team, talk about your company, and discuss what your company does. Start with the customers and potential customers, as well as their current experience both on and offline. Begin by getting your sales team on board, and then re-orient the rest of the company.

The final step in creating a consistent marketing strategy is targeted pipeline growth. By using your messaging and go-to market strategy, you can create experiences both on and offline that support your strategy. It's also essential to leverage data analytics, technology, thought leadership and a strong digital experience as you continue to grow your market presence and revenue. When you ensure that each of your campaigns and messages tie back to your marketing strategy, consumers will know what to expect – as well as why they should buy from your company instead of a competitor.

2: Technology

Instead of simply thinking about what technology to purchase to use in your marketing efforts, it's critical to also rethink management practices and processes in terms of marketing technology. You must ask how your teams can work together using the technology, as well as how to use technology to improve the processes and connectivity.

While it's easy to think of all marketing technologies as one group of products, successful companies strategically invest in two different types of marketing technologies:

- **Core Technologies** – Standard systems and solutions that are the foundation for your marketing programs, such as CRM and marketing automation platforms. Your teams and processes are typically built based on integrating these technologies into your tasks.
- **Experimental Technologies** – New technologies that are not being used in your company and often help with innovation. Consider having a sandbox where you can experiment with new technologies with less risk. Use trials to evaluate their usefulness and effectiveness without impacting customers and campaigns. Many of these technologies will not work out, but often the ones that are successful end up bringing some of the greatest rewards and becoming part of your core technologies.

3: People Strategy

It can be challenging to identify the right marketing technologists for your team. Many of the best marketing technologists often have zig-zagged career paths, such as studying at Harvard, working at an ad agency, and then moving up a corporate career path from manager to Vice President. Some marketing technologists started in software and then moved to marketing, while others began their career in a seemingly unrelated field, such as radio production, and then gravitated to digital marketing.

When building a martech organization from scratch or reorganizing an existing martech organization, consider the following three qualities when selecting people for your team:

- **Aptitude** – Does the employee have the skills needed for today's marketing environment, such as using existing technology to solve a new business challenge, managing and negotiating with vendors, integrating experiences and managing data?

How to assess in an interview: Use a similar approach as in hiring a plumber – instead of asking for an example from their past, you would have the plumber look at a drain and tell you how to fix it. Show the marketing technologist applicants a drawing of the marketing funnel and ask how they would optimize it and when to move on from the vendor.

- **Attitude** – Is the employee curious and like to learn and experiment in a hands-on way? Are they comfortable working across functions? Can they turn skeptics into advocates?

Oracle Data Cloud, which has seen tremendous growth and many acquisitions in the past few years, revisits its marketing organization structure regularly on a quarterly basis. CMO Cory Treffeletti asks specific questions such as 'Who has the best skills?' 'What skills need to be developed?' 'Do we have the right metrics in place?'

How to assess in an interview: Ask “What are five of your strengths? How did you develop each one?” Listen carefully to how each strength was developed for insight to their attitude. Other good questions to learn about the person’s motivation level are “Tell me about a time you learned the most and fastest?” and “Tell me how you prepared for this interview.”

“Org charts are things that you obsess over during a re-org... but the right relationships, the right goals, and the right trust - that’s what matters.”

- **Altitude** - Can they parachute between strategy and tactics? Do they have an understanding of business strategy, marketing strategy and martech strategy? Can they talk with a CEO or CMO about marketing technology? Can they balance short-term objectives with long-term objectives?

Geraldine Calpin
CMO, Hilton Worldwide

How to assess in an interview: Ask “How would you describe the martech stack to the CEO?” Another approach to determining skills is to describe a business problem that is related to innovation and ask the candidate’s approach or have the applicant review a flawed strategic approach to identify problems.

Once you have the right people for your team, the biggest challenge is how to create the organizational structure that allows for the collaboration needed between different groups. Dun & Bradstreet has the following five departments under the CMO:

1. **Communications & PR** - Tells the company story to the world and sets the perception of the company in terms of who they are and where they are going.
2. **Integrated Marketing** - Takes the overall story created by Communications & PR and makes it real for customers by tying it back to the marketing strategy and designing programs that create integrated end-to-end experiences for customer personas.
3. **Demand Generation & Operations** - Executes the marketing strategy and optimizes the buy-in journey while building the sales pipeline. This department also includes the content team, creative team and martech team, which are focused on managing the end-to-end execution of marketing plans to generate demand and driving it through, leveraging technology as well as creative.
4. **Channel Marketing** - Focuses on helping all channels close the sales pipeline.
5. **Measurement** - Measures success of marketing and build modeling to determine what and who to focus on next.

However, using only a linear structure like this will create silos where each group operates without the insight needed from other skill sets. Because today’s technology and marketing require specialists in each area - marketing technology, analytics and communications - Dun & Bradstreet created a new functional organizational structure with “Tiger Teams.” These are cross-functional teams with joint metrics focused on a single customer identified in the go-to market approach.



For example, a “Tiger Team” is assigned to sell to a CMO. The team focuses on architecting an end-to-end experience for the CMO consisting of the right people from the five groups with joint sales and pipeline metrics. They work together to serve the customer by creating an end-to-end experience and generating the pipeline.

Conclusion

When talking about martech, it's easy to focus just on the intersection of marketing and technology. However, management is a key and often overlooked part of organizational capital. When creating a marketing stack for today's environment, companies must re-think their management practices in the context of marketing technology. By focusing on all three components – marketing, technology and management – companies change the way their organization works, which in turn means they can execute and deliver a much higher level of marketing to their audiences.

Leaders must really re-think how their teams work as they address marketing technology. How do we orchestrate the connectivity and processes between our teams? When it comes down to it, marketing technology is simply a tool, a program, a system. You can really only unlock the value of marketing technology when you re-think how you are using it inside an organization with people. By buying the latest technology, you do not solve a single business problem. But when you re-visualize your organization so the technology, processes and innovation are woven throughout the fabric of your organization, you can change the course of your marketing and, most importantly, your customer.

About MarTech Conference:

MarTech Conference® is the premier conference for martech professionals working at the intersection of marketing & technology. The MarTech conference is programmed by conference chair Scott Brinker. Scott has been chronicling the rise of marketing technology and its impact on marketing strategy, management and culture on his blog, chiefmartec.com, since 2008.

MarTech's unique program blends graduate-level marketing, technology and management topics. Attending MarTech will help you:

- Craft remarkable customer experiences.
- Acquire and implement effective marketing technology stacks.
- Rethink strategy enabled by marketing technology innovations.
- Adapt your organization to fast-paced, collaborative marketing.
- Manage cross-functional teams with agile and lean practices.
- Nurture multi-disciplinary talent.
- Redefine marketing's role in the context of enterprise-wide digital transformation.

Conferences are held annually in San Jose and Boston, and London. For more information, visit <http://martechconf.com/> or follow @martechconf on Twitter.

About Scott Brinker and chiefmartec.com

Scott Brinker publishes the Chief Marketing Technologist blog, chiefmartec.com, with over 75,000 readers at the intersection of marketing and technology, and he is the program chair of the MarTech conference series. He is also the co-founder of ion interactive, a provider of interactive content marketing software to many of the world's leading brands.

Scott is an experienced keynote speaker and the author of the book "Hacking Marketing" published by Wiley. He's written articles published in Advertising Age, Adweek, Harvard Business Review, and TechCrunch. He has degrees in computer science from Columbia University and Harvard University and an MBA from MIT. Connect with him on Twitter @chiefmartec.

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- Scott Brinker
MarTech Conference Chair

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