

# Three Ways to Maximize Your Marketing Technology Investment

**Author :** Jeffrey Sierra

**Date :** November 16, 2015



The [universe of marketing technology](#) is continuing to expand, providing marketers with ever-new and exciting ways to create, communicate, connect, and sell. In fact, in 2014, **marketing** tech was a \$20 billion industry, [according to IDC](#), so there is no question about marketers' willingness to jump in and invest.

And why not? Install some software, click a button or two, and presto! A new and improved **brand** with better **marketing** performance, right?

Unfortunately, that is rarely the case... Yet it is the all-too-common misconception many marketers have about adoption of new **marketing** technology. And, often, the result is painful implementation, limited effectiveness, and a poor return on investment.

To maximize your **marketing** technology investment and achieve the results that you and your customers expect, take the following three actions.

## 1. Focus first on outcomes

New **marketing** technology is cool and hip and sexy. And when it's billed as the next greatest thing that every marketer needs, it can be easy to feel the pressure to act and to jump right in.

But successful marketers fight that urge, and instead focus first on the outcomes they want, not the technology that may or may not deliver them.

Make sure you know what your customers really want and need, understand what has to happen to deepen their relationship with your **brand**, and be clear about the specific business problems you need to solve. When you have clarity on those things, you can start to assess whether a particular technology application is **designed** to deliver the outcomes you need and want.

## 2. Don't overlook the human element

Regardless of how sophisticated and powerful **marketing** technology becomes, the fact will remain that people are the ones who make great **marketing** happen. Technology simply enables it. So make sure you don't overlook the human element by think that technology will take over and make everything happen. It won't.

Consider, for example, **marketing** automation, which streamlines and automates **marketing** tasks and workflows, driving efficiency and accuracy. Tasks such as generating emails and landing pages, posting **digital** content, and collecting response data is made easier. In fact, it's fantastic.

But, to make **marketing** automation effective and—more important—to generate more leads and revenue, which is the typical desired outcome, you need smart, experienced people who understand your business, your customers and your technology.

To create great **marketing**, those people will still labor over many of the same things they always have: creating great content, developing compelling offers, properly segmenting your audience, and defining business rules for engagement. Those are the human-generated prerequisites that feed the **marketing** automation beast.

Make sure to put the right people in the right roles, and empower them to create great, technology-enable **marketing**.

### 3. Align technology and process

Many marketers also don't realize that technology and process go hand in hand. Often, they think the new technology will replace or eliminate key processes or make them less important.

The reality is that technology rarely eliminates process. But it does force processes to evolve.

Because for technology to function properly, some sort of input is required; and for the technology to provide value, it needs to deliver the right outputs. Many of those inputs and outputs are managed and controlled by processes, either manual or automated, that often sit outside of the technology itself.

So when new technology is introduced, all of the related processes need to be examined and aligned. Accordingly, marketers need to look at their business from an end-to-end perspective, taking into consideration the entire value chain, to understand exactly where technology does or does not have an impact.

An end-to-end perspective is especially important when processes span multiple areas of an organization. For example, a successful **marketing** automation technology may be the catalyst to helping the **marketing** team produce exponentially more leads in a much more efficiently manner. As a result, the sales team may have to evolve management processes to ensure the new volume of leads is properly distributed, engaged, and closed.

That perspective is also important because companies today are developing more and more

sophisticated "**marketing** stacks." Those ecosystems of integrated and disparate technologies are bound together not only by APIs and application code but also by a myriad of manual and automated processes. To maximize your **marketing** technology investment, make sure you focus on managing the evolution of your business processes.

\* \* \*

There is no question that **marketing** technology will continue to improve and expand. And, as it does, in the quest to remain competitive and bring new and innovative solutions to bear, marketers will continue to invest. To maximize the investment, first make sure the technology will deliver the outcomes you and your customers need, then surround it with smart people and strong processes.

//