Clarifying the Clutter
Marketing that delivers data-driven experiences.
No matter the industry, meaningful experiences, strong engagement and customer satisfaction flow from customer data and insights.

So the fact that 57% of marketing executives admit they often don’t have the data to understand customers or anticipate their needs is no small issue.¹

It’s an existential problem.
Why is the thing that marketers need the most so elusive?

Marketers are stuck in the clutter from the haphazard way that marketing organizations have evolved in the digital era. Layer upon layer of technologies and touchpoints has made marketing complex, overwhelming marketers with endless tasks and data black holes. Nearly 70% of marketing executives say that the past year has completely exhausted their employees.

It’s no wonder. No longer simply a supporting function, marketing is integral to driving direct sales and revenue. The pressure is on marketers to collect, connect and stay current on customer data to deliver business value.

But the collection of tools, competing priorities and ingrained ways of working makes it very difficult to modernize how marketing works.
Getting the data house in order.

Yet one group of marketing executives—Thrivers—has cut the clutter. They deliver superior revenue growth, profitability, customer satisfaction and their teams are invigorated. It’s possible because everything that Thrivers do comes back to how well they continually collect data, extract insights and act on them in a timely way to deliver data-driven experiences.

Marketing leaders should take their cue from Thrivers. After all, the pandemic reinforced the need for CMOs to take the lead in acquiring and owning data to deliver experiences that satisfy customers and drive growth. This means decluttering how customer data is managed. How? Focus on acquiring relevant customer data for short-term targeting and long-term planning, simplify data streams and rewire marketing execution.

Doing these three things takes a mindset shift. It also takes a technology/experience platform that provides an omnichannel view of customers and an ability to orchestrate experience in a seamless fashion. Salesforce can be key to helping marketing organizations deliver data-driven customer experiences that delight.
We surveyed over 1,000 senior marketing executives across industries and countries to learn how marketing is changing and what leaders expect for the future.

We segmented them into:

- 17% Thrivers
- 66% Strivers
- 17% Survivors

Based on how they treat customer relationships.
Now it’s an even bigger challenge.

Marketing organizations have always struggled with customer data. Many don’t have a strategy for managing first-, second- and third-party data. They often don’t connect anonymous to known data and sometimes lose opportunities to derive signals and patterns that drive better experiences. So while 82% of marketers have data from more channels than they did two years ago, it’s no surprise that more than half admit to a data gap.

This data gap can be a liability. It creates a clutter of ineffective marketing activities in its wake. Case in point: While there are a host of critical KPIs, Thrivers tell us that customer satisfaction is their top criteria for success. But marketers can’t truly satisfy customers without data insight into who they are and what they want. This is especially true now. After all, the customers that companies knew before the pandemic behave differently and value different things.
Getting reacquainted with customers requires rich data, and privacy-related policy changes are making it harder to get data from Big Tech. Standout marketers are getting creative about how they collect data themselves with new loyalty programs, polls and sweepstakes. It’s no longer enough to know a customer’s name, email and purchase history. The holy grail is “golden data”—hundreds of insights about customers so that marketers can truly tailor experiences.
Start with the right platform. Build from there.

Most marketing organizations (85%) plan to or have invested significantly in new technologies to keep up with data volumes. Those that have selected Salesforce solutions have a platform that can collect, deduplicate and build the richness of customer data attributes. But the platform is only part of the solution. It should be grounded with effective data management, governance and data integration upstream and downstream. Data democratization is also essential so that marketers don’t need a data science degree to understand what the data is telling them.

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Blue Buffalo

America’s top-selling natural pet food brand took this kind of comprehensive approach when it implemented a data-driven experience platform. The company had a bold vision to increase household penetration and decluttering how it used consumer data was key to this.

With pet adoptions soaring during the pandemic and a growing addressable market of pet parents, it was perfect time to deepen consumer relationships and make new ones. Blue Buffalo realized that this meant expanding the richness of its consumer data, deriving insights from it and acting at scale in an experience-driven way.
One of the company’s new experiences is Buddies™. It’s an app that pet parents can use to track their pals’ activities, connect with like-minded owners and earn points to secure rewards. The technology platform behind new experiences like Buddies is powered by Salesforce—including Salesforce Marketing Cloud, Salesforce Interaction Studio and Salesforce Customer Data Platform—and other ecosystem partners.

The technology enables a 360-degree view of consumers across channels, and the whole ecosystem of products flexes with changes in transaction volume. In addition to implementing the Salesforce solutions, Blue Buffalo made operational changes, such as identifying the roles and skills necessary to work as an experience-oriented company.
How can we understand our customers?

The data-driven experience difference.

01 Get one view of core customer demographics, preferences, product/service affinities, behaviors, transactions and interactions.

02 Use AI-driven recommendations to test and learn new ways of engaging customers with products, services and experiences they want. Accenture’s global applied intelligence know-how coupled with our Intelligent Revenue Growth management framework can help organizations fast-track industry oriented data—it’s insights powering strategies.

03 Tailor channel-based interactions—fast-and-easy flows to purchase on mobile and pleasing exploration on desktop and tablet from a single platform.
Experience is everyone’s responsibility.
But no one sees customers the same way.

It’s one thing for marketers to declutter how data is managed within their department. It’s quite another to tackle the data dilemma in other parts of the front office. Yet enriching customer experiences means unifying data to create a single source of “golden” truth serving marketing, sales and service that informs all their activities.

Just 33% of marketing executives strongly agree that their marketing organization has successfully collected data from other functions to construct a holistic view of their customer. Why? They either lack a customer data platform, have not defined necessary business processes or data governance—or both. This makes it nearly impossible to create relevant omnichannel experiences.

The more that marketing organizations take the lead on unifying customer data, the more empowered they can become.
Companies across industries can sometimes be their own worst enemies here. Their customers have experiences across in-store, ecommerce, social channels and more. Yet silos, disparate systems and internal politics make customers’ experiences far from seamless. As go-to-market strategies evolve post pandemic, this will become even more problematic.

Thrivers are more likely to say that their input is critical in their company’s product, sales, service and even technology strategy.
Execute at scale.

**Accenture’s global execution services**—coupled with SynOps, our marketing automation tool—boosts the potential of a Salesforce-powered ecosystem to drive seamless cross channel experiences at scale.

**The technology can help marketers** master omnichannel marketing by connecting and continuously improving physical and digital experiences through a virtuous loop of insights. Digital-to-physical or physical-to-digital and back again is totally seamless.

*This is incredibly powerful considering customers’ expectation for boundaryless experiences.*
A telecommunications company discovered how Salesforce can help empower employees across departments with the insights they need to deliver connected customer experiences. Thanks to the platform’s automation and integration capabilities, the company has a single source of truth across marketing, sales, service and field operations.

With cross-functional visibility into customer touchpoints, employees can now deliver truly omnichannel experiences. Employees are getting more insights into their customers than ever before. For example, during an interaction, they can know if a customer has both residential and business services or when the best time to follow-up on additional services is. By sharing data without boundaries, the company is making it easier for employees to serve customers and is well positioned to increase conversion and revenue.
Threading data across the organization creates a powerful dynamic between an organization’s brand purpose and the business—with marketing at the center. Instead of being focused only on their own workstreams, employees begin to rally around both the customer and their organization’s collective difference. Thrivers know this well. They are 40% more likely than Survivors to focus their use of data to drive a shared ambition and differentiate their brands.
How can we unify our view of customers?

The data-driven experience difference.

01 Collect and integrate data across marketing, sales, service and commerce to better inform cross-channel analytics and related strategies.

02 Take advantage of standardized, industry-focused, built-in data models to rapidly conform the data collection process.

03 Easily create insights and actions across all routes to market with immediate, button click activation to Salesforce Marketing Cloud for cross-channel customer engagement.
Data and insight streamlines marketing execution.

Driving more efficiency and growth.

Many marketing organizations are inefficient. Most work with many agencies and are investing in tool after tool, which adds complexity rather than addresses it. And marketers typically spend a large portion of their time on administrative tasks. A recent global survey reveals that brand marketers are spending 57% more time on reporting tasks over the last decade.\(^5\)

Getting more control of customer data can help marketing organizations transform marketing execution. Leaders can use data to prioritize where they direct time, money and resources for more creativity, innovation and business growth. They can also pinpoint the best ways to use automation and ecosystem partners to work at speed and scale while keeping internal teams fresh and inspired.

Data and marketing execution are inextricably linked.
Thrivers understand the importance of getting marketing execution right—93% are using technology to free up teams to focus on activities that differentiate the brand. They value standardized and consolidated execution capabilities. Almost all (90%) have industrialized marketing operations to reduce overall complexity, likely turning to global execution models from firms like Accenture. They understand how critical scale and speed is in a world where marketing execution is no longer about launching ten campaigns a month. It’s about having tens of millions of conversations a year.

95% of Thrivers say that a highly agile operating model is key to marketing having a successful data strategy.
Rewire how marketing works.

Rely on one platform.

Marketers have sought out technology for speed and scale. The irony is that for many, technology has contributed to their execution challenges. They are often grappling with a patchwork of tech tools that go unused or become out-of-date. However, Salesforce can help to simplify architecture components and help enable standardization with only a few major platforms.

It is a tool that can help marketers develop a “brilliant basics” approach through industrialization.
Shiseido

Global cosmetics and beauty leader Shiseido has done this extremely well. As part of a larger digital transformation initiative, the company launched a global platform capability across multiple continents, regions and brands powered by Salesforce Marketing Cloud and Salesforce Commerce Cloud.

Fast forward to today, and the platform makes it possible to drive customer interactions at scale and speed. Shiseido has gone even further, using a platform powered by Salesforce at its core as a springboard for rethinking day-to-day marketing execution.
The company turned to a global campaign execution “factory.” It was a cost-effective way of getting rid of the clutter, cost and confusion of multiple teams from multiple brands using multiple agencies on multiple campaigns. Instead, the factory has the core Salesforce platform, rich marketing and analytics capabilities and staff who understand the nuances of local markets.

The factory supports many brands across countries, languages and regions at scale in a flexible model. At the same time, marketers and product teams have a massive insight engine to drive innovation and strategy, using data that previously wasn’t visible to them.
How can we execute across channels at scale?  
The data-driven experience difference.

01 **Unify experiences across products**, taking advantage of Salesforce’s commerce abilities that force commerce, marketing, sales and service to work and integrate with one another.

02 **Go beyond plugging Salesforce in** and turning it on by building with the intent to evolve into routes to market.

03 **Integrate Salesforce with marketing activities** to understand and execute outcomes—from campaign brief to conversion and purchase.
Power data-driven experiences.

Priorities to get started.

Data and marketing execution are inextricably linked. To make the most of customer data and insight, marketing organizations should change how they work with the business.

This starts with the CMO working as the CEO of customer data—setting priorities like a data company would:

Marketing owns its value story. The CMO should take responsibility for educating the business about the value of data-driven marketing. This can go a long way in breaking down data fiefdoms and getting other business leaders to see why sharing their data with marketing is advantageous for all.
Marketing has a place in a new operating model. This digital shift is also forcing the C-suite to think about operational changes that should be made. This means thinking about new roles like chief digital officer, chief transformation officer and chief experience officer, which impact the CMO’s remit and marketing’s responsibilities.

Experience design is a corporate priority. Marketing is about what customers want and expect—an emotional partnership rather than one-way selling. Experience design is the currency of this customer dynamic, and it should be continually evolving, informed by a closed-loop of consumer feedback—and a priority for the CMO.

Marketers double down on digital. CMOs need marketers to be digital evangelists who know how to operate in the digital world—that’s everything from understanding customers’ digital lives and managing digital channels with rigor to using digital tools to augment their work and operate in completely new ways. Digital academies should be a regular part of the marketing organization.
Marketers are data rock stars. Modern marketers don’t have to be data scientists, but they need some data skills. Because long-term data management is required to stop the clutter from reappearing once it is under control. This need for skills will influence how CMOs hire and train people. The good news is that learning to ingest, process and share data in marketing can start small with simpler business intelligence tools and grow over time.

Everyone obsesses over return on data. No matter what initiative is launching on whatever channel or in whatever market, the CMO and marketing team should measure the data attributes that the campaign is feeding back to marketing. Return on data should be part of making the business case for all marketing initiatives.
Thinking about implementing a Salesforce in your marketing organization?

Salesforce can help enable data-driven experiences. It finds efficiencies that drive effectiveness and unlocks customer insights.

ASK YOURSELF:

01 Do I have a clear data strategy to collect, connect and democratize customer data for marketer activation?

02 When I succeed at increasing acquisition and engagement, am I driving customers to digital and physical experiences that satisfy them?

03 Can I tell the story of marketing’s value to my organization easily and relevantly to engage business leaders in sharing their data?
Marketers make meaning of products and services for customers.

But this can’t happen in a vacuum. It starts with moving beyond the clutter and truly understanding customers. That’s where the power of Accenture and Salesforce comes in. Combining strategy, execution and technology, we can help enable marketers to harness customer data and reimagine experiences to ignite growth.

Let the decluttering begin.
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