How To Use Software To Improve Your Marketing

By Eric Davis | www.LittleStreamSoftware.com

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SOFTWARE IS LEVERAGE

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Software has the potential to be the highest leverage points in your business today. There is no other resource, besides people, that can provide such a high ROI from the effort expended. And unlike people, software can run 24/7 and can be cloned to infinity.

GOALS OF MARKETING

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Before we look at how software can improve marketing, it's good to understand what marketing really is. Otherwise, we run the risk of creating software that is expensive, not useful, and which basically doesn't do what we want it to.

Marketing can have several goals depending on your organization:

> brand building and awareness

> attracting new leads to your product or service

> getting additional sales from your existing customers

Of them all, the second and third are the best tasks for software. With the right software, they can accelerate your marketing process like a rocket through the atmosphere.

MARKETING AS A REPEATABLE PROCESS

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Marketing can take many forms. Some are overt and clear like running a advertisement in a magazine or search engine. Others are less so, like facilitating word-of-mouth or sponsoring an event.

But these forms are just tactics, the day-to-day activities that focus on short-term goals. What is more important is that your marketing is strategic and long-term focused.

This comes from changing your marketing from one time event into a repeatable process that you run over and over and over.

DUMB COMPUTERS

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One central idea with software is that computers are dumb. They do exactly what you tell them to do (although sometimes exactly what you tell them isn't what you expected). With the same inputs, they always have the same outputs.

The redeeming quality of computers is that they do those things fast. Really fast. Typically faster than a person could ever hope to.

> The key then is to create a marketing process that is repeatable enough that computer software could do it on its own.

MARKETING PROCESSES THAT WORK GOOD AS SOFTWARE

Even though the software industry is young, and the web even more so, there are huge opportunities to replicate your marketing process into software.

Let's take a look at how software can help you attract new leads.

Digital Publishing

The entire Internet is basically a collection of files and documents. The majority of them are written words, though audio and video account for an increasing amount.

All of this information was created by someone, and published somewhere. Articles, blog posts, mp3 audio, even funny cat videos, all went through a publishing process. An idea was dreamed up, it was produced, edited, and then finally published.

There are two huge areas where software can improve things:

First is the publishing process itself. With an ad-hoc publishing process, you'll be publishing irregularly and might even publish something that wasn't reviewed, edited, or fact-checked. Not only does this look bad, but you could even be subject to fines, penalties, or lawsuits.

Using software to enhance your publishing process means that every piece you publish has gone through the same, correct, and standardized process. Your quality will go up, and you'll also be able to increase your quantity of publications since you don't have to worry about the process as much.

That's all well and good, but how does that help you attract new leads? That's the second area.

Everything published online is public. This means anyone can eventually find your publications, but you can't be sure when.

By putting software behind your publishing process though, you can automate this. When a new piece is finished and published, your software could tell the search engines about it. It could automatically link your similar publications to the new one. And the software could promote the publication to your groups of leads and customers. This can be so automatic that you don't even notice it after the first few publications.

Having a clear and software-based digital publishing process means you'll be producing publications for your potential customers and attracting them to your business faster than ever. But what happens next?

Lead Capture

Having 100,000 people visit your website in a day might sound impressive, but what's really important is how many stuck

around and became customers? 10, 100, 1,000? If you use the industry standard measurements, you'll be doing good if 1,000 people stuck around (1%). But that means 99,000 people just left without becoming customers.

The good news is that there are techniques that salespeople have used for years to improve their close rate. The better news is that software makes this even easier.

Instead of having only 1% of people become your customers, aim to connect with more people. Each person may or may not become a customer but for now all you want from them is a way to stay in touch with them.

This is lead capture and it can be extremely effective to automate with software.

For example, adding a simple newsletter sign-up form to your website could drastically increase the number of interested peo-

ple. Now instead of only getting 1,000 sales, you get 1,000 sales and another 1,000 people who are interested. Even if only half of these interested customers end up buying, you're now looking at 1,500 sales. All of this without having to bring more people to your site.

Even then, these improvements are really, really low. We're talking about only getting 2% of people to sign-up for your newsletter. I've designed a lead capture campaign that captured 76.9% of the visitors (no, that's not a typo. Seventy-six point nine percent.) Even a modest campaign could expect 4-5% of your total visitors to sign-up.

But there is yet another way that makes lead capture even better.

Automated Follow-up

In a normal business a follow-up process looks like this:

1. A prospect might see anywhere from 1-7 pieces of your marketing before they become interested.
2. They visit your website.
3. They reach out to your salespeople for more details.
4. Depending on how good your salespeople are, you'll close a certain percentage of them.

Notice how vague that process sounds? What about this one:

1. Every prospect sees at least one piece of marketing material, the lead capture campaign.
2. Some who are hesitant might start by saying "no", but over time as they the campaign again and again that "no" turns into a "yes".

3. Once the prospect raises their hand and decides to visit your website, they see you have a free newsletter.

4. After signing up they get a series of five emails to educate them about a problem they have.

5. At the same time a sales letter is mailed to them discussing the problem and the different ways your company has found to solve it.

6. If they're interested, they are told to visit a web page and signup for a free 1-on-1 consultation with your company.

7. If they don't sign-up within a few days, a representative calls them to follow-up on the letter and see if they had questions.

As you might expect, this more complex follow-up process is going to get the attention and purchases from more customers. There are more touch points, a clear path, and multiple ways to help the customer.

Automated Follow-up

Software can automate 95% of that process, even so far as notifying the representative of when to call and what to say. The only two elements people have to touch are: the actual phone call, and designing and implementing the system, which only happens once.

We haven't even touched on how to get additional sales from your existing customers using software. That's where proper processes mixed with software can have explosive results.

If you'd like to learn how to have software designed to make your marketing automated and repeatable, contact Eric Davis at Little Stream Software using this website.