

Connect your marketing technology to connect with your customers

Take a new direction and stop leaving money on the table

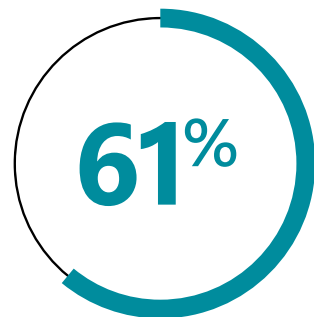


Connect your marketing technology (martech) to connect with your customers

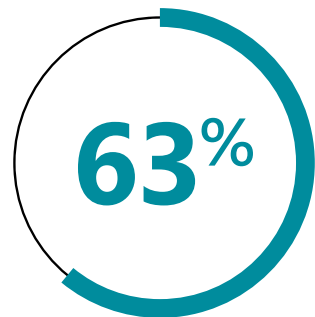
Top Takeaways:

New Avanade and Sitecore® research finds that 61% of businesses lose revenues and 63% miss sales opportunities due to a disconnected martech stack. They can fix that with agile martech, trusted partners and C-suite collaboration:

- Companies need martech stacks that support integration, incorporate artificial intelligence and clarify customer needs in real time.
- It takes three: The optimal strategy for sourcing expertise blends recruitment, retraining and a trusted partner.
- Better IT/marketing collaboration is needed in the C-suite – and elsewhere.



of businesses lose revenues



miss sales opportunities due to disconnected martech stack

You know a great customer experience boosts your business. But do you know how to use martech to achieve it?

Customer-first is not a new idea. Today great customer experiences should be basic table stakes in the game of market competition. And the right marketing technology is key to providing those experiences.

So why aren't more companies delivering great customer experiences? What's going wrong – and how can it be fixed? To find out, Avanade and Sitecore teamed with research organization Vanson Bourne to survey more than 1,400 marketing and IT C-suite decision makers in enterprises across industries and countries worldwide. We analyzed the results in light of our years of experience creating and deploying platforms and solutions for more personalized and engaging customer experiences. Here's what we learned.



Marketing technology enables great customer experiences – if it's done right

Marketing technology, or martech, is a crucial asset for CMOs as they sit at board-level tables around the world. Businesses need the right martech stack to get the clearest view of their customers. That technology, along with great people and processes, enable outstanding customer experiences reliably, swiftly and at scale.

Sounds simple, but most companies find it tough to achieve. Nearly all (95%) of the executives we surveyed said that aspects of their customer experience are in critical need of improvement. About two-thirds of marketing leaders agreed that their businesses are not very mature when it comes to understanding the customer experience, personalization and data analytics.

Yet, few companies are moving to close those maturity gaps. Less than half have adopted ecommerce (40%), personalization (23%) or customer journey (33%) technologies.

Earn a 3X return on your customer experience investment

Customers you can't understand or can't reach aren't loyal customers. At least, they aren't your customers. Most marketing executives who said their martech stack could work together better also told us the inability to reach these customers results in leaving money on the table through missed sales opportunities (63%) and lost revenues (61%).

It doesn't have to be this way. Earlier research from Avanade and Sitecore shows that companies can achieve a 3X ROI on their customer experience strategy, with nearly 80% of respondents attributing that gain to adopting or upgrading their martech¹. Our current research identifies what you can do to boost your ROI, too.

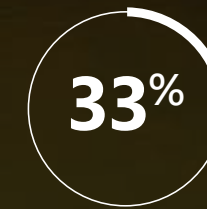
¹"Customer experience and your bottom line," Avanade and Sitecore, April 2016



of businesses have adopted ecommerce



of businesses are already using methods of personalization



of businesses have embraced customer journey technologies

Make your marketing technology smarter

What technology will help to deliver a 3X ROI to your company? The specifics depend on your business needs and goals, of course, but there are common factors to consider. For example, for marketplace agility, your marketing technology should be flexible and adaptable. That means a martech stack that can easily integrate current and future technologies.

With that agility as a competitive advantage, you can modify the customer experience – adding channels, giving consumers more options and more self-service functionality, for example – relatively quickly and easily, to suit new campaigns or respond to the market.

Companies should also identify and address the key gaps or disconnects within their current martech stacks. For most of the executives we surveyed, that includes artificial intelligence, data analytics and machine learning. We believe these are the most important technologies missing from most martech stacks. They are crucial to quickly identifying and responding to customer needs, delivering great customer experiences and making marketing technology future-ready.

By adopting the right AI, analytics and related technologies, you can finally exploit and boost ROI. The right AI and analytics solution can create historical baselines against which you can then compare current trends and make recommendations and more-accurate predictions. And when built-in, automated intelligence means you can analyze data you didn't know you needed when you collected it, you gain the ability to explore any data in any way at any time. You get actionable insights in the moment, without requiring IT to go back and crunch massive amounts of information. You can test faster and more often, tailoring the customer experience for better business outcomes.

It's also smart to get ready for the marketing technologies you don't yet know you need. The cost of integrating technologies can be far higher than the cost of the technologies themselves and can swallow your IT budget unless you plan carefully. That means more than making pre-built connectors a check-box on a requirements list. It means robust, open APIs that provide the flexibility for the specific business need at hand. Even solution suites with a full range of capabilities should provide integrations to swap in third-party elements to suit any business need. That will position you for agility as you get ready to adopt integrated chat and video, chatbots and other artificial intelligence capabilities.



of executives lack sufficient martech skills in-house.



of IT executives say marketing doesn't receive the necessary training to use their martech stack effectively.



of IT executives want to improve their martech stacks but don't know where to start.

Time for a new sourcing strategy

For most organizations, a major challenge to effective marketing technology is decidedly non-technical: Having the right people with the right skillsets at the right time. Failing at this can subvert even the most carefully crafted martech stack. Succeeding at this typically requires a three-part strategy based on:

- **Recruiting new talent**
- **Retraining the talent** you already have
- **Relying on a technology partner** with more expertise in marketing technology and customer experience strategy than you have on your own.

Ideally, your resources should include not just marketers and technologists, but people who bridge the disciplines with integrated marketing, IT and business perspectives. They're probably not coders nor the most creative marketers – but you already have that expertise available to you. Instead, they're the rare individuals who are both digitally curious and marketing-aware. They are data-focused marketers who

understand that unlocking the right data relationships will give the organization an edge with prospects.

While many companies try to recruit these dual-perspective experts, it's often more practical to develop these resources in-house. Find the people in marketing and IT who can and wish to do more and encourage them. Train them. Make their success a career development issue. That will address part of the need – but only part. No organization can keep up with the rapidly expanding and evolving skillsets needed for effective martech stacks. A balance of inside and outside talent can do the job, however. Outside resources can also bring you what few if any internal resources can: The expertise and insight that comes from working with companies throughout your industry and beyond.

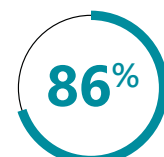
Crossing the uncharted waters of emerging marketing technologies is challenging. An experienced navigator can help guide you. An outside partner with a holistic view of the entire customer experience can provide the advisory capabilities that facilitate the alignment and shared agendas that promote martech maturity. It's an essential component of your customer experience strategy.



of marketing executives complain their martech stack is not user friendly.



of executives could do much more with their data to drive impact for the organization.



of executives believe that AI and machine learning are necessities for the organization, though 79%—almost as many—have yet to adopt them.

Foster collaboration in the C-suite and throughout the enterprise

Our research confirms that after years, marketing and IT still don't communicate effectively nor understand each other's perspectives. This disconnect inevitably hinders the organization's attempt to achieve martech maturity and deliver enhanced customer experiences.

These issues are both top-down and bottom-up; so, they need to be addressed at both ends of your hierarchy. In the C-suite, the roles of the chief marketing officer and chief information officer have evolved as organizations struggle to reorganize and reinvent themselves for an increasingly competitive and digital future. CMOs and CIOs are being tasked with helping to forge a future in which they are more responsible for delivering revenue through digital means. And they're now joined by the chief digital officer, a position that adds further complexity to the mix of responsibilities.

IT has traditionally been a cost center – but marketing technology is a strategic asset, with a different set of underlying assumptions about investment. The CIO, CMO and CDO all need to take this into account and collaborate to ensure the success of martech projects and turn the company's marketing machine into a money machine. That collaboration is best based on shared goals and management by objective. The executives can be measured on their success in this collaboration and, for example, on their success in eliminating the distractions of shadow IT.

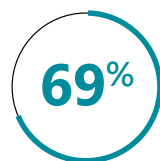
Meanwhile, the organization should also foster collaboration throughout the enterprise. One key is to focus on shared deliverables, rather

than a raft of separate projects. The traditional model of separate marketing and IT teams that toss work over the wall to each other is inherently suboptimal; organizations should consider replacing it with joint marketing/IT teams that work together by design, facilitating buy-in on the integrated mission.

Adopting an ideal roadmap becomes a more complex issue when both marketing and IT needs are properly considered. For example, technology that's easy to code may not be easy to use, and vice versa. These types of factors should be kept in mind as part of any potential acquisition of martech.



of executives see a lack of collaboration between marketing and IT.



of executives see a lack of collaboration between the CIO and CMO.



of marketing respondents say IT lacks insight into digital marketing tools.



of IT respondents say they have more important things to worry about than marketing technology.



of marketing respondents with martech stacks say the IT department built it without their input.



59% of IT respondents say the CMO hasn't communicated what marketing wants from its martech stack.

Ready to take the next step toward martech maturity?

Marketing technology shouldn't be its own worst enemy. Marketing and IT leaders must collaborate to achieve highly engaging customer experiences. Once you're clear on what those experiences should be, you can identify the future-ready marketing technologies that will deliver it.

Want to take those first steps toward success? Let Avanade and Sitecore show you the way with our new guide. It's a step-by-step roadmap, loaded with case examples, to help you rebuild your technology foundation, stay competitive and change the way marketing and IT collaborate on customer experience strategy.

Download the guide at:
www.avanade.com/digitalcustomer

Why Avanade and Sitecore?

Avanade can work with you to supplement and complement your team, boost your productivity and help you get more value from your martech stack. Sitecore is the global leader in customer experience management.

Our companies are working together to deliver an unparalleled customer experience solution. With our Avanade Digital Marketing Managed Services solution, based on the Sitecore® Experience Platform™, we can even run your customer experience program for you.

Real-world examples

Martech is the Rx for healthy customer experiences at Bupa

The major health insurer makes its call-center and member-facing employees far more effective with a Sitecore on Azure solution from Avanade that delivers the right information for more meaningful member interactions.

Customers respond to new experiences at Stockland

Web sessions are up 55% and page views are up 82% at this real estate company, thanks to new and richer customer experiences developed by Avanade on Sitecore and Azure.

Customer engagement climbs at AGL

This diversified energy utility saw a 50% increase in click-throughs with an online customer engagement solution from Avanade based on Sitecore on Azure.

Insurer saves millions in revenues by cutting churn 50%

A major insurer cut customer churn by almost 50%, saving millions of dollars in mortgage business, by identifying and targeting high-value customers likely to move to competitors.



About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital and cloud-enabling services, business solutions and design-led experiences, delivered through the power of people and the Microsoft ecosystem. Majority owned by Accenture, Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation and has 30,000 professionals in 24 countries.

Visit us at www.avanade.com

About Sitecore

Sitecore is the global leader in experience management software that combines content management, commerce, and customer insights. The Sitecore Experience Cloud™ empowers marketers to deliver personalized content in real time and at scale across every channel – before, during, and after a sale. More than 5,200 brands – including American Express, Carnival Cruise Lines, Dow Chemical, and L'Oréal – have trusted Sitecore to deliver the personalized interactions that delight audiences, build loyalty, and drive revenue.

Visit us at www.sitecore.com

About Vanson Bourne

Vanson Bourne is an independent specialist in market research for the technology sector. Our reputation for robust and credible research-based analysis is founded upon rigorous research principles and our ability to seek the opinions of senior decision makers across technical and business functions, in all business sectors and all major markets.

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