

4 common misconceptions and solutions for data-driven marketing

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Marketers today have a wealth of information available at their fingertips. We can know where our leads come from, what they're interested in and what influences their buying process. However, quantity does not always equal quality. With how marketing campaigns have become so reliant upon data-driven strategies, we wanted to offer some tips and tricks for data-driven marketing based on our experience.



Here are 4 of the most common misconceptions and solutions for modern data-driven marketing.

But first – what is data-driven marketing?

It wouldn't make much sense to talk about how to improve your data-driven marketing without a basic understanding of what it is in the first place. If words like soft data, channel performance and attribution tracking sound more like science fiction than science to you, you should start here.

Data-driven marketing is an approach to marketing that uses data acquired through customer interactions and third-party sources to improve and optimise a marketing campaign. The information gathered is used to gain a better understanding of your ideal customer, their motivations, preferences, and behaviours.

In essence, data-driven marketing helps companies optimise their marketing channel performance by improving their customer experience based on provable, configurable data points.



The problem with data-driven marketing

So, we understand that data-driven marketing is about using data and matching it to your marketing so you know what you can change to have a positive effect on your marketing efforts. With the nearly limitless access to data we have today, you'd think that we're in an ideal position to implement best-in-class campaigns.

Sadly, the opposite is true. With so much access to data, many marketers end up feeling overwhelmed or focused on the wrong data entirely. In this blog post, we'll attempt to set you in the right direction with four misconceptions and solutions to help you achieve success with your data-driven marketing initiatives.



1. Misconception: To achieve results, you have to change everything.

The truth: Singular, incremental changes are best.

Many organisations want to change as much as possible, in an effort to accomplish dramatic transformation quickly. They often turn to data-driven processes to highlight the areas where they need to optimise and begin to change nearly everything about it.

While this may make marketers feel like they are being productive, they could actually be introducing counter-productive measures for their campaigns, and they are certainly introducing less certainty. When you change multiple aspects of your marketing approach, you cannot be sure which changes were central to new, observed changes. If you do not understand the underlying causes, you have no real way to remedy or capitalise on the solution.

This is why singular, incremental, changes are a clean approach for data-driven marketing. Simply changing one aspect of your campaign or using A/B testing to see impacts will help you identify what changes affect your marketing outcomes. Once you have that, you know what you can focus on to boost your success or mitigate your weaker aspects.



2. Misconception: The purpose of data-driven marketing is to say the right message at the right time and right place.

The truth: Data-driven marketing is about linking hard data to soft data.

Since the introduction of marketing automation, the idea of getting to your customers 'with the right message, at the right time and at the right place' has dominated every digital marketing conversation. However, in practice, this means very little if you do not understand the hard and soft data of your customers.

Data-driven marketing is not about capitalising on a marketing phrase but is about discovering more about your customers. It enables you to discover the hard data (who your customers are) and the soft data (what are they doing and why) of your ideal customers. This enables you to make intelligent, informed decisions on how you position your marketing and on solutions that enable you to achieve this rather than a buzz-phrase from the past.



3. Misconception: Getting the most data is essential for data-driven marketing.

The truth: Data-driven marketing is most successful when focused on generating insights, not data.

As we mentioned before, today we have so many options when it comes to generating data. Harvesting large quantities of data is easy. Getting useful information and insights out of that data is not so easy.

Having vast amounts of data is not enough to have a successful data-driven marketing strategy. Data-driven marketing relies upon using insights to make better marketing decisions. Therefore, you should always have a solid reason for generating data and linking them to marketing KPI reporting. This way, you are creating actionable insights rather than unrefined data.

4. Misconception: Data-driven marketing is all about optimising the customer journey.

The truth: Customer experience should always take precedence over the customer journey.

Optimising your customer journey is a beneficial endeavour, and data-driven marketing can help you achieve this goal. However, that's not the only area where data-driven marketing shines. The primary aspect where this marketing approach is best suited is the customer experience.

As highlighted above, data-driven marketing helps you discover who your customers are and why they interact with your company. Using these insights, you can craft amazing customer experiences that delight and surprise your audience.

For example, if you understand why your customers interact with your brand, you can focus on those aspects and tailor their experience for them. If you understand who your customers are, you can address their challenges, alleviate their fears and speak in a way that they find appealing. All of this makes for a better customer experience before you even consider the customer journey.



Get serious about your data-driven marketing

A marketing strategy is only as good as the people, processes, and tools behind it. In many ways, this is especially true for a data-driven marketing approach. If you're ready to get involved and start generating actionable, transformative data that will take your company to the next level, consider Engagement Factory to help guide you in the right direction.

As an experienced digital marketing consultancy, we can help you plan and deliver marketing strategies and tactics to your business' full potential. [Contact us](#) today, and talk through your marketing challenges with one of our expert consultants, or [download this handy resource to help you get started](#).

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