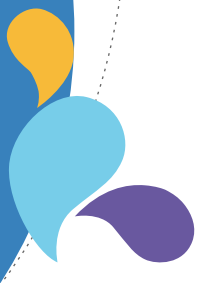
Sales Enablement and Marketing Automation for Franchises



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Think Sales And Marketing

Sales Enablement and Marketing Automation for Franchises

Corporations that run on the franchise model, by definition, need to maintain strict control of their entire brand, from the product or service itself to the entire marketing and sales process. It is at the very core of a successful franchise business model. This model, however, comes into conflict with two realities.

First, franchisees have a legitimate and valid wish to tailor and refine the corporate marketing plan to meet the vagaries of their store's individual market. They have an understandable drive to ensure that marketing efforts respond to regional interests and local demographics. Activities such as creating personalized marketing collateral based on their own regional demographic and behavioral data, can significantly increase marketing effectiveness.

Second, and this is a more recent development, are the opportunities presented by personalized marketing, as ushered in by Big Data—that vast amount of specific buyer information acquired through websites, point–of-sale terminals and other digital sources. This growth of available customer data, as well as the rise of individual interaction through online and social media has created a customer expectation for personalized interactions.

This second issue presents a direct challenge to corporate control. By definition, big data and social media cannot be used to their fullest potential if they are controlled at the corporate level. The value of social media and this accumulated data is that they allow us to market on a focused individual level. The broad question arises then, how can a corporation free its franchisees to use these new platforms and this new data to market more effectively at the store level, without losing control of the entire brand?

The answer to meeting the demand of these seemingly conflicting needs—local, individualized marketing v. strong corporate brand control is provided by asset management and marketing automation software.

This whitepaper will discuss how automation allows corporations to enable their franchisees to adjust their marketing to their specific local market segments. Specifically, this paper will review how franchisees can be freed to design their own sales and marketing materials, make use of big data and utilize social media for marketing purposes.

PERSONALIZED SALES AND MARKETING MATERIALS

Clearly, management at the corporate level has an exceptionally strong interest in maintaining the brand image it has created from logos, to color, style and fonts, as well as terminology and phrasing. Franchisees are interested in having the capacity to generate individualized creative assets in order to compete more effectively. They also have limited time to devote to marketing collateral creation. Channel automation solves these problems. Through the use of a template based system, franchise owners can be given access to defined templates that maintain the corporate brand. Channel marketing automation software allows for defined parameters within which store operators can personalize their documents to cater to specific clientele or demographics without damaging the national brand. Better local and personalized marketing drives increased revenues. As a result, everyone wins.

"BIG DATA" AND LEAD CAPTURE

There is an ever-increasing amount of available data being saved from customer and lead interactions. Multi-channel marketing can yield a vast quantity of useful information about every possible lead or customer. Technology has increased the volume of data collected about each customer's interests, behaviors, and buying decisions. In particular, data is now acquired from point-of-sales terminals, website visits, email and SMS responses, and social media.

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Every time a lead looks (or doesn't look) at an email, each time they open (or don't open) a link, you've learned more about their interests. You can even learn the time of day they are most responsive to marketing messages. The point is, an enormous quantity of data collected is being aggregated at the corporate level and is available to fine tune marketing efforts.

USING "BIG DATA"- AUTOMATION ANALYTICS AT THE FRANCHISE LEVEL

This raises the question of how this data can be used to develop more targeted marketing efforts. If there isn't a streamlined collection and application tool for all of this information, this pile of data is useless. Marketing automation software offers a solution that takes all of that data and shows the organization how prospects have interacted at each touch point, allowing smart marketing decisions to be made. The result is data that can be used to devise more effective marketing campaigns that yield better results.

Most importantly, this data is providing you the opportunity to respond on a very individualized level to your prospect's interests. Instead of national marketing campaigns based on broad aggregations of data that "even out" regional interests, channel marketing automation software offers new opportunities for the franchise business model. Channel software provides strong analytical tools that allow individual franchises to access and segment this information. The result is data that can be used to respond most effectively. Analytics make it possible for franchises to develop marketing campaigns based on a very clear understanding of their local market, including specific regional and individual preferences.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Lastly, marketing automation plays a significant role in using social media platforms for marketing. Franchisees have limited resources, which have to be focused on immediate revenue growth. Social media can be a challenging marketing platform for busy owners because it demands constant attention. Platforms like Twitter and Facebook will grow stale without continual updating. Customer interactions with your social media that go un-noticed can create a serious brand backlash. Unfortunately, business owners generally feel that they haven't the time to devote to the care and feeding of social media sites, and so often avoid this platform altogether.

Marketing automation software is the solution here. Automation allows franchise owners to plan social media campaigns that don't need daily management through the use of drip campaigns. More significantly, the use of social media personalized at the franchise level is an opportunity that has yet to be widely used. Enterprising firms can be trend-makers that put them ahead of the competition by developing social media sites that put a face on each individual franchise.

In summary, the needs of corporations to maintain tight control of their own brand can run counter to the needs of individual franchisees. Nationally-based marketing campaigns cannot respond to differences in regional demographics and behaviors. Out of fear of distorted branding, corporations traditionally forbid individual franchises to produce any of their own marketing materials to create personalized communications. Also, when large quantities of data are evaluated on the aggregate at the national level, the analysis may fail to sufficiently address the unique demands of regional markets. As a result, campaigns may fail in certain sectors and potential revenues will be lost. Channel marketing automation software can be used to meet the needs of both sides, so national branding quality is assured, and individual markets can be addressed. In the end, when both concerns are met, revenues can be maximized at both the store and national level.

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