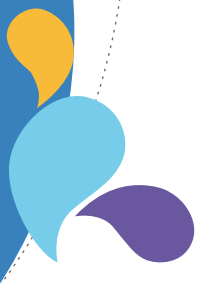
Automation: A Must-Have for Successful Brand Management and Collateral Creation



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Marketing and sales materials creation is an important element of every business's communication strategy. It plays a key role in brand building. Research suggests that people form a perception about a person or product in less than a minute. This is one reason organizations should finely tune every piece of marketing and sales material and carefully design each customer's touchpoint. Everything must immediately telegraph the desired corporate image. This is the core concept behind "branding." Consequently, sales and marketing materials creation assumes a high level of importance. However, the expanded number of platforms on which a customer now interacts with a company has increased the complexity of managing brand.

Brand Management is an ongoing, enterprise-wide task, involving every unit of an organization. The goal: ensure that the position created for a brand is accurately reflected in the image that customer's develop. As companies expand into virtual markets and focus increasingly on product customization, control of the company's brand during the sales and marketing materials creation process becomes a challenge. There's just one antidote to this challenge—seamless sales-marketing alignment. This article discusses how you can effectively bring about sales-marketing alignment in your business processes and solve brand management and sales collateral creation challenges by deploying AMP.

BRAND MANAGEMENT VS. MARKETING MATERIALS CREATION

Branding was traditionally synonymous with logos and advertisements, mascots and bottle designs. The modern definition of "Branding" has abandoned this outdated and non-customer interactive notion. Brand management is the complex effort to ensure that once a product is positioned, every single interaction a customer has with the organization precisely reflects that positioning. In short, every touchpoint should be in lockstep with the message. (Disney and McDonalds take this so seriously they created "colleges" for their employees). The challenge is managing and unifying the message as the number of meeting places with customers expands.

Sites for interaction include

- E-mails
- Customer service chat rooms
- Social networking sites: Facebook, MySpace, & Twitter
- Company websites
- Customer & Industry Blogs
- Franchisees
- Brick and mortar locations

The challenge here is to project a consistent brand image at all of these locations. With every contact, customers take away a perception of the company that builds – or distorts-its brand image. With the addition of each new channel for interaction comes the job of keeping that channel in line with your internal brand positioning. On top of this, remember that social networking has created a very public space where the customer shapes the discussion of the brand, not the enterprise itself.

In summary, all of these new platforms offer great new opportunities. However, they add layers of complexity and risk to the task of ensuring each communication material—whether marketing or sales - is appropriate and reflective of your brand. But when creating sales or marketing materials, there are other challenges such as resource availability, multiple marketing and sales channels, tight monetary budgets and even tighter timelines. Here are some of the most critical challenges.

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The "Business-Beyond-Boundaries" Concept:

Businesses are no longer confined by geographical boundaries. Thanks to technology, every market is now virtually accessible. Businesses now have multiple branches, within the country and abroad. More importantly, their web presence takes them everywhere. They face the challenge of managing their brand correctly across their multiple sites, while still trying to meet the demand for marketing collateral that is personalized for specific regions and market niches

The Explosion Of Customer Touchpoints:

Prospects and customers come in contact with a business in various venues. These include social media sites such as Facebook, information sharing portals such as SlideShare or YouTube, and the web in general. Prospects gather information about the brand from peers online and from other sources such as 3rd party reviews on the web, and blogs. Businesses have to keep up with the various arenas of interaction and tailor their marketing collateral to suit the format of these sites.

Limited Marketing Resources:

Sales and marketing materials are generally designed by marketing, but are used by the sales force. In most organizations, there's lopsided resource availability, where the marketing team is almost always short of people. Studies show that the ratio of sales to marketing personnel is around 10:1. As the scope of marketing collateral expands, this problem becomes dire.

These brand management and collateral creation challenges can be met by using technology to create high-impact marketing collateral. This is where MindMatrix comes into the picture.

MINDMATRIX MAKES BRAND MANAGEMENT EASY

MindMatrix unifies all of the various facets of brand management onto one platform.

Overall Brand Management:

MindMatrix brings uniformity to sales and marketing materials by recognizing branding patterns and ensuring that all marketing collateral embodies the same look and feel. Whether the company logo is appearing on a flyer, print advertisement, sales presentation or on its social networking page, the logo and other corporate branding mechanisms remain consistent with company standards.

Consider a firm headquartered in Chicago with a sales force spread across the country. When the company changes its logo, this change must be replicated in all the marketing materials generated in offices across the nation. With MindMatrix, once the change is entered into the system, the new logo is automatically transferred onto all relevant materials. The sales team would only have to download the latest copy from the system when they need it. This way, marketing personnel don't have to bother about manually updating every single presentation or flyer and the salespeople don't have to worry about not having the latest, updated version of sales materials.

Consistency Despite Multiple Channels:

There are various textual and visual elements that go into sales and marketing materials creation. These include the logo, color, font and image standards. MindMatrix makes sure that there's conformity among all the marketing channels. The company's message goes to the various avenues (including blogs, social media, email marketing) in the same form and manner, ensuring no dilution or distortion of the company message. Once the standards are fed into the system, AMP ensures all new communication materials are automatically generated according to required standards.

For example: A company has an ad campaign that is to be launched on several fronts. These might include print, website, email blast, and e-newsletter. While high-resolution images are needed for print media, download issues require a lower resolution for email. AMP's intelligent branding support tools will automatically ensure that low-resolution images are used for the web campaign while the print utilizes only high-resolution.

Centralized Data Storage:

MindMatrix is the central storage for all visual and text content that is used in the creation of all marketing materials. Once data is entered into the

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interface, everything is available for online access based on the permission levels set by the administrator.

Personalization:

MindMatrix allows for fast and easy personalization of marketing collateral. Using our advanced features, a business can move beyond the mundane acts of personalization such as addressing prospects by name. Our platform lets you create parameters to define specific template colors and font sizes for individually designated recipients. For example, one segment of a company's target market may include an older demographic. All materials targeted toward that cohort could automatically use a larger font and more streamlined visuals. MindMatrix simplifies the otherwise overwhelming task of managing your brand effectively despite multiple marketing and sales media. By leveraging MindMatrix technology, you save on costs related to branding and marketing-sales materials creation. The marketing and sales staff doesn't have to adjust the font every time or update the information in each marketing document when there's a change. For example, it would cost you much more in terms of dollars and time if you were to individually brand every corporate communication. The MindMatrix platform ensures that there's conformity in all communications—whether you are reaching out to a prospect in Maryland or California, sending out an email blast or an e-book.

Power To Sales:

MindMatrix takes sales collateral creation away the marketing team by enabling salespersons to create their own sales collateral—on demand. Using MindMatrix's template-based approach, your sales team will be able to generate high-impact, personalized sales materials when they need it—without depending on your over-extended marketing team.

Through superior sales-marketing alignment, we bring the various elements of brand management and collateral creation onto one platform. MindMatrix can replicate brand elements faster throughout the various communication channels—at both sales and marketing levels, and at a lower cost than traditional methods. In short, it achieves greater accuracy, lower cost, and faster response times. All with a consistent message.

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