

Sales & Marketing Automation: Your 24x7 Advantage

A MiBiz Marketing Staff Interview with Paul La Vigne, President - DVS

Q: From your experience in the marketing world, what businesses or industries are benefiting the most by using Sales & Marketing Automation?

A: It can really be used by any business in any industry. In the beginning, automation was only practical for large companies, but now it's available to all companies at competitive prices. Right now is actually a great time for SMBs to pull ahead of competitors by investing in automation.

You might be wondering what makes this such a powerful tool. Automation has a ton of applications. We're seeing clients use it for things like marketing and social media management, scheduling, hiring and recruiting, and boosting brand awareness.

The advantage of automation is that it helps align your sales and marketing efforts into a central platform, making it easier for you to generate leads and make the most of your investment.

Q: When is the best time to implement automation software?

A: That depends on your business and your specific goals. You need to compare your current state of affairs with where you'd like to be. You can then choose the best strategy for your business model.

You may decide on a more granular approach, phasing in automation piece by piece. Or you may decide to build out your entire automation strategy and roll everything out at once. The real beauty of automation is that it can be built around what's best for your business.

At this point, you may be asking yourself: how do I know if automation is a good fit for me? At DVS we have a number of available resources, including a full Sales Process audit that takes a comprehensive look at ways to better optimize your sales funnel.

Q: How hard is it to implement automation into your business? And how does it impact your current marketing team?

A: Automation is meant to enhance your existing process. It typically requires an initial investment of time and resources, but after the foundation is laid, automation is relatively simple to maintain. As I mentioned a moment ago, implementing your new strategy can be done slowly with a granular approach, or by migrating over to a completely new system.

As for how it impacts your current team—again, automation simply makes your existing process more efficient. It's not meant to replace your employees. Instead, it gives your team more time and insight to focus their efforts.

Q: Isn't automation really expensive?

A: Automation may be a relatively new industry, but it includes a healthy amount of competition. Because of this, automation is becoming more affordable for small to medium-sized businesses. You can purchase automation directly from a software provider, or find more competitive pricing from a partner agency like DVS.

After purchasing the platform there are usually one-time costs for setup, but once things are in place your automation can be maintained for a fairly low price. Getting started with automation and building automated campaigns may seem intimidating, but it's an investment that pays off.

According to SalesForce, 82% of marketers see positive returns on investment from automation and also see an average 3% increase in revenue. This means that automation can actually pay for itself in a matter of months.

Q: Do you need to have an agency to use automation?

A: No, you don't need one, but having an agency handle your automation will help you use your new communication tools more effectively and be up and running in less time. Generally,

subscription-based platforms come with a slew of tools. This is both a blessing and a curse for SMBs because of the technological learning curve and time investment needed for initial setup.

While enterprise organizations tend to keep this process in-house, SMBs may find it cost-effective to employ a certified agency partner. Most agencies offer different levels of service, including DIY contract, supported options, and full-service contracts that can have you up and running within 90 days.

Q: What features are most important when considering automation software?

A: Before you consider features, it's a good idea to step back and look at your overall objectives. Take some time to determine what's best for your business and for your audience.

When considering features, it's important to understand the difference between Marketing Automation (MA) and Customer Relationship Management software (CRM). Most CRMs are only designed to keep a running list of customers. On the other hand, MA platforms have the power to take those contacts and automatically begin nurturing relationships.

In my experience, most businesses benefit from automation that has integrated CRM features. What specific features to implement after that will depend on what's important for your business. Do you need a modular or customizable setup? What are your process requirements and third-party API needs? Do you need additional Salesforce integration? Other things that may affect your price point include: how many contacts you're storing, number of emails you'd like to send, your anticipated number of page visits, how many of your staff need logins, etc.

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At DVS, they Start by Listening™ in order to get to know you and your audience. They believe that automation should be built around what's best for your business and would love to start a conversation about how it can work for you.



Capture Leads
Drive Sales
Measure ROI

Marketing Automation
Is The Solution.



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