CMOs today are getting advice from all quarters about what they need to do to have a successful digital marketing strategy. Generally, this advice is all very insightful but there is one thing that is conspicuously missing from these ‘to-do’ lists. If CMOs are to have any hope of a positive outcome from all of the investments being made in advanced marketing technologies they must catalyze adoption of an integrated information management program across marketing operations and supporting processes. Granted, on the surface this may not seem like the ‘sexy’ part of the initiative. However, to get to a successful end-game, it is mandatory.

CMOs are faced with two conflicting goals: agility and scalability. The new world of integrated digital marketing requires the ability to react and respond quickly and efficiently across departments, tools,
platforms and functional business processes. It also requires marketing organizations to manage a significantly larger volume of content than ever before.

There are eight essential principles to building world-class agile digital marketing at enterprise scale in large organizations.

Visionary CMOs can catalyze change and spark increased levels of collaboration by initiating foundational programs that allow new tools and technologies to be brought in as needed. This foundation means campaigns can be launched and managed across channels and platforms without wreaking havoc and requiring “acts of heroics” in order to achieve success.

**Two Conflicting Goals**

The rules of marketing have changed and the volume and sources for advice for CMOs is expansive. There are so many more dimensions to a successful marketing strategy than there were traditionally, i.e. social media, content marketing, cross-channel customer experience, Big Data, analytics, and so on. If one were to find commonality across these new dimensions they all require that CMOs consider two somewhat conflicting business goals.

The first goal is to achieve agile execution. Agility is more important than ever before as the pace of business and markets accelerate. As organizations try to keep up with changing priorities and strategies, there will be tactical execution challenges to market outreach programs. What is working and what isn’t? Where are resources focused? What does market research and customer data tell us and how should marketing organizations respond, adapt, and evolve?

The second goal is being able to scale sophisticated and nuanced content marketing initiatives across platforms and channels and operate them at faster clock speeds. This goal conflicts with agility in
that it typically entails coordination of many tasks and processes that cannot be completed quickly. Scaling any process requires consistency and standardization. Agility is based on reacting and adapting. If the organization is changing how it is responding and evolving to the changing marketplace, it is difficult to efficiently scale that responsiveness across the enterprise.

What is often overlooked, is taking a fully integrated, holistic, cross department execution perspective underpinned by digital technologies. Very few marketers have become fully fluent in all of these areas. Due to the speed at which the market is changing, it is an overwhelming undertaking to develop, integrate and optimize these capabilities in a large enterprise.

**Marketing at Enterprise Scale**

Agile digital marketing at enterprise scale means leveraging data and content from diverse systems, processes and organizations in a coordinated and synchronized fashion. Personalized content for a mobile campaign is typically modeled, tested, and deployed independently of print campaigns that are managed by another part of the organization using a different set of resources and technologies. Omni-channel marketing programs in many cases are handcrafted through customer focus groups and rolled out by agencies for each brand. Email marketing lives in a separate silo from web commerce. Due to the fragmented nature of most large enterprises with a traditional division of responsibilities, skills specialization and technologies, scaling well-coordinated digital marketing initiatives is extremely challenging.

The new world of integrated digital marketing requires the ability to react and respond quickly and efficiently across departments, tools, platforms and functions — marketing agility at enterprise scale.

The following 8 principles are essential to building world-class agile digital marketing at enterprise scale in large organizations.
1. **All marketing is digital marketing.** There is no longer a distinction between marketing and digital marketing. Traditional marketing assets and programs are “born digital”. There are no more paste ups and mechanicals. They need to be proactively managed and leveraged across channels – not emailed from group to group. If upstream processes are broken or are slowed by organizational friction, this will impede marketers’ ability to deliver value to the organization. In those circumstances, the CMO needs to create and executive on a vision of the future that will catalyze the organization’s digital transformation.

2. **Marketing is increasingly a function of collaboration, not messaging.** Customers want their problems solved and needs met. This may mean exposing the knowledge and expertise of engineers in a B2B organization or it may mean enabling customers to have the insights they need to choose your product in a B2C context. Marketers are knowledge enablers; they are no longer messaging creators.

3. **Marketing is about scaling the machinery of communication,** collaboration and content processes. It is about enrolling deeper levels of the organization in the process. This means being involved in various aspects of governance and change management in order to get meaningful content created and managed in such a way that it is organized effectively and presented to target customers in a consumable way.

4. **Marketers need to be intimately involved in IT processes.** They need to work closely with the CIO, and, if the role exists, the CDO (Chief Data Officer). Marketing is increasingly data-driven, and data quality will be essential to marketing success. Digital agility means data agility. Therefore marketers need to show the organization what can be done with high quality data as well as show the impact of poor
quality, difficult to access or missing data. The CMO can champion data quality to show the impact on the bottom line through metrics linked to customer acquisition and revenue growth. Technology is the vehicle through which marketing delivers its messaging and engages with customers. Marketers need to understand technical capabilities at a meaningful level.

5. **The CMO needs to have a seat at the table when choosing technology platforms and infrastructure.** I recently heard about an organization choosing a Digital Asset Management system without the involvement of marketing. Marketing is one of the chief creators and consumers of non-text assets, and therefore, should be driving requirements for these types of systems, as well as Web / Marketing Content Management, Marketing Automation, CRM, and others.

6. **Digital Marketers need to become Digital Architects.** Marketers are increasingly leveraging data assets from many parts of the enterprise – from customer purchase histories to call center feedback, survey responses, social media data, clickstream behaviors, campaign responses, external data feeds, mobile usage data, search metrics, and so on. Deriving meaning from these sources is accomplished through translating this “digital body language” into meaningful content, campaigns and offers. Increasingly, this means translating data models from various systems into attributes that become inputs into personalization engines, web content management tools, collateral creation processes, campaign management systems, and various outbound demand-generation activities.

7. **Analytics expertise must become a core competence of marketing teams.** We hear how important “Big Data” is and how it will change the face of business. That is certainly true. Unfortunately, many marketing organizations do not fully
leverage the tools that are currently at their fingertips. New approaches are available for determining engagement effectiveness beyond traditional web analytics. Mastering basic analytics is the cost of admission.

8. **Marketing agility and effectiveness require an enterprise view of taxonomy, metadata, and information architecture as a foundation.** Though difficult to develop, implement, and maintain, enterprise taxonomies become the mechanism by which the organization becomes more consistent in language, terminology, business processes, customer descriptors, product and service attributes, and reference data. They are core to master data and product information management. Many taxonomy programs are initiated by digital marketing and e-business executive leadership.

### Establish Common Ground

Visionary CMO’s can catalyze change and spark increased levels of collaboration simply by initiating information architecture and taxonomy programs across the enterprise. These programs are foundational for achieving business process and information flow efficiencies, interdepartmental communications and collaboration, and establishing consistency and reliability of data. Taxonomy programs begin as business concept discussions that later get translated into technology designs. Having a common data vocabulary and dictionary for sales, marketing, and business development gets these organizations on the same page with regard to how they define and understand customers, and how to characterize the value proposition behind products and service offerings. Jennifer Zeszut, CEO of the Marketing Metrics firm Beckon, has referred to this as a “marketing chart of accounts” (http://chiefmartec.com/2014/02/marketing-intersection-complexity-accountability). A business taxonomy driven information architecture
helps drive consistency in marketing program execution —
measuring effectiveness of strategies, vehicles and programs, as
well as defining regions, customer types, demographics, business
units, brands, product classes, channels, and buying stages.
Content attributes can be associated with campaigns and customers
in order to build metrics dashboards by which to monitor
performance. Developing an information architecture foundation is a
key component of building agility and scalability into digital marketing
programs. By applying these principles, the CMO can increase the
“information metabolism “of the enterprise and more quickly and
effectively meet the needs of customers.

About Us

Earley Information Science (EIS) helps organizations harness the value of one of their most important
assets – information. We improve enterprise information agility to drive digital commerce innovation, increase
revenue, and enhance customer experience with a strong enterprise information architecture and management
foundation. EIS helps make information more findable, valuable and useable — thereby helping organizations
improve operational efficiency and effectiveness. EIS has over 20 years of experience in working with Fortune
1000 organizations globally across many industries, including manufacturing, retail, financial services, healthcare,
life sciences, the public sector, and professional services.

Earley Information Science
PO Box 292
Carlisle, MA 01741
P: 781-444-0287
www.earley.com