



TRANSFORMING THE MARKETING DEPARTMENT FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

An Element Solutions White Paper

01 TRANSFORMING THE MARKETING DEPARTMENT FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

One of the most difficult aspects of digital transformation – moving from a traditional to a digital-first approach to marketing – has been in transforming the marketing department, and indeed, the entire corporate communications structure, to take advantage of new tools and techniques.

In many marketing departments that have been in existence for many years, digital marketing was often added as a second parallel structure alongside the traditional marketing activities. The erroneous assumption has been that traditional and internet marketing are entirely different things that need entirely separate approaches. This, however, is not the case and, in our experience, these parallel structures create new, and worsen existing, information silos.

Our clients who have had the greatest success with their digital-first transformations see that “content is content is

content,” meaning that PR/MR, advertising, SEO/SEM, promotion, etc., are not separate departments but interlocking channels within an integrated marketing communications regime. A way to think about marketing communications in this way is:

- Based on a strategic business goal, a marketer decides on a message designed to illicit a particular response from a particular audience segment
- That message is wrapped into a piece of content created to best present the message to the audience segment
- The content is delivered via a channel or channels selected to most effectively reach the audience segment
- The message is delivered and the response is measured



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02 BREAKING DOWN THE SILOS

This process is the essence of marketing communications. Everything else is minutiae. Whether the message is a coupon or brand positioning; sent via a press release, an email, a TV spot, or a landing page, the process is the same. So, rather than long, vertical, and parallel structures that separate marketing work areas by traditional and digital channels, our successful clients have developed structures that are extremely horizontal and flat, and organize work efforts by these steps:

- 1 Strategy
- 2 Creative
- 3 Communications
- 4 Analytics

In our digital transformation consulting practice, we recommend that the operations of the marketing department should flow through these four functional teams and not be divided into traditional and digital channels.



...the vital element is the willingness to break out of traditional ways of thinking and learn as much as possible about digital techniques and how these are integrated into traditional forms.

03 A NEW TEAM STRUCTURE

So, what would this new team approach look like?

Strategy Team

- Defines business goals, aligned with overall business strategies, to be met through digital engagement activities, defines ROI models
- Secures necessary funding
- Serves as the strategic voice of the customer, elicits internal and external customer input
- Sets priorities, oversees and guides the utilization of digital properties and marketing activities and creates a supportive culture throughout the organization
- Ensures the effective use of resources through consolidation and elimination of organizational barriers
- Regularly reviews analytics and ROI reporting against benchmarks, adjusts resources as necessary

Content Team

- Creates and maintains a content governance model and content calendar
- Monitors enterprise ecosystem for content opportunities
- Curates content opportunities and aligns with input from strategy team and experience team persona channels
- Monitors their industry's global environment for content opportunities
- Monitors current website content expiration dates and revises
- Provides strategically tailored content in channel-oriented form as defined by communication team
- Monitors analysis of search rankings and SEM effectiveness and modifies SEO and taxonomy models

Communications Team

- Creates and manages persona profiles and algorithms and rules of engagement necessary to drive marketing efforts
- Aligns marketing goals with digital channels, targeted personas and curated content
- Manages content and analytical data workflows between teams
- Provides content, channel programming, and anticipated metrics to team
- Plans and monitors search marketing and email campaigns
- Conducts internal and external customer focus groups and surveys
- Plans and conducts email nurturing campaigns
- Manages, configures and supports digital marketing tools and platforms
- Informs teams of technology capabilities and site improvement possibilities

Analytics Team

- Collects, evaluates and distributes all marketing data, coordinates with enterprise dashboard
- Analyzes content and site effectiveness and provides feedback on content to be developed and site functionality to be modified
- Develops prediction models to identify conversion probabilities by persona and geographic segment

04 EVOLVING MARKETING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Organizing marketing personnel in this way – as strategists, creatives, communicators, or analysts – typically takes some retooling of job descriptions and retraining of current staff. Account supervisors and marketing communications veterans make good strategists. Copy writers, graphic designers, and videographers are creatives. People with experience in public relations, publicity, and community relations are communicators. Auditing experts can be analysts.

Strategists must learn to see their brand conversation with consumers from all aspects of the communications ecosystem. Communicators need to learn how to use all communications channels – e-mail, the telephone, social media, website, SEM and more. Copy writers need to learn

about how to craft meta titles and meta descriptions and how “selling copy” is different from “informational content” and how to write the text of website product pages while keeping semantic models and keyword themes in mind. Analysts need to understand how to measure ROI and related metrics in terms of online conversions, media hits, brand awareness, reach, frequency and more.

These are just a few examples of how marketing staff can transform themselves. But the vital element is the willingness to break out of traditional ways of thinking and learn as much as possible about digital techniques and how these are integrated into traditional forms.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robin Snow

Before joining Element Solutions as principal strategist, Robin Snow was founder of Aefinity Interactive, LLC. He has more than 35 years of experience in advertising, marketing, and strategic planning. He has held positions within healthcare as a web center director and interactive marketing director, and has worked externally with healthcare providers as an advertising creative director, marketing strategist, and digital engagement consultant. Over the last 20 years, his specialized experience has been in the planning and implementation of e-health, integrated marketing, and digital business and clinical strategies for hospitals and health systems across the country. Robin was vice president with Greystone.Net for eight years and has worked in conjunction with a variety of healthcare technology companies to plan and implement effective strategic Internet business and communications plans for his clients.



ABOUT ELEMENT SOLUTIONS

Element Solutions is the industry-leader in developing online customer experience solutions. We understand our client's business goal of meeting demanding customer experience needs and have focused our business on developing solutions to meet these needs online. Our multi-channeled approach provides a seamless and personalized experience for your internal and external customers, no matter what their preferred method of interacting with your organization.

For more information please visit us online at www.elementsolutions.com or email sales@elementsolutions.com.