

Editorial: Marketing planning methodology, organizing for marketing transformation, and ensuring relevance and consistency for customers, while understanding emotional nuance

Three years ago, the reputed BCG attracted our attention on how Millennials are transforming Marketing (BCG's research generalizations being considered useful in understanding the reciprocity principle in terms of reach, relevance, reputation, relation, and referral), what are the implications for Marketers (fewer organizational silos, new organizational capabilities and partnerships, more innovative media and tools), and how the traditional framework (company's start by defining its brand's positioning, benefits, and personality, and continuing its attempt to build awareness and customer loyalty by pushing then that image down to consumers) had become outdated. At the beginning of 2015, Peter Economy, a leadership expert and best-selling author, highlighted that Millennials (Generation Y, people born in the eighties and nineties) are now "firmly established in the workplace and a force to be reckoned with", (Economy, 2015) while Generation Z (anyone born after 1993) is "beginning to show up on the radar screens of businesses around the world." Some month later, on May 19, 2015, The Center for Generational Kinetics (the leader in generational research and solutions, especially with Millennials - aka Gen Y, and Gen Z - aka iGen), together with Barnum Financial Group, presented the latest findings on Millennial employee engagement and specific ways to increase Millennial employee performance. (Dorsey, Hiza, 2015) And on his website, Jason Dorsey (a bestselling Gen Y author at age 18; won Entrepreneur of the Year at age 25) shows that "iGen and Generation Z are fast on the heels of Millennials".

And as we are at the end of this year, let's remember an article posted on The Symphony Agency in September 2016, entitled "How to Create Your 2017 Marketing Plan", (Fernandez, 2016) which showed that in order to produce measurable results, you need a structured and effective 2017 plan by covering the following methodology: creating a succinct overview of the previous year's performance (by uncover top performing channels - traditional, digital and other - and looking for opportunities to improve subpar results); collecting all performance metrics (by pulling basic information on digital performance from the Google Analytics account or from internal documentation collected during the sales process, call data with sources, e-commerce transaction data or customer surveys); what concerns marketing and advertising budget (if there isn't a predetermined budget already), you have to consider your industry, business's size, and growth stage, then to allocate this budget by category (traditional, digital and other, this last one being no more than 10% of the budgetary allocation, and relying progressively on for variable expenses and for budget flexibility, while the allocated funds for the traditional and digital initiatives being on the basis of the previous year of metrics).

But organizing for marketing transformation in the current digital era also presupposes to bring one customer experience (CX) along the complete customer journey, bridging the

departmental silo's, activating employees, and introducing new skill-sets, all of these on the basis of a proper organization structure organized by this customer journey, as shown in the figure below. (De Baere, 2016)

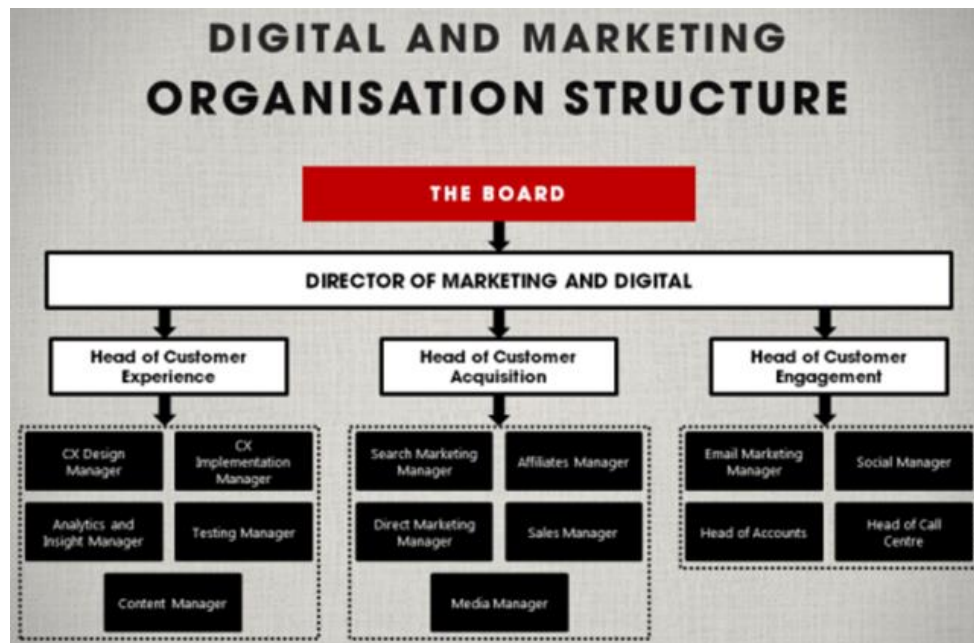


Figure 1: An example of an organization structure organized by the customer journey

Source: De Baere, T., *The CMO's Guide to Digital Marketing Organization Structures*, April 17, 2016, available at: <http://www.b2bmarketingexperiences.com/2016/04/cmos-guide-digital-marketing-organization-structures/>

On the other hand, it is important to consider the “TakeAways” offered recently by the reputed Ernan Roman, President of ERDM: to take into account the unprecedented consequences of the irrelevant marketing, and to prioritize getting to know customer’s individual preferences (given an Omni channel strategy at the basis of the true relevancy); to ensure relevance and consistency for your customers (by understanding how they shop your brand and their preferred touchpoints, and building ways to connect these touchpoints accordingly). (Roman, 2016) And as 20 years ago FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) was coined by Dr. Dan Herman (who first identified and named FoMO), Jeff Snyder (the chief inspiration officer and founder of Inspira Marketing) reminded us (Snyder, 2016) that at the level of April 2016 FOMO (n, informal) was defined as “fear of not being included in something (such as an interesting or enjoyable activity) that others are experiencing.” (Steinmetz, 2016) Snyder argues that you have to use FOMO responsibly, and identified three ways to turn customer envy into engagement: *broadcast the show on social; get exclusive; send influencers to the party.*

Today marketers are also facing a new challenge: Generation Z (shaped by the recession; borne with Facebook already in full action, with shopping from their smartphones; less trusting of brands; aware that Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube stars are paid to endorse products, and filtering information available at all times by digging into what brands really stand for, being

very comfortable doing their research, and spending their money differently; penetrated by some of the anti-establishment sentiment, and trusting individuals more than big institutions; valuing highly authenticity and transparency; realistic about the challenges ahead; ultra-competitive, but very accepting; seeing the workplace as a battlefield, but being inclusive and tolerant of difference), with its different relationships compared with Millennials (the most collaborative generation), “seeming like oceans of separation when it comes to shared experiences.” (Segran, 2016) Not forgetting, of course, what a Millennial wrote in November this year that Millennials want to be treated like adults, normal people just doing their best to live in this complex world, respecting their social consciousness, and working with them to make the world a better place. (O'Neil, 2016)

The CEO of Periscope (a well-known independent Minneapolis-based ad agency), explained recently what marketers can learn from America's election shock, (Ross, 2016) underlining, among other aspects, that it is important to stop using the word “consumer” because no one in the world simply consumes, all of us being complex humans who make choices every single day, and there is a real need to understand emotional nuance (we can rely on data in the absence of humanity), and apply gut-level knowledge and information (people are behind data points) based on conversations with real people at all costs.

And as the CMO at ThreatMetrix argued recently, (Najarian, 2016) today's role of CMO is a lot more complex, to navigate the current ever-evolving digital and mobile-focused business landscape CMOs facing the challenge of optimizing operational processes and demonstrating measurable impact, being forced to think like a CFO, to align with sales, to hire creatively, to embrace account-based marketing (ABM), and to prioritize content, seizing the opportunity to serve as dynamic leaders.

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