Marketing Automation

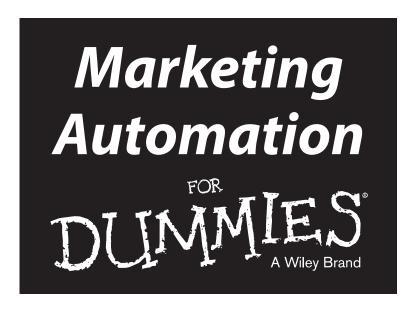# FOR DUMMIES®

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Learn to:

- Establish a buyer's profile and create a lead scoring model

- Integrate marketing automation with CRM and other processes

- Choose the right tool for your business

- Reach buyers via e-mail, social media, and more

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Marketing Automation

FOR DUMMIES®

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by Mathew Sweezey

Marketing Automation For Dummies®

Contents at a Glance

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Introduction

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*T*he marketing world has changed more in the last few years than in the entire 100 years prior. Technology has given rise to an ultra-connected world and a new way in which people operate, communicate, and find things. This fundamental change has also given rise to new and better ways to reach your consumer. Marketing automation allows a business to reach people in a personal and scalable way, increasing your marketing's effectiveness — and your revenue.

In this book, I tell you all about marketing automation: what it is and why it is something you should strongly consider putting to use for your company. I show you how to find a marketing automation tool to suit your needs, how to set it up, and how to create better campaigns than ever before.

About This Book

This book exists to help you understand this new technology called marketing automation. Whether you need to run marketing campaigns for your company, work on the sales side, or employ the people doing those things for you, having a strong understanding of the most critical marketing process is a must. The reason marketing automation has become such a critical piece of the marketing world is that it solves the issue of how to be relevant at scale. This book gives you a look at marketing automation that's unlike any other publication on the topic. I've laid this book out to teach you the why, the what, and the how.

The book uses a step-by-step approach to guide you through every aspect of working with this technology. Here are some conventions used in the book that you should know before jumping in:

- ✔ Web addresses and programming code appear in `monofont`. If you're reading a digital version of this book on a device connected to the Internet, note that you can click the web address to visit that website, like this: `www.dummies.com`.

- ✔ I've included Twitter handles of key people and companies when possible, and I've included them so that you can take action and follow them. Being successful with this technology requires constant learning. These are the best people to learn from.

Foolish Assumptions

The most foolish of assumptions is that you already know how to do automated marketing. The concepts that are the basis for current marketing methodologies do not translate directly into the work of marketing automation. Marketing automation is just as much of a mind shift as it is a new technology, and throughout this book I show you how to think correctly about marketing automation and how to best execute programs to meet your goals.

For those of you who are beginners to the field of marketing, I encourage you to learn the basics and stay with low-level techniques for a while. Don't try to run too fast without fully understanding how to walk. Also, realize that you most likely have *lots* of work ahead of you. I have, however, organized this book to make the workload as easy as possible to tackle.

For those of you who are advanced marketers, make use of the information that's appropriate for you and leave the rest. Also, realize that an advanced technique for you may be a basic technique for someone else. It's all about context, and I give you plenty of that in the book.

Finally, if you have a marketing automation tool, you *must* read this book. I can't tell you how many people have already tried working with marketing automation tools and still have no clue how to use them correctly. I see people still struggling to accomplish their basic goals a year after they've purchased their marketing automation tool, and I see people who are successful with their tool in very short order. The difference between the two is how they approach a new technology.

If you approach marketing automation without understanding it, and you use an outdated approach, you will not accomplish your goals and will likely end up having to hire a consultant to help you use your marketing automation tool. Reading this book will save you lots of money and months of work just by showing you the basic elements to focus on, how to think about setting them up, and how to improve your automated programs over time.

Technology is moving fast, and new tricks, tips, and tools emerge every day. Knowing which ones are important is necessary so that you don't get caught chasing fads.

Icons Used in This Book

The Tip icon marks tips (duh!) and shortcuts that you can use to make this process easier.

Remember icons mark the information that's especially important to know. Make sure to take the time to read these. I've included them because these are critical items to understand when working with marketing automation.

The Warning icon tells you to watch out! It marks important information that may save you headaches, so do NOT skip Warning paragraphs.

Beyond the Book

I have written some extra content that you won't find in this book. Go online to find the following:

✔ **Online articles covering additional topics at**

   www.dummies.com/extras/marketingautomation

   Here you'll find a Top 10 guide to creating great content, tips for automating follow-ups, help with data management, and more.

✔ **The Cheat Sheet for this book at**

   www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/marketingautomation

   Here you'll find additional articles about lead scoring as well as how to create the perfect nurturing email. Consult the cheat sheet when you are reviewing your lead scoring model, creating a lead score for the first time, or creating any drip nurturing programs.

Where to Go from Here

This book isn't written for you to start at the beginning and work your way through. It's written so that you can use it as a reference and get all the information you require in a chapter. The best way to use this book is to keep it with you and, of course, have it handy when you are either planning or executing your marketing automation programs.

Part I

getting started with **Marketing Automation**

In this part . . .

- ✔ Get introduced to the modern buyer and learn why marketing automation is so effective.

- ✔ Create a business case for a marketing automation solution.

- ✔ Find out the basics of setting up a marketing automation tool.

Chapter 1

Introducing the Concepts of Marketing Automation

*M*arketing automation is a buzzword in the marketing world. This chapter explains what it means and why marketing automation has made such a big difference in so many companies.

I show you what defines marketing automation and why it's such a big deal. I list the major reasons that companies are implementing marketing automation solutions and show you how to start conversations about it at your company. I also dig into the changes in the modern buyer that have made marketing automation so popular.

Defining Marketing Automation

The term *marketing automation* got its start in the mid to late 1990s when a few people were combing their databases with automated code to make it easier to segment their databases into more granular segments based on more data. Since then, it has turned into a massive industry and has been called the fastest-growing software segment in the CRM space.

In short, *marketing automation* refers to the process of using a single platform for tracking leads, automating personal marketing activities, and being able to produce full closed-loop reports on the effectiveness of all marketing activities.

There are also many other ways to refer to the processes that marketing automation encompasses. Each company that sells marketing automation software calls it something slightly different, and even the analysts call it something different. Here's a list of terms you may hear in place of marketing automation:

- ✔ Demand generation
- ✔ Lead performance management
- ✔ Revenue performance management
- ✔ Automated lead management
- ✔ CRM lead management

Marketing automation (or whatever name you call it) really consists of three parts:

- ✔ The first is lead tracking, which consists of tracking a lead across all marketing channels.
- ✔ The second is automated execution, which enables you to have automated processes take place either as marketing campaigns or as internal changes based on these tracked actions.
- ✔ Finally, the third part allows for closed-loop reporting for proving the value of your marketing efforts down to every dollar those efforts bring in.

Full marketing automation vs. piecemeal marketing automation

Marketing automation has many levels, an idea that you need to grasp before you dig deeply into this book. Currently, many options are available to help you automate marketing activities. Depending on your goals, you may just need a single tool to add to your existing toolbox, or you may need to replace your entire toolbox with a full marketing automation platform.

For example, say that you're using a form on a website and you can now easily have form submissions dropped right into your CRM without your having to lift a finger. This is an example of a single automation. A single tool can do this for you if this is all you require. I call a single tool working to do one action "piecemeal marketing automation." But if you need those form submissions to score your prospects so that you can determine who is the most sales ready, you need a full marketing automation platform. Removing tasks is considered a level of automation, but it is a single-point solution and doesn't meet all three of the criteria I mention in this chapter to qualify as full marketing automation.

As you go through this book, determine whether you need just piecemeal marketing automation or full marketing automation. Making this determination will help you to ensure that you get the tools you require and don't buy a technology just because it is a hot buzzword.

When thinking of marketing automation, many people may be confused, wondering whether it's a technology or a way of marketing. It's actually both. Marketing automation is just as much a new way of marketing as it is a new tool that most companies have never used before. There are also many levels of marketing automation. Throughout this book, I cover all levels of marketing automation and show you how to implement the new technology while thinking about marketing in a new way.

Recognizing the Relationship Between Marketing Automation and Online Marketing

Marketers are running the majority of their campaigns online. This fact makes many marketing activities easier to execute and track but also adds a lot of technical challenges. Marketing automation and online marketing have a symbiotic relationship. Think of marketing automation as an extension of online marketing. It needs online marketing to work, just as online marketing is made more effective by marketing automation.

Online marketing usually consists of many different channels and types of campaigns. Here are the marketing campaigns that can be made more effective with marketing automation:

- ✔ **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):** Marketing automation allows for the tracking of each keyword, and full closed-loop return on investment (ROI) reporting on every keyword.

- ✔ **Search Engine Marketing (SEM):** Marketing automation provides full lead tracking so that you can see each person and every paid advertisement that person has engaged with.

- ✔ **E-mail marketing:** E-mail marketing changes with marketing automation because you don't have to send blast e-mails, which are individually executed marketing pieces not tied to other prospect interactions. With marketing automation, you gain the ability to execute automated, personalized lead-nurturing campaigns that may last for months and dynamically change based on people's interactions with the emails they are receiving. So you move from a manual execution and scrubbing of lists to an automated campaign that can optimize itself for best results.

- ✔ **Content marketing:** Marketing automation gives you the ability to track every piece of content and see each person in your database who engages with your content.

- ✔ **Trade shows:** If you attend trade shows, marketing automation gives you the ability to track each lead from your booth and prove full ROI on each trade show.

✔ **Social media:** Tweets, blog posts, LinkedIn, Facebook, and all other social media channels can be tracked and reported on. So you can prove the ROI on social media down to the tweet and demonstrate how it influenced your last closed deal.

✔ **Website:** You can drive more value out of your website by knowing every page a prospect looks at, helping you to identify hot leads based on the prospect's level of engagement with key pages.

Marketing to the Modern Buyer

A European study in 2013 noted that the average consumer is in front of a screen 12 hours a day. More than 294 billion e-mails are sent each day, and more than 2 million new blog posts go online every day. The *Wall Street Journal* reports that more than 42 percent of holiday shoppers in 2013 did their holiday shopping online. Clearly, with the amount of time people spend online, if you're not online, you're going to be left behind.

Most of this is not news to you. You probably have a website, an e-mail tool, and a Twitter account. You have started to blog and create content for your website. You've learned about the benefits of SEO and optimized your content for search results. The next sections explain how to engage with the modern buyer in more granular detail so that you can easily see how marketing automation helps you better engage online with your consumers.

Feeding the need for content

Content marketing has become another buzzword in the marketing world. It has sparked the *New York Times* bestselling book *Youtility,* by Jay Baer, and spawned new institutes such as the Content Marketing Institute. Content marketing even changed the way Google's algorithm ranks websites in natural searches. The Internet is now made up of content, and marketers are clued in. We're creating more content than ever before, and it's because we have to.

Today's buyers want to get help and are looking to your company for that help — and they should be getting help from your content, too. This is one of the key messages Jay Baer puts forth in *Youtility*. It's also the message of Joe Pulizzi, founder of the Content Marketing Institute. Your content needs to be helpful to get people to engage with it, and you need to provide a lot of it, as well.

The need for all this content has put a strain on a marketer's day and made distribution of content a massive problem. Marketing automation helps to solve a lot of this content problem by giving marketers an automated way to distribute their content and by opening up more time in their day to create more content instead of managing a database. The need for content isn't going away. Content is only getting more important, which means that the problem of distributing content, and following up with people after they have engaged with your content, is only getting harder as well. Marketing automation makes content distribution and follow-up very easy.

With the new release of Google's Hummingbird, the content imperative has been driven to a new level. *Hummingbird* is the latest release on the Google algorithm for sorting search engine results. It now puts more emphasis on content, helping people answer questions rather than just supplying keyword matches. Most marketers are creating many forms of content. Here are just a few of the many types of content you should be considering:

- ✔ Webinars
- ✔ Videos
- ✔ Infographics
- ✔ White papers
- ✔ Research reports
- ✔ Surveys
- ✔ ROI calculators
- ✔ How-to guides
- ✔ Buyers' guides
- ✔ Ebooks
- ✔ Blog posts
- ✔ Newsletters

Prospects are searching for answers

People are beginning their research process on Google. Many marketers have turned to search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine marketing (SEM) to capitalize on these searches and help drive more leads into their pipeline.

SEO and SEM refer to the practices of optimizing your website for search engines. *SEO* refers to the natural way you rank in these searches, and *SEM* refers to the paid listing in these searches. Figure 1-1 shows the difference between a natural (SEO) listing in a search result and a paid (SEM) listing in the same search.

If you ever want to think about how big SEO and SEM are, just look at the profits from the largest SEM provider, Google AdWords. Google AdWords made Google more than $42 billion in profits last year. This profit was made on the 1.2 trillion searches preformed on Google in 2012.

Search marketing likely is not new to you; however, being able to prove the ROI on search engine marketing may be. Closed-loop reporting on any marketing channel, including SEO and SEM marketing, is one of the larger benefits of marketing automation.
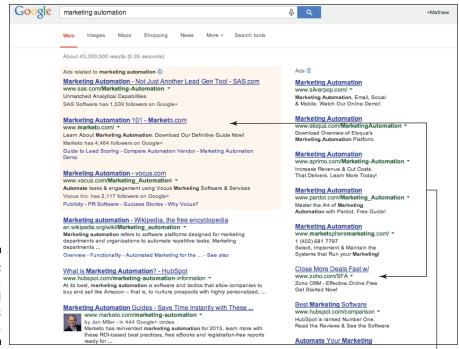

Figure 1-1: SEO is a natural ranking; SEM is paid.

Paid search sections

Consumers are engaging over a life cycle

The concept of the buyer's life cycle is nothing new. It has been written about for years, and even implemented in just about every organization's sales department. I imagine that your sales team has opportunity stages during which salespeople talk differently to a buyer and have different goals to meet. This same thinking has not made its way to the marketing side of the house because there used to be no way to track a buyer's life cycle before that buyer was in the hands of the sales team. Marketing automation has changed this situation with lead tracking.

Consider how a buyer purchases things. This becomes the basis of all modern buyer theory and marketing theory. Dissecting how a buyer buys tells you where to market, what message to use, and what your next marketing move should be. When you do the research, you'll find out a few key things about the modern buyer, such as the following:

- ✔ **93 percent of all buying journeys begin online.** *Search Engine Journal* states that 93 percent of all buying cycles begin with a search. This may be a search on Google, Bing, Yahoo!, or other search engines.

- ✔ **Buyers don't want to talk to you right away.** Buyers searching online don't want to talk to a person right away. They prefer to gather information and then talk to the companies they feel are the best to talk to. This is why content marketing and online marketing have become so important.

- ✔ **Buyers are hypereducated.** The amount of information we are putting online has educated consumers on a completely new level. Buyers now hold the power of the sales process in their hands. They can read every tweet and review and find out all the pros and cons of your solution before they talk to you.

- ✔ **Buyers are hypersensitive.** With more than 294 billion e-mails sent every day, buyers are not engaging with e-mails or content unless it is 100 percent relevant to them. This is another reason that automated marketing has increased companies' bottom lines. By tracking leads and automating communications, companies can now get relevant with every communication they have.

- ✔ **Buyers go back to Google 2–3 times.** The buyer's life cycle was proved in a study I conducted in 2012 and published in an article on CLickz.com. The study found that buyers go back to search engines 2–3 times before they want to engage with sales and enter the sales cycle.

The concept of a buyer's journey helps marketers to be relevant with their communications. Marketing automation is the tool being used to stay relevant over the buyer's journey and the sales cycle. Understanding the fact that there *is* a journey is the first step in tracking where someone is in his or her journey. That tracking takes place through marketing automation.

Everyone is socializing online

Social media dominated online marketing over the past few years. Figure 1-2 shows the rise of social media after the rise of SEO and just before the rise of mobile. Social media has taken on a new meaning in the past few years. Social has quickly become known as anything online.

Consumers and businesses are getting more social every day. Two years ago, you may not have even heard of Twitter. In 2013, Twitter had an estimated user base of 215 million active users who send more than 400 million tweets per day, and it has become a mainstay in the social world. Other businesses are learning the power of Facebook and LinkedIn for business. With the rise of social media and social platforms, many companies are finding strong uses for social media.

Social media was designed to facilitate communications and has turned into a distribution channel with a massive reach. Authors such as Jeff Rohrs, author of *Audience* (John Wiley & Sons, 2014), speaks about the need for companies to build their own audiences on social media. This is a complete change from just a few years ago when many companies would buy audiences through mass media.

Figure 1-2: The rise of social media is a recent trend, preceded by SEO and mobile.

The main challenges of social media marketing are managing the massive level of communications, and proving the value of your efforts. Marketing automation has been the driving force for many companies to prove the value of social media by giving companies the ability to keep a consistent message across channels, tie social activity to actual revenue generated, and easily manage the multitude of social activities through automated programs.

Marketing in the ultra-connected world

Mobile doesn't really change marketing all that much. Before you dismiss that idea, hear me out. Mobile is just a device. Getting access to someone via mobile was a challenge in previous years. This is not the case now, with 42 percent of all email being opened on a mobile device and the large majority of social media being controlled from a mobile device.

If you market internationally, consider that more people have cell phones than have electricity or access to clean drinking water. If you look at the world this way, it's easy to see why mobile will soon be the number-one device your content is being read on, rather than being a different channel that you have to master.

The original idea for mobile marketing was to have an app because it gave you the ability to reach someone 24/7, with relevant messages to drive engagement. This is a great idea and works for many companies, but for many others, an app strategy is not a good idea. It's very hard to work your way onto a person's phone and keep that person engaging with your app if you're not pushing content to it constantly, but it is much easier to just send an email that gets read on the smartphone.

So instead of creating an app, you should try to figure out how to get content into people's hands 24/7 in the most relevant way possible. Marketing automation allows you to turn people's Inbox into your "app" that can push the correct content at the correct time and have it reach people wherever they are in the world.

Just think of it as having automated emails being opened on a different-sized computer. Speaking of the iPhone, Steve Jobs said something to the effect of, "This isn't a phone; it's a computer that can make phone calls." Think of your mobile strategy in the same light. Consumers are using their phones as devices to access your content, speak with you, or learn more about you. Marketing automation, through its ability to track every marketing interaction, can help you keep up with your prospects and then automate the correct message at the correct time, helping you to reach your consumers 24/7 with relevant content. This is the real goal of a mobile strategy, and it's accomplished much easier with marketing automation than with an app strategy.