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Marketing Cloud

Five Keys to Successful Automated Marketing

How to Crack the **B2B Customer Code**

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Find the Best B2B Prospects—and Convert Them Into Loyal Customers

In the past, B2B transactions occurred in face-to-face meetings as a sales professional worked a product demo, business luncheon, or boardroom presentation to influence a customer – and close the deal. Today, however, B2B stakeholders perform much of their product and service research online. In fact, 93 percent of B2B buying starts with online searching, according to a **Pinpoint Market Research study**. This research occurs long before a customer engages with sales.

As your prospects research and evaluate your offerings, they leave behind valuable clues to their intent. Understanding these clues – cracking the code – can help you tailor your messages to them, thereby providing them a more tailored, relevant experience. As a result, business-savvy marketing and sales departments have embraced marketing automation platforms, so their respective teams can work together on one common platform, reach B2B customers online, and drive revenue.

Marketing automation platforms automate repetitive manual tasks for email campaigns, web forms, and landing pages, thereby freeing your marketing team to be more efficient, productive, and strategic. Equally important, marketing automation can align marketing

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and sales teams with vital revenue-producing tasks such as:

• Generating, nurturing, and scoring sales leads

• Improving customer loyalty and long-term engagement

• Cross-selling and upselling

• Measuring marketing ROI

As B2B buying has moved online, marketing automation has become a must-have technology for marketing and sales. Now they can reach customers wherever they are via email, targeted ads, social media platforms, and a company website – and deliver a contextual and tailored message to the right customer, in the right place, at the right time.

The companies that embrace automated marketing often enjoy increased revenue and decreased marketing costs. This is because marketing automation enables companies to automatically reach customers and prospects across multiple channels and cost-effectively target them with context-appropriate and personalized messages. Indeed, many B2B marketing professionals say marketing automation is critical to their company's long-term business success.

93%

of B2B buying starts with online searching.

Source: Pinpoint Market Research
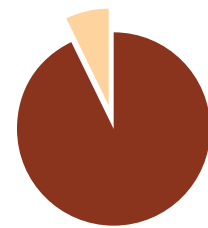
Deciphering the B2B Customer Code

HOW MARKETING AUTOMATION PROVIDES B2B COMPANIES WITH A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

When a user visits your website and spends several minutes watching a video about a product, it's important to understand the identity of the visitor and their intent. Is this visitor a college intern conducting market research? A midlevel manager who's heard about the features of a competing product? Or a senior executive who is poised to pull the trigger on a large purchase?

Marketing automation platforms collect, analyze, and decipher various online clues to help paint a more accurate picture of your customer and their intent. Identifiers like cookies, device IDs, and other digital tools establish the identity of an online visitor. An accurate visitor profile is then created with information from other data sources, such as a job title.

A marketing automation platform also provides insights based on a prospect's behavior – such as the amount of time a person lingered on a product landing page, what posts a person read during their second visit to the company's blog in three days, or the fact that a visitor started to sign up for a webinar but didn't complete the web form.

Once the marketing automation platform has pinpointed where the prospect lies in their customer journey – whether the prospect is at the top of the sales funnel doing primary research, at the bottom of the funnel making product comparisons, or somewhere in between – marketing and sales can target the prospect with context-appropriate, personalized messages and offers.

Using a marketing automation platform to crack these B2B customer codes will give you a significant competitive advantage over your peers who don't. Some of the top reasons for using a marketing automation platform are:
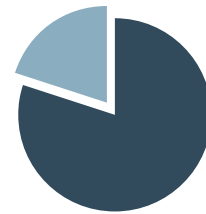
- Generating higher-quality leads

- Increasing revenue

- Aligning sales and marketing

Companies that can accurately decipher a B2B customer code are on the path to increased lead conversion rates, shortened sales cycles and improved win rates.

80%

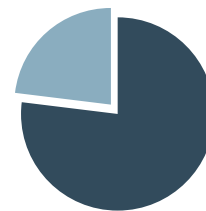**of marketing automation users see an increase in the number of sales leads.**
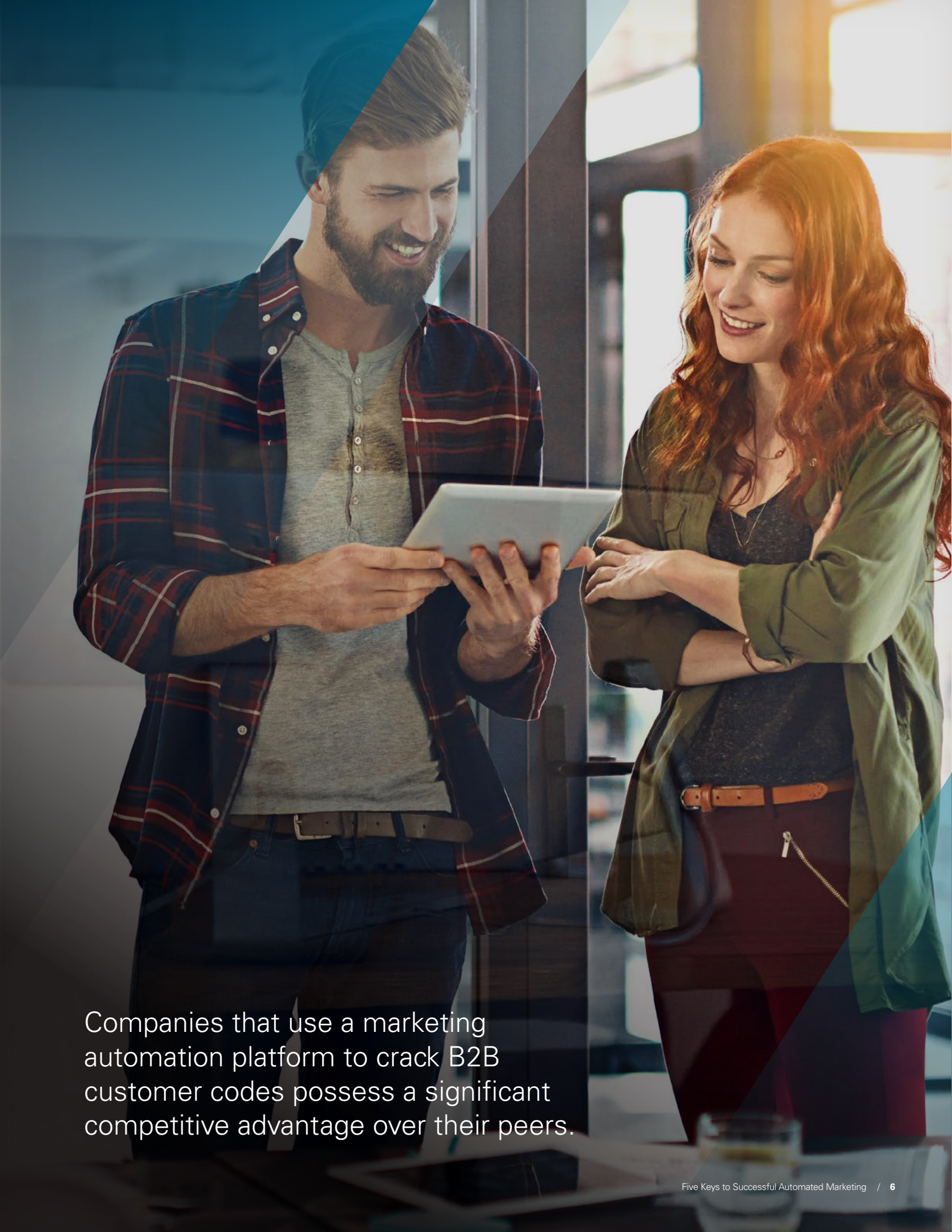
Source: VentureBeat

77%

of marketing automation users see an increase in conversions.

Source: VentureBeat

Companies that use a marketing automation platform to crack B2B customer codes possess a significant competitive advantage over their peers.

A marketing automation platform enables a company to aggregate relevant profile data from various online and offline sources to create a complete view of customers.

Five Keys to Successful Online Marketing

TRANSFORMING MARKETING VISION INTO BUSINESS REALITY

A marketing automation platform provides B2B companies with the technological foundation needed to achieve five key goals of effective online marketing:

1. KNOW YOUR CUSTOMERS.

Unlike any other marketing solution, marketing automation enables a company to aggregate relevant profile data from various online and offline sources to create a complete view of customers. In addition to your own proprietary customer data, you can add data from third-party vendors and other outside sources, including information about a company's demographics, organization, and buying patterns. And you can integrate multiple marketing channels – such as email, mobile, and web – into a single marketing system to create comprehensive customer profiles.

An integrated view of your customers' data helps you target them with appropriate and personalized messages. The payoff? Companies that recognize their customers and continually nurture them with marketing automation see a significant increase in qualified leads.

2. CRACK THE CODE ON CUSTOMER JOURNEYS.

Marketing automation's robust tracking and analytics capabilities help marketing and sales understand a prospect's online behavior – such as the stage of the sales funnel the prospect is located in – with precision. This enables you to deliver the right marketing message or sale offer at the optimal time.

A marketing automation platform can also alert you in real time when a specific customer visits your website. This allows you to provide personalized content immediately after that customer's visit, increasing the odds of a sale. Moreover, your ability to deliver relevant marketing collateral demonstrates value and helps advance the customer through the sales cycle.

3. PROVIDE INFORMED, PERSONALIZED EXPERIENCES.

Customers take different routes to purchasing a product or service. As they progress along their path, their information needs and behavior change.

A prospect who is at the consideration stage may download a white paper about industry trends. Further down the sales funnel, a prospect may review technical specifications and an implementation guide. Marketing automation will allow you to adapt your customer outreach with informed, personalized messages that meet the prospect's needs at each stage, thereby advancing them to the next stage in the sales funnel.

Suppose you're hosting a conference in Las Vegas. Your target demographic is senior risk management executives in the Midwest. The prospects who fit the description will receive a personalized email invitation.

The executives who open your email will receive precise, targeted messages based on whether they accept, reject, or ignore your invitation. The ones who accept will receive a confirmation email and, on the day of the conference, a reminder email or text message. And at, or soon after, the conference, a salesperson will follow up with the executives.

The executives who decline the invitation will receive a "We hope to see you next time" email and a "This is what you missed" email after the conference. As for the executives who ignored the email invitation, they will see sponsored ads on Facebook, LinkedIn, and elsewhere for a designated period of time until they accept or decline the invitation.

This ability to provide informed, personalized messages is why B2B marketers use marketing automation for everything from scoring leads to automating lead flow and data integration to sending highly targeted nurture emails.

4. REACH YOUR CUSTOMERS EVERYWHERE.

Marketing automation empowers marketing and sales to execute targeted, personalized experiences across multiple channels, including email, direct mail, phone campaigns, mobile, social media, and online initiatives.

By reaching customers and prospects everywhere, you can provide them with sales-relevant insights and content to help close deals faster. And as mentioned earlier, marketing automation lets you learn about a customer's online activity in real time.

The more targeted, personalized content your customers receive, the more time they're likely to devote to exploring your website. So you should consider every possible touchpoint and interaction – and maximize the impact of each.
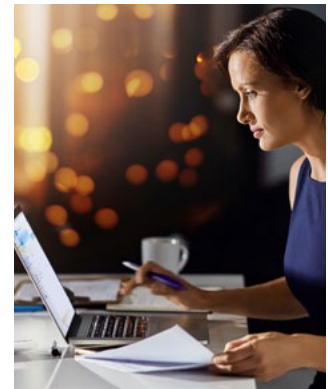
5. DRIVE REVENUE AND MARKETING ROI.

CMOs at top-performing companies say their most compelling reason for using marketing automation is to increase revenue. This is hardly surprising given marketing automation's ability to identify the best sales leads and nurture them through the sales funnel until they are ready to pull the trigger on a deal.

One of the chief ways marketing automation decreases marketing costs, and thereby improves ROI, is through better time management.

Time is one of an employee's most precious resources. With marketing automation, marketers can spend their time on important initiatives, such as finding the best prospects, not manually sifting through sales leads or juggling multiple marketing systems. Many users of marketing automation say its biggest benefit is its ability to save time.

All told, marketing automation users often realize a substantial increase in sales productivity and a substantial reduction in marketing overhead.

The ability to provide informed, personalized messages is why B2B marketers use marketing automation for everything from scoring leads to automating lead flow and data integration to sending highly targeted nurture emails.

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How Oracle Eloqua Cracks the B2B Customer Code

Oracle Eloqua helps marketers manage the entire customer journey. You can leverage the industry's richest data set in tandem with adaptive marketing tools developed for your specific needs. The result: Prospects and customers receive relevant, consistent, and contextual experiences across multiple channels.

One B2B company that has benefited from its use of Oracle Eloqua is Invacare Australia, a health care equipment provider. With Oracle Eloqua, Invacare Australia switched from email blast campaigns to targeted, personalized marketing, resulting in a 100 percent increase in qualified marketing leads passed to sales. And its email open rate for customer communications has increased to 25 percent, which is twice the industry average.

ORACLE ELOQUA EMPOWERS B2B COMPANIES TO:

1. TARGET THE RIGHT CUSTOMERS AT THE RIGHT TIME.

Oracle Eloqua enables marketers to present personalized campaigns across email, display search, web, video, and mobile. And its lead and campaign management tools ensure that you can deliver the right messages to the right customer at the right time.

As part of the Oracle Marketing Cloud, Oracle Eloqua boasts a best-in-class partner ecosystem that delivers a diverse portfolio of innovative and fully integrated marketing technologies.

In addition to its targeted, personalized campaigns, Oracle Eloqua will help you generate new sales leads. This is increasingly important, as **IDC predicts** that the inventory of names in marketing databases will decrease by 40 percent by 2019.

And you can extend your global reach as Oracle Eloqua is now integrated with WeChat, China's most popular messaging platform. B2B companies can use WeChat activity data for their cross-channel campaigns.

2. DELIVER INTELLIGENT, PERSONALIZED MARKETING.

To deliver targeted, personalized marketing, Oracle Eloqua lets you strategically filter and segment customers based on their attributes, behavior, and geography. It collects and analyzes different profile data, customer behavior data, and third-party data so you'll have a single comprehensive view of each customer.

As part of the Oracle Marketing Cloud, Oracle Eloqua boasts a best-in-class partner ecosystem that delivers a diverse portfolio of innovative and fully integrated marketing technologies. This centralized interface allows you to organize and assess your campaigns across paid, owned, and earned channels to drive greater revenue.

3. UNDERSTAND A CUSTOMER'S REAL INTENT.

Thanks to Oracle Marketing Cloud, Oracle Eloqua has access to the industry's richest data set, so it can take unknown customer profiles and transform them into real-life prospects. It can also add information from third-party data sources and use identity resolution technology to create accurate and fully detailed customer profiles. This comprehensive customer profile, plus a unified view of a customer's behavior across email, social media, and other channels, allows you to understand a customer's intentions like never before.

4. MEASURE MARKETING IMPACT.

Oracle Eloqua helps CMOs and their teams better analyze and report various customer metrics. This is especially important since **IDC predicts** 60 percent of B2B CMOs will soon be made accountable for at least one customer-oriented metric – such as loyalty, advocacy, or quality – as companies see customer centricity as core to the marketing mission.

Use Oracle Eloqua's intuitive digital whiteboard to design multichannel campaigns and visualize every step in the campaign, ensuring that your customer messaging is precise. Also, Oracle Eloqua's lead and campaign management tools provide you with immediate reporting and insights so you can improve your marketing efficiency.

5. ALIGN MARKETING AND SALES FOR GREATER ROI.

Oracle Eloqua unifies various sources of intelligence about a buyer, such as email opens, web activity, social activity, and form submissions to create a comprehensive buyer profile that helps sales engage with the buyer about his or her specific interests or concerns.

Collaboration between marketing and sales is enhanced as Oracle Eloqua pulls together all relevant communications, highlighting the interests and sales funnel status of a buyer and the buyer's multichannel activities in the sales cycle. This and other information can be easily shared between marketing and sales – and is readily available in the customer relationship management system.
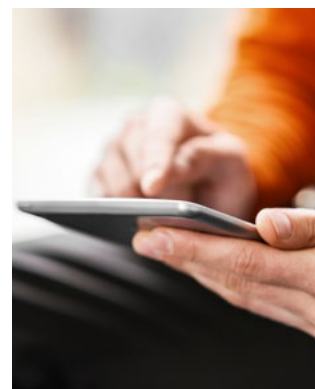
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Conclusion

TARGET CUSTOMERS AT EVERY STAGE OF THE FUNNEL

B2B customers have moved much of their product research online and usually contact a company late in the sales cycle. Marketing automation helps marketing and sales work together to reach customers at every stage of the sales funnel with targeted, personalized messages. Marketing automation also automates many of the manual, repetitive tasks pertaining to customer data, email campaigns, and social media, thereby enabling you to devote your time and energy to more rewarding strategic initiatives.

Takeaways

1. B2B customers conduct **93 percent** of their buying research online before contacting a company.

2. Marketing automation platforms can help you understand the intent of customers and reach them with **targeted, personalized messages**.

3. Marketing automation allows you to provide customers and prospects with contextually informed and personalized messages in real time, **increasing the odds of a sale**.

4. Marketing automation enables B2B companies to deliver a **comprehensive customer experience** from the first interaction to the closing sale.

5. Marketing automation empowers marketing to devote their time and energy to important **strategic initiatives**, not redundant manual tasks.

6. B2B marketing professionals almost universally agree that automated marketing is critical to **long-term business success**.

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ABOUT ORACLE MARKETING CLOUD

B2B and B2C marketers use Oracle Marketing Cloud, an integrated portfolio of best-in-class applications, to drive sales, brand, and customer loyalty. Oracle Marketing Cloud offers the industry's richest data sets and most adaptive intelligence so marketers can deliver irresistible, consistent, and connected experiences to customers wherever they are and however they choose to engage.

Visit **oracle.com/marketingcloud**.

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