



CASE STUDY

Avanade's integrated digital marketing strategy drives a 66% lead conversion rate

Automation and insights deliver personalized experiences

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Businesses spend a great deal of time, money and effort telling clients about their products and services. But how do they know if their marketing investment pays off? For Avanade, like many businesses, the impact was more or less a guessing game. Not anymore. The launch of Avanade's marketing effectiveness strategy and automation system brought extensive capabilities, innovative approaches, new insights, personalized experiences and better alignment with sales. Now there's no question of the impact of intelligent, targeted client interactions in delivering tangible business results.

"An effective digital marketing strategy is critical to business success, and today, that entails creating a seamless, engaging client experience across an expanding digital landscape," said Stella Goulet, Avanade's chief marketing officer.

Business situation: Time for mature digital marketing

Amber Hall, manager of digital marketing automation at Avanade, remembers when the company launched its new marketing vision and strategy. The plan was to focus on fewer things in order to have greater impact, while improving the client experience, integrating multiple touch points and making our marketing team more effective. This included moving away from multiple ad hoc, manually executed marketing campaigns in favor of fewer, more robust campaigns with a more centralized, standardized management approach.

Improving reporting was also a goal. At the time, marketing teams had limited factual data to demonstrate the effectiveness of their campaigns. And with limited reporting, it was difficult to effectively track and manage leads.

Achieving these goals would require a new strategy, tools, technology and processes. It would be a massive undertaking. Avanade first needed to get its marketers from across the globe on the same page as well as aligned with the company's business leaders.

The job for Hall and the digital marketing automation team was to help ensure a smooth integration. "It was a challenge starting from scratch," she said. But Avanade's integrated marketing solution would prove both powerful and innovative in driving successful sales and marketing campaigns.

Solution: An integrated, multichannel campaign execution and lead management platform

The premise for the solution was recognizing that clients don't just want information and content from companies; they also want personalized, relevant experiences. At the same time, employees across the enterprise need the right tools, technology and insights to deliver these great experiences.

The solution was built using Marketo, Sitecore and Microsoft Dynamics 365. Critical success factors involved (1) identifying the right audience for specific content and (2) putting rules in place to target and personalize interactions. The two main components of this initiative include:

- Marketing automation – Our integrated, multichannel execution and lead management platform is the foundation of our engagement and marketing program, which includes lead scoring and progression. Features include a content engagement framework, the ability to nurture active leads with relevant content, country and global workspaces, automated lead lifecycle workflows, standardized templates and central webinar integration.

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- Analytics and Insights for Marketing – AIM is a one-stop-shop for all of the company's marketing data and analytics needs, including Microsoft Power BI-based dashboards, web analytics and social listening. Also, all form data is fully integrated into Marketo and includes backend processing and logic. Tracking codes are present on every one of the company's website pages, and over 200 web pages contain a Marketo form to capture conversions, engagement, inquiries and more.

The solution integrates all of the company's marketing systems and technologies, including paid search, SEO, segmentation and lead enrichment, content and collaboration tools. This enhanced integrated environment gives Avanade the ability to engage with its existing and potential clients in the most meaningful and relevant manner, whether it's through emails, events or targeted advertising.

"We have a stronger and continually evolving infrastructure now and better alignment between marketing and sales," said Hall, who also described how the features and functionality make her job easier and prevent delays. With manual processes and campaign management, she could only execute five to six activities on any given day. Now she can execute up to 20 activities a day. This includes putting all the components in place; for example, layout, imagery and audience segmentation. "The continued enhancements made in Marketo, including our campaign processes, have increased productivity and decreased man hours by 20% compared to when we first started," Hall added.

Automation also reduces some of the legwork for field marketers, who now have time and resources for strategic engagement with existing and potential clients. "All we have to do is set up our campaign parameters and then let the magic happen," said Kelly Heywood, an Avanade field marketer.

Results: A win-win for marketing and sales

Our marketing and sales teams are now equipped with the tools and insights needed to deliver personalized, action-oriented experiences for clients at every touch point, driving consistency and ongoing value. The system allows us to engage with prospects and clients in more creative, innovative ways, providing them with a more relevant and positive experience. And it allows us to continue to improve our marketing effectiveness.

"If we didn't have a platform like Marketo, we'd continue to 'shoot in the wild' with our content, not being able to capture interesting moments, group those people into specific campaigns and continue to nurture them in a more effective manner," said one Avanade field marketer.

Avanade's new marketing approach provides both qualitative and quantitative benefits:

- A comprehensive content engagement framework that ensures we communicate relevant content and messaging to the right audiences. In the first three months with the new solution, we saw a 72% improvement in click-throughs for website visitors targeted with industry-specific content.
- Enriched client experiences that reduce search times and irrelevant or repetitive communications to drive client engagement at scale.
- Better alignment and cross-team collaboration now that marketing can provide sales teams with high-value marketing-qualified leads (MQLs) and insights. In the past year alone, the MQLs generated on the company website's "Contact Us" page increased over 28%. Sales teams can have more meaningful conversations when they know what information clients viewed and how they responded to various marketing campaigns.

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- A 53% reduction in end-to-end manual processes and content loading thanks to automated translations and other internal efficiencies resulting from standardized templates and user-friendly campaign frameworks.
- A clear demonstration of marketing's influence on the company's business based on a 66% conversion rate of marketing-qualified leads to sales-accepted leads. In the past year, sales influenced from client interactions on Avanade's website increased more than 300%.

Avanade is continually evolving and optimizing its marketing environment and extending that expertise to our clients. For example, we recently expanded our partnership with Adobe (Marketo's parent company) to create a more seamless, comprehensive client view and brand experience by connecting Adobe Experience and Marketing Clouds with Microsoft Azure and Dynamics 365. By sharing relevant data across the enterprise, all teams can deliver a consistent, personalized experience to clients.

"Looking back from when we initially deployed our integrated campaign execution and lead management environment to where we are now in our digital transformation journey, we've progressed so far," said Dan Stevens, senior director of Avanade's Global Demand Center. "This wouldn't have been possible without the close collaboration and partnership between marketing and IT. What makes this so worthwhile is our ability to share our expertise and experiences with our clients so that they too can realize similar results and benefits."

Our continued evolution is helping us keep pace and supports our goal to be a best-practice marketing organization. "And that aligns to Avanade's vision to be a leading digital innovator," said Goulet.

About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital and cloud services, business solutions and design-led experiences on the Microsoft ecosystem. Our professionals bring bold, fresh thinking combined with technology, business and industry expertise to help make a human impact on our clients, their customers and their employees. We are the power behind the Accenture Microsoft Business Group, helping companies to engage customers, empower employees, optimize operations and transform products, leveraging the Microsoft platform. Avanade has 36,000 professionals in 24 countries, bringing clients our best thinking through a collaborative culture that honors diversity and reflects the communities in which we operate. Majority owned by Accenture, Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation. Learn more at www.avanade.com

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