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Brand and performance: **Strange bedfellows?**



2021

Many organisations silo their advertising and communications into two camps, brand marketing and performance marketing.

Brand marketing, as it says on the tin, is all about awareness and refers to marketing that expresses who your business is for, what it is about etc. Whereas performance marketing lives and dies by key metrics such as transactions, conversions, sign ups, accounts generated etc. While disparate in their objectives, it does not follow that they should be disjointed and siloed off to separate teams. The balance between the two must be finely tuned and this requires cross collaboration and a recognition of the synergies that exist between them. This comes after a predominant focus on marketing and sales, which in the past have driven businesses in somewhat the wrong direction.

The changing digital landscape has come with unparalleled ways to track activity. Sophisticated tracking software has meant performance analytics been elevated to the forefront. Especially D2C brands that constantly require new sign-ups and accounts opened to develop. Generating leads is an important function of the marketing arm but an over insistence on performance marketing can leave website pages looking mechanical and overly sales orientated.



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A constant barrage of “Click here to buy” can be overwhelming and turn off potential prospects. This is an anathema to many consumers who desire to buy into the brand’s vision and values before they decide to purchase.



On the other extreme, there are companies that are desperate not to convey a performance-based approach that they overload the consumer with their brand aesthetics. This mistake is repeated ad nauseum in the luxury item space. Websites are impossible to navigate because of the mass of superfluous content. This comes at the expense of a complete disregard for Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and driving organic traffic. The quest for a non-invasive consumer connection, which is purely about communicating emotions, is only fruitful if it will, at some point, translate into revenue. In other words, without availing yourself of the tools of digital marketing (e.g., PPC, programmatic, social media and push notifications) it is unlikely prospects will ever land a brand's website in the first place. Companies tend to overlook some of the finer details when approaching their marketing strategy. A complete investigation into partners and other potential tools are essential when formulating a campaign – every user needs to be treated in a bespoke way.

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For example, a digital campaign for a certain device will need the correct parameters and messaging to have a lasting effect on the individual. Many native campaigns do not fit the page with writing falling off the end of the device. This is a brand marketing disaster, and will no doubt hinder performance marketing.



Many companies see brand and performance marketing as a funnel to increase sales, as shown in Figure 1.

Unlike many organisations who have distinct roles and or separate departments for these two means to increase sales. We at Metrix Data Science do not believe that they should be considered separate roles within a business. With brand marketing having minimal performance indicators, and performance marketing being all about measurement in most organisations, we prefer to step back and look at the whole picture.

Figure 1: How it looks in most organisations



Figure 2: The brand performance continuum.

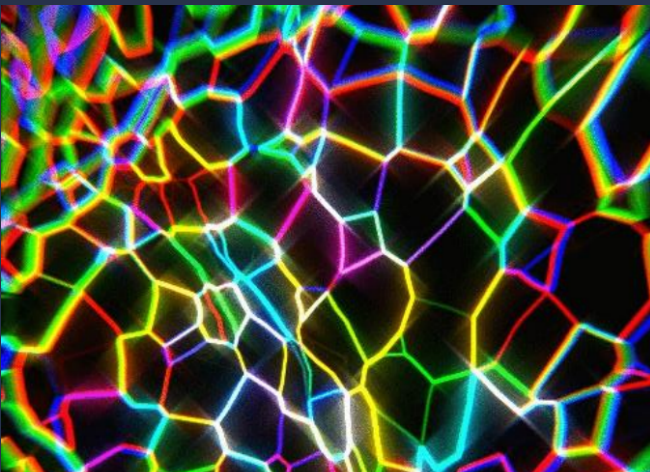



Figure 2 is our take on how brand and performance should work as an intermeshed network that comes together in a holistic manner to drive sales, somewhat like the time space continuum. Both use each other to optimise sales, with scientific measurements throughout (it is not called Data Science for nothing!).

The take home is to devote an adequate number of resources to top and bottom funnel activity. Focusing too heavily on brand activity that is good for top funnel will ultimately mean low conversion rates if there is no concerted effort to sell a product or service. Trying to by-pass this stage and focus on the bottom of the funnel will limit to lifetime value of your customers. It may be a successful short-term strategy to gain leads/customers, but such efforts are likely to leave the brand in a precarious position when tastes change, and the marketplace evolves.

A hand holding a pink highlighter is positioned over a desk. To the left, a smartphone displays its home screen with various app icons. In the background, a whiteboard is covered with handwritten notes, diagrams, and lists. The text on the whiteboard includes 'WHEEL', 'LISTS', and 'Desk / L...'. The overall scene suggests a creative or strategic planning environment.

There needs to be a meeting of minds for a cohesive marketing strategy. Brand marketers need to appreciate the value of measuring successes and performance marketers must understand that each piece of communication is an opportunity to connect with a consumer emotionally. Consumers need to be treated as individuals – everyone is different in how they react to marketing messages. Most businesses overlook this intricate difference. Take a mass marketing event like a huge email broadcast. How do we understand the success of this event? Brand marketers might focus on metrics like revenue generated, leads, newsletter sign ups etc. While undoubtedly important, it only tells one side of the story. There must also be a focus on how effective the brand in was conveying a message about themselves. This can be investigated by looking at traffic to the website/social media and dwell time on different pages. Successfully communicating brand values will translate into people clicking on website pages which talk about values or reading white papers which describe work that is important to the brand. This will inevitably materialise into a seamless process, to increase efficiency and prevent marketing teams going back to the drawing board to waste valuable time that can result in overall performance downfall.

Both different aspects need due care and attention. They also need to build symbiotically on each other. The sweet spot is to implement the principles of both brand and performance marketing across all marketing channels and have clear goals regarding how to measure success in each case. The synergy of the two approaches requires a clear definition of what values you have as a brand and a unified strategic direction which ties in different parts of the organisation