



How  
does your  
**martech**  
stack up?



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How does your martech stack up?

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CMOs must focus  
on **improving**  
**research**, training  
and accountability  
to increase **martech**  
**investment** and  
effectiveness.”

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- Daniel Rawles of Antiblanks.



# Marketers are utilising just **42% of their martech's** existing capabilities.

- According to Gartner's October 2022 survey

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This is despite the fact that CMOs in the same survey reportedly allocate nearly a quarter of their entire budget to marketing technology.

As a CMO, you know that technology is critical to creating an outstanding customer experience. From social commerce and the metaverse to marketing automation and engagement platforms: the marketing technology (martech) space is growing fast, creating an ever-changing software menu to tempt the marketing budget. All this software is advertised as being customisable and easy to use. So why aren't we using it properly?

## **We will help you understand:**

1. Why marketers are struggling to use their techstacks
2. Signs you need to update your stack - or investigate new technology
3. The fundamentals of a strong martech stack
4. How to audit your martech stack
5. How can CMOs future-proof their stack to integrate future capabilities?
6. Investing in success: top martech tips for CMOs



## Martech and the CMO

As CMOs, we have our work cut out. Yes, we have more autonomy, but with that power comes responsibility. To communicate our brand effectively, our teams need to leverage technology as seamlessly as possible, connecting value-adding data points to gain insight and traction.

For many reasons, which we'll delve into, this isn't easy. If any of these sound familiar, then you are not alone:

**"There's no point learning something new as it will be dropped tomorrow."**

**"It's a good platform but I don't have time to explore its full potential."**

**"I used the software for what I needed at the time, but our needs have changed."**

**"The platform isn't easy to use so I do a lot of manual work between solutions."**



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Quite simply, businesses just don't do enough research to understand what they really need and often buy products too soon. This results in solutions that either don't match the type and size of their business and/or lack alignment with any business process or work flow.



# Why are marketers struggling to use their martech stacks?

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**1. Lack of time to fully train staff:** the biggest culprit. Companies buy technology as a way to fix a problem but rarely invest enough time in managing the tools to give them the ROI they expect.

**2. Lack of ownership:** not holding people accountable for the onboarding and use of the applications they buy.

**3. Lack of understanding:** this happens when businesses didn't compare other products, didn't test enough on their shortlist and/or bought a product purely on features or price – only to find everyone dislikes the UI or it doesn't integrate well with other technologies.

## What are the signs that you need to update your stack?

**1. Competition:** you notice your competitors doing things which seem to work for them – so you need to stay on top of what they are doing and listen to how the market responds to new technologies.

**2. Inefficiency:** if any of the following tasks is carried out manually then it is a good candidate for automation:

- Building email lists
- Scheduling campaigns
- Writing content for different social platforms

- Data segmentation

- Managing content and schedules across multiple platforms and channels transferring leads between marketing and CRM.

**3. A lack of understanding** about who your customers are, and the desire to deliver a personalised experience, especially at scale when you have a mass consumer product or a global market product.

**4. Data governance and security** – building and maintaining trust with customers is essential, especially when collating and managing the data you need to deliver a personalised experience. Tech should make data management and control an easy, cost effective process, yet this isn't always the case.

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## “what we need, and why we need it.”

- Be ruthless





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## What are the fundamentals of a strong martech stack?

**First**, you need to understand what journey you want to deliver. Then you can think about the data you need to capture and process to make it happen. Ignore technologies or products at this stage. Think instead about: “what we need, and why we need it.” Be ruthless.

**Next**, start to research and shortlist technologies that are a good match for your organisation’s style and size.

**Then**, sit down with your CIO or IT team and explain what you’re trying to achieve. Their buy-in will help you build the right customer experience architecture.

**Lastly**, always make sure you validate your hypothesis by implementing analytics. This will confirm whether the process and tools are working as you’d expect.



## How to carry out a martech audit

It's tempting to jump straight into fixing a specific problem without understanding the bigger picture.

Time spent mapping out the entire business is time wisely spent. This will help you understand where the high level processes are in the business, and how customers interact with them.

For example - which products do they currently interact with when they call you for a demo, fill in a form, or raise a support ticket?

Then, complete this 6-step process:

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- ☐ **Ask the finance team for a list of current tech subscriptions/renewals** for the past two years. This should catch all the tech that you are currently paying for, which renewals have been requested and anything pending.
  - ☐ **Create a simple form asking employees** which software they interact with to do their job. You can use the list from the previous step as a starting point. Make sure to ask employees to include tools they have purchased themselves.
  - ☐ **Check and amend any duplicate payments** that arise as a result of this exercise.
  - ☐ **List the functionality of each platform** and send the same survey to staff to understand how each is being currently used. This should give a utilisation score for each platform/product.
  - ☐ **Implement monitoring software** on your employees devices so you can see what tools are being used both locally and online. You will be able to see whether this activity is exposing your business to any data breaches.
  - ☐ **Consider inventory management solutions** to provide visibility of 'ghost' products - once introduced and never adopted - as well as intel about the security of applications within your stack. Yes, it's another item for the stack!





# Investing in success: top martech tips for CMOs

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**1. Start small, iterate and learn** what experience your team already has. Sometimes getting a tool everyone can get on with is the right thing to do – even if it's not the one you'd choose.

**2. Decide the primary need** the technology is meant to be used for and make sure you implement it to serve that need – don't deviate or make excuses.

**3. Talk to other companies** about what works for them. Go to events where people share their failures and successes.

**4. Take time to test** at least three solutions so you can look back and know you've done some research to make an informed purchasing decision.

**5. Talk to customer references** if possible. The supplier should provide these willingly.

**6. Give people autonomy** to own the technology and

implementation based on reaching both minor and major milestones.

**7. Work in sprints**, agree on clear objectives, and have regular check-ins.

**8. Incentivise team members** by aligning progression with simple KPIs.

**9. Leverage agency relationships** to give you support both in terms of strategic thinking and planning but also implementation and adoption.

**10. Don't outsource fully** but make sure any partners are integrated into your team for best possible results. Partners need to see the good, the bad and the ugly so they don't just give you a best practice solution which will not fit in with the reality of how your business currently operates.





## How can CMOs future-proof their stack to integrate future capabilities?

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When it comes to ROI, new AI-driven tools can help you focus on what works for your business and help you rule marketing activities which do not drive direct impact.

Whether it's machine learning, no-code development or entering the metaverse - follow these best practices and you'll be well-placed to take advantage of everything that martech providers have to offer:

Embrace a microservices architecture: having a flexible decoupled architecture will help you test multiple martech products without the need to do major integration or restructuring of your tech stack.

Incorporate gamification, viral looping and referral functionality into your digital products. Your customers are your business ambassadors so make it easy for them to refer you to their friends and colleagues.

Move away from a reliance on first party data: using machine learning platforms with deep learning algorithms creates exciting opportunities to service customers in real time. Behavioural events based on clicks and actions leave patterns, which closely align to different types of user profiles. By understanding these patterns, the platform can tailor the customer experience in real time. In essence, this new tech engine uses game theory AI algorithms to play a game of chess with each individual customer.

Want some guidance on how to get the best out of your martech? Your agency can help. Contact us to start the conversation.



### About the author

Daniel Rawles is Growth and Innovation Director for Antiblanks - a product delivery agency - where he works with an amazing team responsible for delivering tech4good products that provide positive impact on our planet and/or our lives.

Daniel also works with some cutting-edge Blockchain and AI technology products like QUIN and SENZE, providing mentoring and strategic advice around marketing and growth hacking.

A technologist at heart, Daniel loves innovation and marketing. He helps start-ups and big brands cut through the obvious and spot areas where they can innovate and try new things, connecting the dots between people and the business.

With over 20 years' experience in Digital Marketing, Daniel has had the privilege to work with amazing start-ups and major brands, from charities to retailers to technology platforms. And he's still having a blast!