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3 WAYS | THE RIGHT DATA IMPROVES CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Introduction

In the Digital Age, broader product choice and the ease of comparison-shopping has transformed the purchasing process for business buyers. Still, many marketers cling to an outdated approach in how they think about customer engagement.

The traditional sales funnel — where marketing creates a campaign, produces leads, and then simply hands off qualified leads to sales — must now make way for a continuous customer engagement approach, where marketing can connect in a deeper and more lasting manner with the buyer.

> *"B2B marketers must take responsibility for their company's engagement with the customer through most of their journey."*
>
> - Forrester[1]

To find the best approach to engage each buyer in a personalized way, marketing needs a deep understanding of the prospect or customer. This means having the "right data." So what is the right data?

To best engage potential buyers, customer data must be complete, reliable, and relevant. But in today's rapidly changing global marketplace, getting and maintaining the right data can be a challenge.

For this reason, marketers are now turning to data enrichment technology to improve management of their customer relationships. With the right data, fed into key marketing and sales systems, marketers can achieve three key engagement goals.

What is the right data?

Complete:
There are enough data fields populated to both compare potential customers and make contact with the most likely buyers.

Reliable:
The data is current and doesn't conflict with company data being used by other parts of the organization.

Relevant:
The data provided can be analyzed to target likely buyers with meaningful and engaging campaigns.

One:
Zero in on buyers.

To successfully engage potential customers both initially and throughout their buying journey, marketers rely on detailed customer data. Having the right data allows them to tailor their campaigns and tactics to better speak to the needs of customers in the specific industries and roles they want to target.

The problem is, marketers know that lead forms must be kept short so that prospects are more likely to fill them out. But answers to a few basic questions are not enough to create personalized engagement. As companies target more and more prospects, this personalization demands a reliable way to enrich the data provided on lead forms. Also, company information can change at a moment's notice.

> In fact, every 30 minutes, 240 businesses change addresses, 75 change phone numbers, 20 change CEOs, and 30 new businesses are founded.
>
> - Dun & Bradstreet[2]

Companies now face the challenge of maintaining data accuracy with their leads and contacts in this constant state of flux.

The advantage of improved automation

So how can marketers get the complete, reliable, and relevant data they need to properly divide their potential customers into meaningful segments, no matter how quickly their base is growing? Automated data enrichment tools provide and append up-to-date contact and account data from reliable third-party sources, giving marketers the details they need to create precise, targeted campaigns. They can opt for automatic updates, or choose to run reports on the accounts that are affected and decide which changes to implement.

Brainshark Divides and Conquers

Sales enablement solution provider Brainshark Inc. identified a need for better data segmentation to improve the success rate of their marketing campaigns. With a database of millions of contacts, they turned to Data.com to refresh data regularly based on both crowdsourced contact information and Dun & Bradstreet company data. They could then sort the data based on characteristics that might lead to more personalized marketing. In this way, Brainshark is able to segment what was once a cumbersome contact list into targeted marketing campaigns based on vertical, functional area, or persona. As a result, it has seen marketing qualified opportunities double and uses enriched data to close 50% more deals.

Two:
Put leads in the right hands.

One of the most important benefits of good customer data is improving marketing's ability to qualify leads and route them to the sales rep that is in the best position to connect with that potential customer.

For example, marketing can better route leads to sales if they know more about the customer, such as if the company is a subsidiary of another company where there is an existing customer relationship. That way, marketing communications and sales pitches to potential customers are more relevant, and customers feel that you understand their specific needs.

As marketing takes on a bigger role in customer engagement, they must work more closely with sales to make sure customers receive personalized and consistent messaging that reflects any existing relationship.

Follow through on the journey

Many companies are also pulling together marketing lead data, campaign materials, and sales activity in one customer relationship management (CRM) system, where the entire organization can access it. Not only does this help marketing remain involved with existing customers, but it also makes marketing-sales collaboration easier, faster, and more effective. Using this more wide-ranging information, marketing can more effectively assign leads based on where the customer is in the buying cycle.

Field Nation Steps It Up Without Staffing Up

Small and midsized businesses (SMBs) are not always in the position to address an uptick in leads by hiring more staff. But competitors aren't going to wait for you to develop leads at your own pace. So to compete with them, you must get more from the resources you already have.

Field Nation uses a combination of Pardot for marketing automation, Data.com Clean for lead enrichment, and Salesforce Sales Cloud for customer management to make this happen, bringing together its sales and marketing efforts to maintain a personalized conversation with their customers throughout their journey. With more robust and current information on leads through Data.com's enrichment capabilities, they are able to better score, prioritize, and assign leads, which adds up to better results, faster.

Through better use of customer data, the company has expanded its capabilities without adding to its 3-person marketing department, and can now deal with 100,000 inbound leads. In fact, they've managed to shorten the lead-to-close cycle from 18 months to 2 months.

"Using Pardot and Data.com allows us to punch above our weight."

- Billy Cripe, Chief Marketing Officer for Field Nation
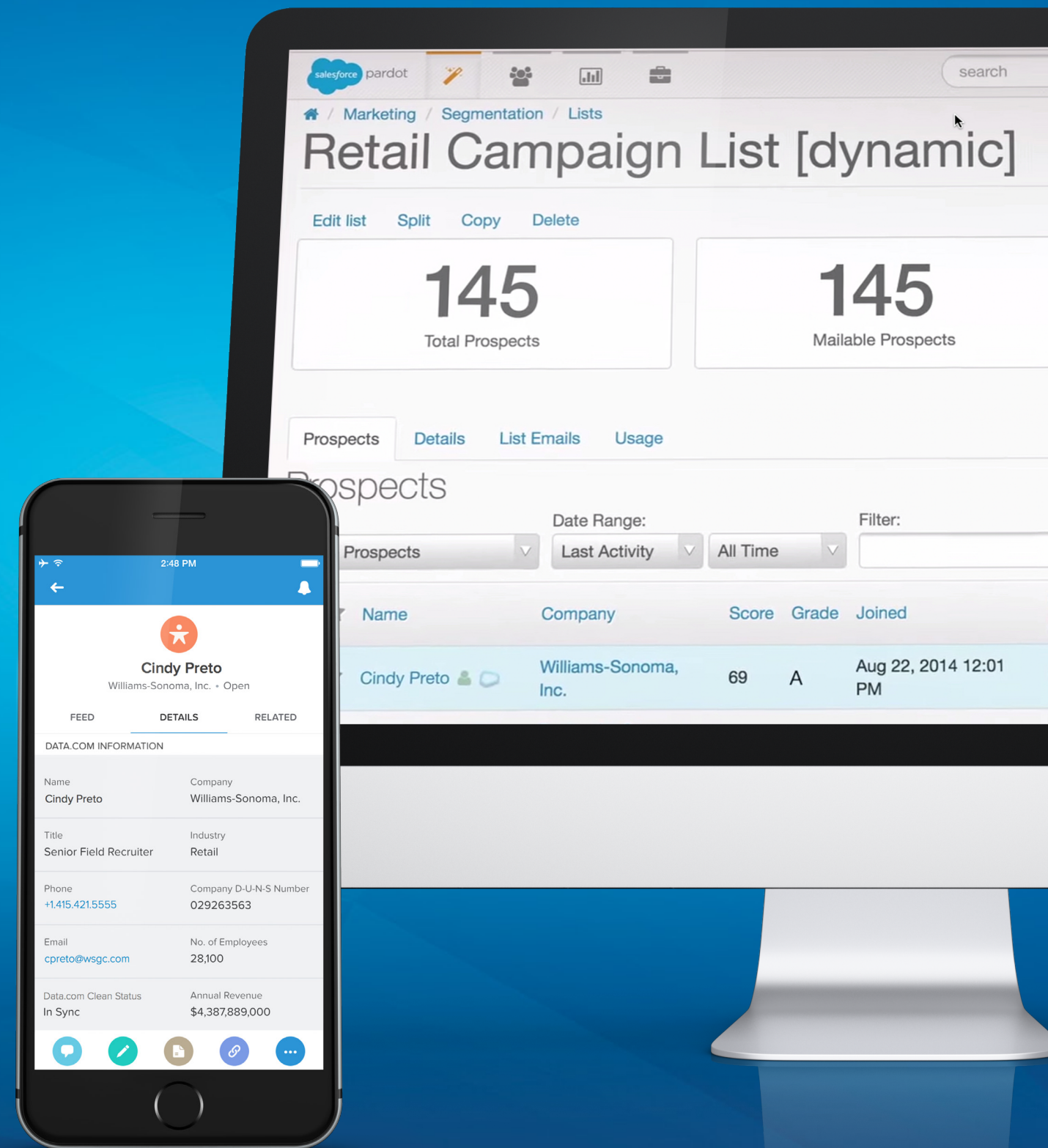
Three:
Get priorities straight.

Digital and mobile technologies have allowed companies of all sizes to target a global audience. But with expanded reach comes the challenge of making sure that as you scale up the audience, you're still delivering a targeted and engaging marketing message.

This personalization at scale can stretch marketing resources, and that's where strategy and prioritization step in. But which campaigns should get top priority when time or budget is tight?

From numbers to insights

The right data can help marketing strategy — including campaign planning and prioritization. Marketers can tailor campaigns to particular company sizes, industries, and subsidiary relationships to speak more directly to a company's needs. They can also prioritize leads and contacts based on individual information, such as role, to better identify buyers within the organization.

Companies are beginning to use tools to analyze which campaigns and messaging are getting results and with which types of customers. This helps weigh products and messaging by how likely they are to appeal to different segments of the customer base. Marketers can also use detailed customer data, coupled with sales information, to identify cross-sell and upsell opportunities, driving revenue growth.

Standard Register Builds Campaigns Around Customers

As an established brand with a 100-year history, Standard Register looks for insights from its existing customer base when developing tactics and strategy for marketing new products. For them, it is crucial to turn customer data into insights that can help steer campaign strategy and ensure the success of campaigns.

To accomplish this, the company created dashboards to give the entire marketing staff access to a 360-degree

view of the customer, including previously untapped information like subsidiary relationships.

More detailed customer information from Data.com, powering Standard Register's customer master in Salesforce and available throughout their organization, has shortened the company's marketing and sales cycle and helped them retain customers as they expand from products into services.

Conclusion

As marketing takes on a larger role in long-term customer engagement and companies scale up their customer base, smarter and more reliable data becomes more crucial to personalizing marketing campaigns.

Companies are beginning to recognize the importance of complete, reliable, and relevant data, and the tools that can help them put it to good use. The right data has helped create personalized and effective marketing even as the customer base grows. And putting that data to work in campaign strategy and prioritization allows marketing to partner more effectively with sales, and get better results without investing more resources.

ABOUT SALESFORCE AND DATA.COM CLEAN

Salesforce.com is the enterprise cloud-computing leader. Our social and mobile cloud technologies, including our flagship sales force automation and CRM application, Sales Cloud, help companies connect with customers, partners, and employees in an entirely new way.
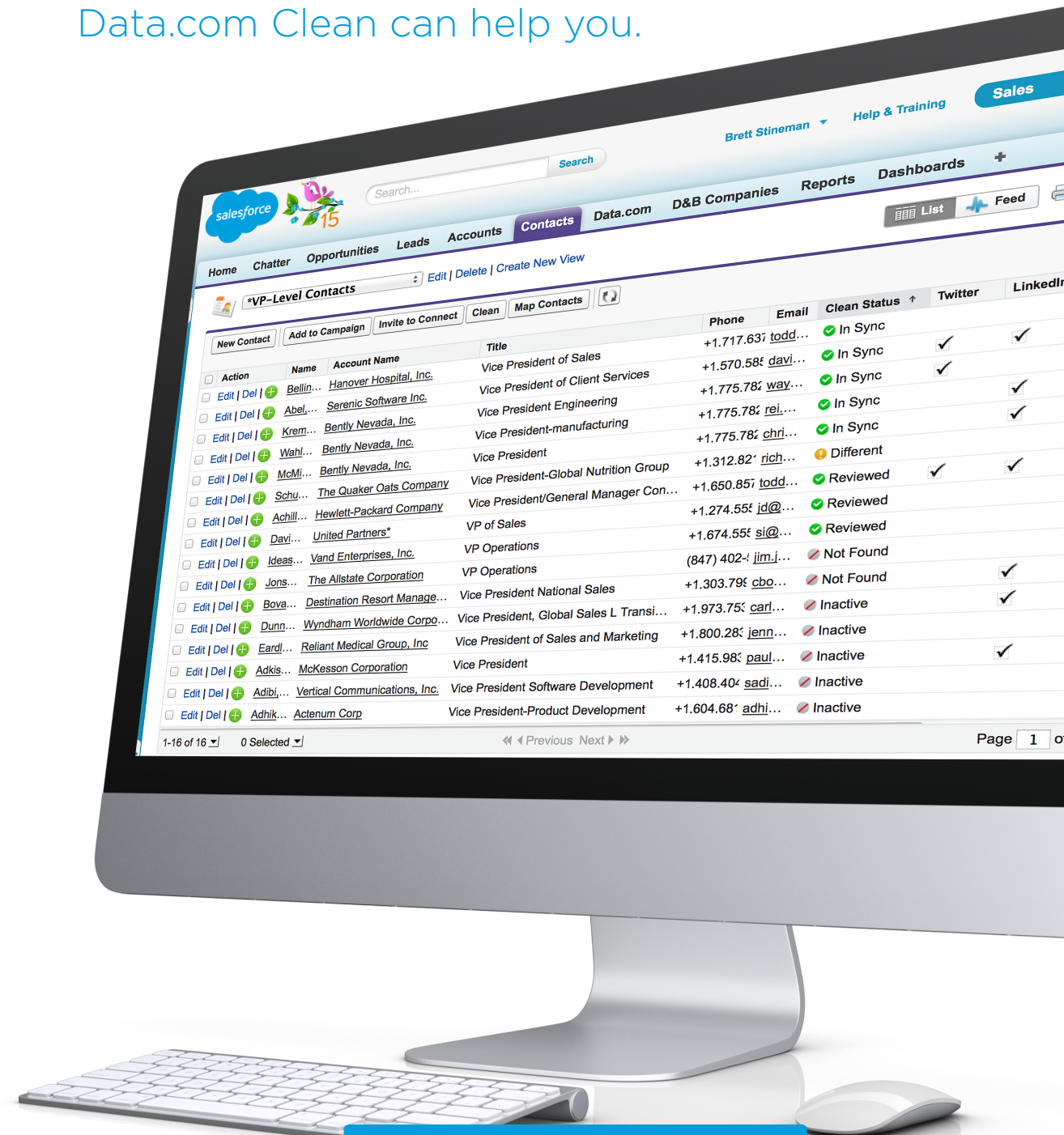
Salesforce Data.com Clean enriches customer and prospect data in Sales Cloud using company-level information from trusted external sources and accurate crowdsourced contact data, keeping this information updated so you know it is current and reliable. This improved customer data drives better strategy and collaboration between sales and marketing to help engage customers more deeply and effectively throughout their customer journey.

[1] "Pinpoint The Actions And Outcomes That Elevate Leads To Revenue", by Lori Wizdo with Peter O'Neill and Sophia l. Vargas, Forrester Research, Nov 16, 2012.

[2] Dun & Bradstreet, The Sales and Marketing Institute

See how Sales Cloud and Data.com Clean can help you.

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