



## BREAKOUT VIEWPOINT: Mastering the Art of Marketing

We know the traditional channel marketing activities of the past that drove conversion rates and leads—the golf outings, dinners, and sporting events—aren’t going to satisfy your marketing needs in today’s digital environment. More than 65 percent of sales and marketing touchpoints occur digitally first, and 71 percent of buyers reach vendor selection after that digital journey and experience.

The influence of the “digital natives” is here, and staying in front of current and new customers is more important than ever to remain competitive. This is why our Marketing Masters breakout sessions at Channel Connect were some of the most popular.

Below, I’ll share my thoughts on the highlights from these sessions so you can understand how to create a marketing strategy that matches this shift to drive new leads and business scalability.

**Topline insight number one:** Customer service IS marketing, so survey your customers and understand their needs. The customer comes first when marketing—build your funnel from that.

**Topline insight number two:** Content and data are your two best friends. Content gets you to better brand awareness and stronger digital marketing, and it can serve as the bridge to in-person connections. Data allows you to test things and know what’s working so you can activate campaigns that land with your intended audience.

### **BUILDING A MARKETING STRATEGY**

This session highlighted the channel’s transformation, where buyers are predominantly active in the digital world, and you are figuring out how to distinguish yourself from competitors to secure your position in the market.

One of the key activities discussed for building a strategy was the creation of a “Unique Selling Proposition.” In a noisy and crowded marketplace, standing out is crucial for success. Our panelists emphasized the need to conduct market research to help define your unique selling proposition and understand your target audience and the marketing tactics that will resonate with them.

The panelists encouraged attendees to pay attention to ROI metrics with every campaign launched. This ensures the resources invested yield measurable results. They also highlighted the practicality of marketing landing pages, and they introduced Intelisys University as a valuable resource for accessing readily available campaigns.

## IDENTIFYING CUSTOMER PERSONAS

Creating personas takes time and attention. Buyers are complicated, and not always “one size fits all.” But if done correctly, they can go a long way in supporting the creation and activation of effective marketing strategies. Understanding the essence of these personas is the cornerstone of any marketing endeavor.

Research is the foundation of these personas, and our panelists shared suggestions for the various approaches you can take to gather insights, including competitive intelligence from rivals, searching online for reports, and combing through trade media to identify trends.

Furthermore, understanding customer personas was stressed when selecting the most suitable medium or social channel to convey marketing strategies effectively. Tailoring the approach to the audience is crucial for success.

The bottom line? Create a persona and tailor your content to suit your buyer’s needs. Identify and understand buyer personas, craft personalized messages, and develop targeted marketing campaigns.

If you’re actively looking for an example of how to create business personas and use them to your advantage, check out [ScanSource’s Employee Experience initiative](#).

## MARKETING SYSTEMS MADE EASY(ER)

Who doesn’t love hitting the Easy Button? In this session, attendees delved into the strategies that enable them to pinpoint their target audiences effectively. This involves identifying the audience and their objectives, the most suitable channels to reach your audience, the type of content that resonates, and the methods to distribute this content while closely monitoring the results.

Attendees asked how they could best optimize their existing systems and tools. Whether it be CRM tools, marketing automation software, or any other integrated systems, they focused on how they can use these to make more informed decisions that enhance their overall marketing strategy.

For example, the art of selecting the right digital marketing channels was discussed in depth. Once these channels are prioritized, you can create metrics and processes for tracking the performance and effectiveness of your activities.

## BUILDING YOUR BRAND THROUGH VIDEO CONTENT

Did you know that over 90 percent of business IT decision-makers visit YouTube for insights and reviews while researching potential products and solutions? It’s true – YouTube trails only Google as the most popular search engine.

Why do marketers love video as a content strategy? It’s the “snackable” format, memorability, and measurable impact. Audiences have an innate desire for short, engaging posts, making video an ideal medium to connect with them effectively. Attendees were

encouraged to consider how they can achieve many goals by conveying their messages through video, capitalizing on its wide-reaching impact.

Additionally, the speakers highlighted a remarkable statistic – 87 percent of marketers believe that video has a direct, positive impact on their business marketing efforts. And 79 percent of individuals have been swayed to purchase after viewing a video on social media. This highlights the persuasive potential of video content in the modern digital landscape.

## **UNDERSTANDING OMNICHANNEL MARKETING**

In this session, we discussed the ins and outs of omnichannel marketing and how it can benefit you. Key was understanding the difference between omnichannel, all types of marketing that benefit the customer, and multichannel, just seeking points of engagement. The former tends to be better when nurturing a customer throughout their lifecycle.

Understanding your overall reputation, creating new and understandable content, and building strong business personas that allow you to accurately build marketing funnels were all noted as primary activities. Although customer service is oftentimes separated from marketing, they will act as one in the same when building valuable campaigns that make impact.

## **GET SOCIAL**

When it comes to the world of social media, our panelists noted that the two most important considerations for your strategy were consistency and authenticity. They encouraged attendees to consider and experiment with using generative AI. But they cautioned them to make sure the outputs are in line with your brand voice.

As the channel evolves, partners who leverage the power of omnichannel marketing strategy and execution will outperform those who don't.