

Owned and Paid Engagement – A Decisioning balancing act

Why there needs to be a balance and synchronisation in your customer engagements between owned and paid channels

AN OPINIONATED PERSPECTIVE BORNE
FROM REAL WORLD EXPERIENCES

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Evolution of Owned & Paid

Historically, before the advent of modern sophisticated decisioning & marketing platforms, organisations have maintained separate diverged teams for owned and paid media due to differences in their functions, goals and expertise.

The factors contributing to this separation...

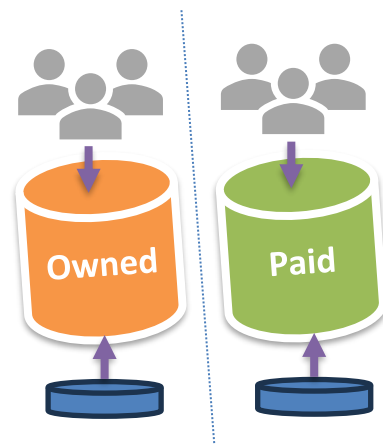
Typically, organisations have well established and dedicated teams for owned media in the form of marketing or base management and for paid media via media or Ad agencies for branding and advertising.

There are various factors that have led to this separation including differentiated business objectives with specific measurement goals, as well as the obvious unique specialisations implicit to using tailored technologies and tools, etc.. to name just a few.

For example, owned media is focused on engagement rates, traffic and customer lifetime value, whereas paid media is focused on click-through rate, conversion rate and return on Ad Spend.

Because of these distinct objectives and goals, organisational structures naturally develop silos; with dedicated leadership teams managing individually allocated budgets, leading to limited or no collaboration.

But customer journeys have become increasingly complex and cross-channel. The importance of data integration, and the demand for a consistent brand experience across all touchpoints has become more evident leading to the rise of omnichannel marketing. As digital marketing evolves, organisations need to align these teams to improve coordination, share data, to create more cohesive customer experiences.



In summary, the shift towards integrated marketing drives the need for a more collaborative approach; unifying these functions for better overall performance.

"A brand is no longer what we tell the consumer it is—it is what consumers tell each other it is. This means paid and owned media must be in sync to foster consistent, positive consumer conversations."

— Scott Cook

Hampered business growth

Over time, the separation between owned (Website, Email, SMS, etc.,) and paid (Paid Search, Display & Video, Social Media, etc.,) channels will lead to lower customer engagement, lower conversion-rate, wasted Ad-spend, etc.,

The impact...

Without a cohesive strategy, data silos and disjointed self-learning between channels as a result of poorly integrated people and processes across the two business functions results in customers being presented with irrelevant, or at best, inconsistent messaging which leads to **wasted Ad-spend and lower conversions.**

Everyone has experienced a situation whereby the same product is following us across touch points, and yet we've already responded to the engagement via another channel. This would be particularly pertinent in organisations with silos between the marketing and advertising functions.



Your customers or prospects could be anywhere in the marketing funnel and in any channel and there is no set sequence in their interaction with your brand. It is critical to have the ability to engage with the customer or prospect during those micro-moments, seamlessly, across touch-points including the ability to self-serve at any time.

As customers, we seek engagement with our brands that are relevant to us, simple to understand, consistent, and effectively valuable to us.

All Business-to-Customer brands aspire to achieve and maintain a high level of 'customer engagement' and 'customer satisfaction', which are measured at an organisational level and not a at a business unit level; a holistic goal for the entire marketing function to achieve as one.

It is no surprise that research shows that among the companies without a unified and integrated marketing strategy they score lower in NPS ratings, and consequently lose customers to competitors who offer a more integrated and seamless experience.

"The inability to connect brand strategy with execution leads to fragmentation. When paid and owned media operate in silos, the customer experience suffers, and the brand loses coherence."

— Scott Brinker

Merging silos: small & subtle

In an increasingly customer-centric world, where every marketing strategy, objective and goal revolves around customer experience, it is a necessity for organisations to begin to merge silos.

The change...

Change is inevitable, and the best time to start is now. Even if that means starting small; targeting quick wins to begin with. The key thing is how we integrate all channels for a two-way communication to share data and learnings between each other to achieve the best results from one another.

This enterprise data could very well form the base for your acquisition campaigns on the paid channels, where your high-propensity existing customers can inform the look-a-like audience on the paid platform. This increases the paid platforms' effectiveness in identifying high-likelihood prospects.

Zero party data First party data Second party data Third party data



Data proactively and willingly shared with you by customer



Data collected by you directly from your customers during their interaction with you



Data collected by a different org. which you have contractual agreement to use

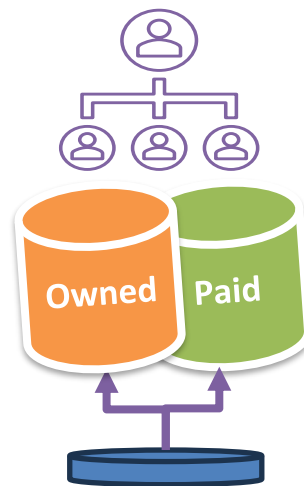


Data collected and aggregated from sources that customer did not directly consent

Conversions are one such potential use case for 1st party data, which can form the basis of your audience exclusions from paid re-targeting that will reduce wasted ad-spend on targeting converted customers in your paid campaigns.

The 1st party and 2nd party data can help understand customer interests and intent towards the products and offering specifically offered by an organisation, at a very granular level, which could then form the audience segmentation for re-targeting on the paid channels. While there is so much data and advanced analytics within the paid platforms, identifying the customers willingness and the potential can be effectively harnessed from your own 1st and 2nd party enterprise data, which could lead to greater value on your paid channels.

When a customer shows interest on one of your products or services by visiting certain pages of your website (owned), that 1st party data can be utilised to create an audience segment of all such people on the paid platforms to re-target them on Google Search or Instagram. This is a great example of how the channels can add value to each other.



“The real magic happens when brands allow each channel to do what it does best, while maintaining a consistent message across all touchpoints.”

— Nancy Duarte

How do we solve it?

While each channel (and team) may rely on its proven methods, a unified decisioning engine leveraging AI should be enabled to tackle the vast complexity and unlock hidden opportunities, to determine the best course of action for each individual customer or prospect.

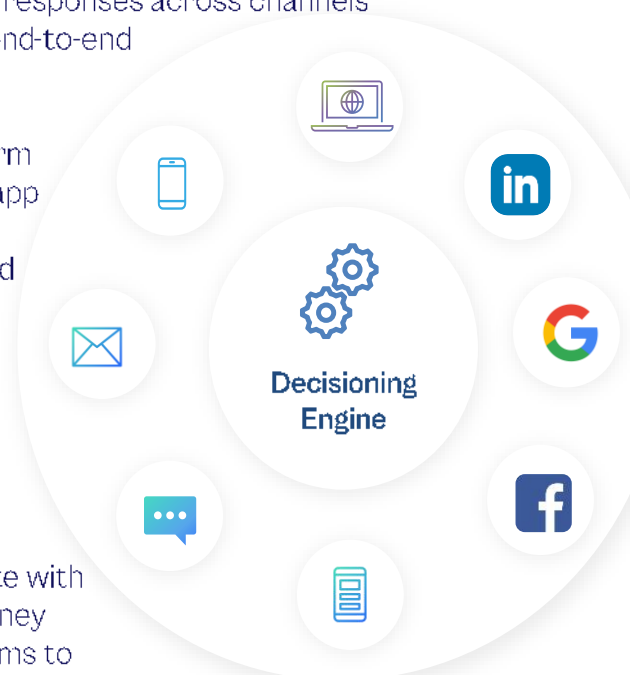
The decisioning engine should be enabled to make timely, contextual and relevant decisions at every customer interaction both offline and in real-time.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

By giving a centralised decisioning engine access to the full-fidelity of enterprise data, it allows the centralised "brain" to be aware of all customer interactions and responses across channels and devices, allowing the decisioning engine to orchestrate an end-to-end customer journey leading to a positive outcome i.e., conversion.

Imagine the satisfaction of a prospect who starts filling out a form on your website, leaves halfway, gets a notification on a mobile app and then seamlessly continues on the mobile app before dropping-off again. They then receive a timely reminder on a paid Ad platform which takes them back to self-service channel to ultimately complete it. This truly connected experience across channels ensures convenience and engagement at every step.

It is not a one-size-fits-all solution, it is a continuous process to identify small achievable targets that could reap big benefits, and without a big overhaul. We can enable your decisioning and marketing tools to empower them with data and AI and integrate with more channels and tools to achieve this truly omni-channel journey orchestration capability. We can work with your paid media teams to optimise audience targeting by applying decisioning techniques that will allow them to reduce wasted ad-spend, provide seamless integration between paid ads and your website landing pages for personalising actions for visitors leading to high-value prospect acquisition, etc..



HOW DCS WILL HELP

DCS is a 1:1 Customer Engagement specialist that partners with some of the world's leading brands. We help businesses leverage the power of AI, GenAI and Decisioning to deliver compelling customer experiences, at scale.

We will work with your decisioning and marketing teams to understand the existing stack and maturity in terms of the data and channels and identify a backlog of Minimum Loveable Product (MLP) which could bring your ambitions and goals to life starting with small subtle changes.

Since our beginnings in Financial Services, we have branched out and delivered 1:1 Customer Engagement projects across Telecommunications, Gaming and Home Security sectors.

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