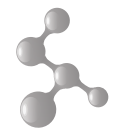# How to Choose a MarTech Stack

Christopher S. Penn

What's a good baseline marketing tech stack for a consumer company? What should it include beyond marketing automation, email, and a content management system?

At first glance, this seems like a fairly straightforward question. What marketing technologies should consumer companies use? However, while this question is direct and succinct, we know that any answer which demands technological decisions is likely to be bewilderingly complex. Just take a look at Scott Brinker's Marketing Technology Landscape map:

Figure 1, Scott Brinker's Marketing Technology Landscape map

As shown in Figure 1, there were thousands of marketing technology companies at play in 2016. Selecting a cohesive handful from this massive selection is no easy feat—especially when all the vendor demos essentially promise the same thing: more money.

Yet, that's not the only problem with the question above. There's a much greater, and hidden danger lurking within; we're putting the cart far before the horse.

Step back and look at the bigger picture. Marketers tend to leap straight to the tools and technology without giving due consideration to basic strategy or data-informed decisions. Why are we already talking about marketing technology? First, what business problem do we intend to solve with technology – and is the problem a technology problem, a process problem, a strategy problem, or something else entirely?

This fundamental problem has been present across various marketing trends across the decades:
- A focus on Email Service Providers over email strategy
- A focus on SEO tools over content content
- A focus on social media over social strategy

Jumping ahead to specific tools is like asking which cookware we should be using, when we haven't even decided who's cooking or what meal we're serving.

Consider this marketing technology deployment diagram I presented during speeches last year.
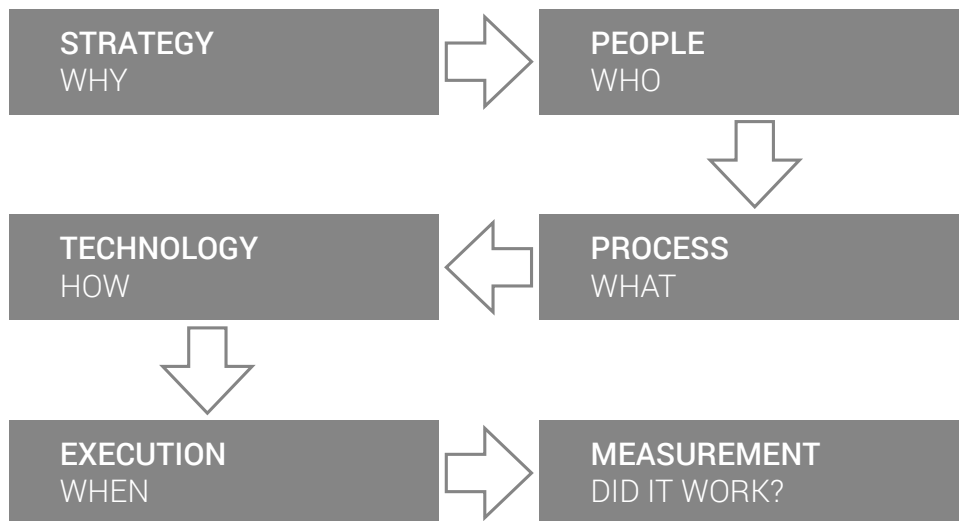
PROPER ORDER OR MARTECH STACK DEPLOYMENT

STRATEGY WHY	⇨	PEOPLE WHO
TECHNOLOGY HOW	⇦	PROCESS WHAT
EXECUTION WHEN	⇨	MEASUREMENT DID IT WORK?

Figure 2, Copyright 2017, Christopher S. Penn

Technology – the how – comes fourth. We make our how-related choices once we've figured out why, what, and who is involved. In this eBook, we'll dissect the marketing technology deployment strategy referenced above. We'll learn how to properly plan a marketing technology stack rollout, develop a sensible governance model, examine what could go wrong, and succeed on the first try rather than attempt to patch and repair a post-mortem disaster, repeatedly.

In this series, we'll break down our marketing technology deployment strategy. We'll learn how to properly plan a marketing technology stack rollout, develop a sensible governance model, examine what could go wrong, and succeed on the first try rather than patch and duct tape a disaster repeatedly.

Develop a Marketing Technology Strategy

All strategy begins with the question why. Why are we doing what we're doing? When it comes to marketing technology specifically, we must ask ourselves why marketing technology is the right solution for the problem we face.

Let's walk backwards through a standard list of questions we should ask.

UNDERSTAND GOALS

First, what are our business goals? What does the business need to achieve overall? For some companies, it may concern gross or net margin goals. Margins focus heavily on both cost and growth, so knowing that a company has a margin target is important. We may be constrained on what technology we can invest in to meet the margin target.

Other companies might focus on gross revenue. Avinash Kaushik recently relayed a story from his time at Google when CEO Eric Schmidt faced particular business challenges. Rather than lay out a margin or net revenue target, Schmidt called for all-hands to pile on gross revenue, and stated that revenue fixes all known problems.

UNDERSTAND KPIS

Once we understand our business goals, we work backwards to figure out what we are responsible for. What is our contribution to the business goal? If we face margins or net revenue goals, then our KPIs involve equal parts cost reduction and growth. If we face gross revenue targets, what is our contribution to those targets?
Do we generate supplementary revenue with our audience reach?
Do we crank out more marketing qualified leads?
Do we change our marketing target to chase higher value leads?

UNDERSTAND LIMITS

Next, we examine our constraints. What constraints do we face in achieving our goals?

Is there a specific timeframe during which we must achieve them?

Do we need to stay within a certain budget or headcount?

Are there certain markets we cannot address?

An awareness of our limitations helps us to, eventually, make an intelligent marketing technology solution decision. Through knowledge of what we cannot do, we can eliminate specific implementations.

CATALOG METHODS

Finally, we need an existing inventory of our current tools and technologies. What systems do we currently have in place? Consider the average marketing technology stack, which includes many of the following:

- Advertising Systems
- Social Media
- Public Relations
- Data Management Platform
- Website
- Lead Management
- Email Marketing
- Marketing Automation
- Sales Enablement
- Remarketing or Retargeting

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

What methods do we currently have in place? Make an extensive catalog of the customer service, analytics, reporting, and financial management systems in place.

CONSIDER MARKETING TECHNOLOGY'S IMPACT

When we consider the aforementioned marketing methods and systems we use, we must focus on two key principles: efficiency and effectiveness.

Efficiency concerns our return on investment. Given a certain amount of time and resources, how well does any given method accomplish its associated tasks? We measure efficiency as a financial measure. For any given amount of money invested in hard and soft dollar costs, how much does the method return? (We measure time as money in soft dollars.)

Effectiveness is a question of impact. How much does each method contribute to our overall targets and goals? If we are tasked with 1,000 conversions per month, how much does any given method contribute towards those conversions—either as the last touch or as an assisted conversion?

We need to understand efficiency and effectiveness in order to understand our marketing technology strategy. Different marketing technology solutions fix different marketing problems. Some solutions, like marketing automation, address efficiency problems. Instead of manually scoring leads, marketing automation can accelerate the scoring process by automating it.

Other solutions, like enterprise social media management or data management platforms, help us to scale, to be more effective, to make a greater impact, and to generate more results. They help us stretch beyond our current limitations and reach.

How efficient or effective is each portion of the marketing technology stack we currently have? Take the time to assess each tool, method, and process in place before moving forward.

When our goals relate to margin and net revenue, we should focus on efficiency over effectiveness. When we are charged with gross revenue related goals, we should focus on effectiveness over efficiency. We don't completely discount efficiency or effectiveness in either scenario, but, instead, strategically emphasize one or the other.

Once we've scored each existing component, we should be able to clearly understand which parts of our existing strategy underserve our goals. We are able to build a strategic foundation of what we will improve once we grasp which technology is wrong, broken, or inefficient.

Determine Who Will
Be Involved

Once we've assessed the why component of a marketing technology project, we must ascertain who will be involved. A clear designation of who is responsible for which specific pieces in our marketing technology stack is essential. However, the who is a much larger question than it first appears; most marketers are accustomed to a casual organizational project structure. After all, we don't need many people to launch a Facebook ad or run a webinar.

For any kind of technology deployment, we must turn to the software and IT world to help us rollout mission-critical projects. How does IT decide who does what? How do we keep a major project on time, within scope, and on budget?

For any large IT project, we typically have a large cast of characters:
- An Executive Sponsor
- Steering Committee
- Project Lead or Owner
- Project Managers
- Team Members

Who are all these people? Let's briefly examine each of these roles and their impact on a technology project—we'll need them for any kind of marketing technology rollout beyond a pilot project.

EXECUTIVE SPONSOR
The executive sponsor is the member of management who sponsors our project. Sponsorship indicates a willingness for the executive to, at a minimum, be held accountable for the success or failure of the project. Executive sponsorship may also entail the reallocation of resources, such as personnel and budget, to the project.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee is a group of stakeholders who guide, or steer, a project towards success. These stakeholders should include the executive sponsor, authorities delegated by the sponsor (for example, a President who designates a Vice President's assistance), the program lead, and other necessary team members or project leaders. The goal of the steering committee is to ensure our project adheres to our strategy.

PROJECT OWNER

The project owner is the chief executor of the project. If the executive sponsor is the owner of a sports team, the project owner is the head coach. The project owner is responsible for delivering the project on time, on budget, and in accordance to the outcomes dictated by the sponsor and steering committee. In the context of a marketing technology deployment, the project owner would ultimately deliver the software to marketing and ensure its successful rollout and integration.

PROJECT MANAGERS

The project manager is the executor of specific tasks within the project. A marketing technology project may have one manager, or it may have many managers depending on how complex the project is. The deployment of a new webinar software might require only one project manager while a fully integrated marketing automation platform, with ties to web analytics and CRM, might require a dozen.

PROJECT TEAM LEADERS AND MEMBERS

The last group of people involved in a project are the team members, the people who execute specific tasks assigned by the project manager. These people may include individual subject matter experts, or regular staff assigned to the project.

Team members will be assigned an assortment of tasks, which generally fall into the following categories:

Testing or Quality Assurance: Team members spend a large quantity of time ensuring that the technology works as intended.

Integration: Team members integrate the technology with other compatible software and, when faced with incompatible software, develop workarounds to provide process continuity.

Training: Team members train line of business users in the new technology to ensure they achieve minimum viable competence in its operation.

ROLES DIFFER FROM TITLES

One important consideration, which may require a shift in mindset for the average marketer, is that roles and titles do not necessarily correlate within a technology deployment project. We must become comfortable with a different approach to process and progress, a different framework for reporting, and a different style of management.

For example, here at SHIFT, we've developed a technology-based training program for our employees to learn new digital skills. Within this project, the executive stakeholder is our Managing Partner, Amy Lyons, and the project owner is our Marketing Director, Katie Lioy. Our project manager is one of our Senior Marketing Analysts, Emily Mong. I create content for the project as both a subject matter expert and a regular team member. From a hierarchical perspective, Katie is one of my direct reports, and Emily is one of Katie's direct reports. However, I report to Emily on this particular project; my role on the project has nothing to do with my title. This concept may be difficult for some organizations to adapt to, yet the enterprises that can adapt reap its benefits.

Defining Process in Marketing Technology

We've determined the why behind our marketing technology strategy and who should be involved. Our next step involves our process—the what.

Just as IT supplied us with an understanding of what roles are important to the project, IT is also the authority on process management. The IT industry offers many variations on three core themes of project management:

- Scopes of Work or Project Charters
- Project Plans
- Governance Models

Let's take a look at each of these to understand which type of process plan is appropriate for any given business context.

SCOPES OF WORK

For the smallest projects, a simple scope of work or project charter is appropriate. In the scope of work, we detail the following:

- Budget
- Timeframe
- Roles
- Deliverables
- Methodology
- Tools and Technology

The role of a scope of work is to define a small project and obtain stakeholder approval. A scope of work tends to be a short document; little more is needed to manage a successful outcome. An example of a project that solely requires a scope of work is the rollout of a new version of software, or a tactical change to an existing system.

PROJECT PLAN

For larger projects, we require a project plan. Project plans contain the same elements as a scope of work, but also include additional items:

- Business case for the project/value provided
- More detailed individual and group responsibilities
- Timelines and milestones
- Dependencies
- Risks and assumptions
- Partners/vendors
- KPIs and metrics

The role of a project plan is more contractual. It details what will happen, when it will happen, and the accountability for results.

Project plans tend to be longer, multiple-page documents which include workbooks, schedules, calendars, Gantt charts, etc. A project plan is appropriate for the rollout of a new software package that impacts more than one area of responsibility, or that makes significant organizational impacts to existing systems. Individual deliverables or milestones may have their own scopes of work within a project plan.

GOVERNANCE MODEL

For the largest projects, we need a full corporate governance model. Governance models contain the same elements as scopes of work and project plans, but also include the below:

- Mission or Vision
- Organizational Charts or Structures
- Detailed Business Cases
- Business Impact Forecasts
- Regulatory and Legal Impacts
- Human Resources Roles and Impacts
- Contractual Obligations
- Policies and Procedures
- Reporting Requirements and Cadence

- Oversight Structure
- Core Values and Ethics

The role of a governance model is similar to the foundation of a corporate entity, and details every aspect of a major initiative.

Corporate governance models are usually massive documents, binder-length in size and scope, and may contain multiple project plans for each of the initiative's major areas.

We would use a corporate governance model for a large marketing technology initiative, such as technology enablement of a new business unit, marketing technology management during a merger or acquisition, or any other large, strategic organizational change.

CHOOSE APPROPRIATE PROCESS MANAGEMENT MODELS

Which process model do we need? It depends on the context of the project. The rule of thumb is to use as much process as necessary to ensure a successful outcome.

Too little process allows a project to creep in scope or to create breakdowns in accountability and achievement.

Too much process bogs down a project and wastes resources on overhead instead of execution.

Use the lists above to determine what kind of situation our stakeholders are asking us to manage. If we're asked for simple timelines and deliverables, we're talking about a scope of work. If we're asked for a handbook of organization-level policies and procedures, we're in governance model territory.

The Marketing
Technology RFP

Believe it or not, choosing the actual marketing technology is one of the easiest steps in the process. It's hard to believe after glancing at Scott Brinkner's illustration of the many, many marketing technology vendors in the field:

Yes, thousands of companies are vying for our attention, our interest, our data, and our money. So why is this the easy part? Had we begun our marketing technology stack process by evaluating this landscape and trying to choose vendors, it wouldn't be easy at all. We would be, unquestionably, overwhelmed—at the mercy of these vendors' sales teams.

However, consider what we've determined thus far through analysis of our own needs:

- Our overall strategy and goals, what we aim to achieve, and how we'll measure success

- Our people governance, from team members to stakeholders, who will be doing what
- Our budget, needs, and timeframes
- Our deliverables, methodologies, and business cases
- Our dependencies, risk analysis, policies and procedures, and oversight

When we take a step back and look at all the pieces we have defined, it becomes evident that not many vendors can fulfill our specific and varied requirements. The steps we have previously completed provide us with many disqualifying conditions that eliminate many vendors. For example, if we work in an industry in which PCI or HIPAA compliance are mandatory, our process and governance models have already addressed these requirements. Any vendor lacking PCI or HIPAA compliance will not be considered.

If we determined, in our people phase, that we require multiple team members with varying levels of access to information, then any vendor which doesn't provide granular access to control lists and permissions must be ruled out.

CREATING THE DREADED MARKETING TECHNOLOGY RFP

How do we distill all our research down to reach a decision? We create a marketing technology RFP template for our vendors to complete. No one enjoys RFPs, but when we've done our due diligence in defining the strategy, people, and governance in our marketing technology plan, creating and issuing an RFP is relatively straightforward.

Design an RFP based on our previous steps:

STRATEGY
First, we state our strategy, goals, KPIs, and metrics. Here's an example within the context of choosing a social media publishing tool:

Our goal is to accelerate our sales pipeline through social media. We will measure the tool's effectiveness by social touchpoints and velocity of sales — against quarterly benchmarks.

This outline of strategy clearly articulates what we want from a vendor's tool. A vendor that drives awareness rather than sales acceleration might opt not to participate.

BACKGROUND

For companies unfamiliar with our organization, we should provide useful information and background for their proposal. Provide a detailed summary of industry, background, company size, and additional needs relevant to the vendors involved.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND SCOPE

Next, we must clearly articulate our budget, timelines, deliverables, and milestones. We must also specify RFP logistics so vendors are clear about what to submit and when.

Use the following example as a template:

This RFP is due on March 31, 2017 at 11:59 PM Eastern Time. All materials must be received by this time; no submissions will be accepted after this time.

The submitting organization must include the following in its proposal:

Budget: Not to exceed $125,000 annually.

The project must begin no later than May 1, 2017, and conclude implementation no later than August 31, 2017.

Deliverables required:

- A fully-deployed social media publishing infrastructure
- Connections to all relevant social media accounts
- Two (2) one-hour trainings delivered to staff by webinar
- One (1) web portal with documentation for the product
- Fifteen (15) hours of support per month

Milestones:

May 1, 2017: Project begins

June 1, 2017: Requirements gathering concluded

July 1, 2017: First user testing to begin in beta

August 1, 2017: First user training to begin in production

August 31, 2017: Project concludes

If a vendor is unable to meet any of the above criteria, they will know not to submit for the RFP. In our guidelines, we might also want to specify other parts of our governance process, such as who the day to day contact will be, or how the vendor will be managed.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The final section of the RFP should specify how a vendor will be chosen. Factors such as experience, budget, examples of previous work, expertise, industry knowledge, conflicts of interest, and other selection criteria should be clearly dictated; this allows vendors that are unlikely to be chosen the opportunity to opt out in advance.

Consider the following example:

SHIFT Communications will evaluate proposed solutions on the following criteria. To ensure consideration for this RFP, your proposal should address each of the following components:

- Experience: Detail how you have deployed similar solutions for similar companies of our size.

- Budget: Detail how you will achieve an on-budget deployment, and certify your understanding that if your submission is accepted, you may not request any additional funding for any reason; you will absorb any and all unplanned costs.

- Features: Detail how your product aligns to our strategy, as outlined in section one, and our specific feature needs in schedule A (attached).

- Conflicts of Interest: declare any conflicts of interest you may have with competing companies; if you have a conflict of interest, detail how you will resolve it and ensure confidentiality.

Be clear in how selection criteria will apply to the accepted proposal.

ONLY MAKE THE RFP AS LONG AS IT NEEDS TO BE

One final note on the RFP: make it only as long as it needs to be based on the scope of the project. Consider the governance models we explored in part 4; very tactical projects require little more than a scope or project charter. Strategic, enterprise-wide projects incorporate a complete governance model including detailed accounts of everything from values and ethics to regulatory impacts.

Our RFP process should mirror our governance process; whatever components are necessary to effectively govern a project also belong in our RFP.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MARKETING TECHNOLOGY RFP PROCESS

The RFP process may seem tedious, but it's vital for marketing technology stack vendor selection because it ensures we've chosen a vendor who meets all the criteria outlined in our strategy, people, and governance steps. We will face inevitable disappoint if we chose a vendor based on a trade show interaction or the information within one of their white papers; the most successful vendor decisions are made upon the alignment of vendor capabilities and project requirements — not marketing hype.

So what if something goes wrong? How can we avoid mishaps? Our next step takes a look at mistakes we can prevent in the rollout process.

Avoid These Four Common MarTech Deployment Errors

Marketing technology projects — and indeed, technology projects in general — go off the rails in ways we often don't anticipate. We start a project with a budget and timeline, and are surprised when we exceed both. Why? Four common mistakes cause projects to go awry.

POORLY DEFINED GOALS

The first and most dangerous mistake we make with marketing technology projects is not defining goals clearly enough. An unclear goal means we won't know when the project is done, or, more likely, the project won't be done anywhere close to our budget or timeline.

For example, if our project is the rollout of out a new website, and we only have a due date and budget, we're likely going to fail. A project like a new website necessitates milestones because there are so many potential setbacks along the way. A web server or cloud server might not support our technology of choice. A design might need multiple revisions. Approval processes take longer than we expect.

INCOMPLETE REQUIREMENTS GATHERING

An incomplete requirements gathering process is one of the primary causes behind poorly defined goals in a marketing technology project. We set goals based on what we want the project to achieve. However, if it turns out that we didn't fully grasp what the project was supposed to achieve, then our goals will be meaningless.

For example, let's say we've planned out our website with goals, milestone, budget, etc. What happens to our project plan if, about a third of the way through our project, the CEO says, "Hey, will this have an intranet for employees? It will

blow the plan up, or at least cause a significant delay as we reboot the project to accommodate the new requirement.

If we thoroughly gather requirements up front and interview as many stakeholders as possible, we're much less likely to run into incomplete requirements gathering problems.

CONFLICTED GOVERNANCE

One potential complication, which often accompanies incomplete requirements gathering, is conflicted governance. In layman's terms – multiple people want to be in charge of the project or provide significant input. Suppose that, within the context of our website example, our advertising director crashed our weekly project status meeting and insisted that the new website must support a full complement of ad options. Suddenly, we have an incomplete requirements gathering problem and, arguably, a goals related problem as well.

Another type of conflicted governance problem involves the opposite sentiment: no one wants to be in charge. This issue commonly occurs when coworkers perceive a project as "pointless," or do not find any personal value within its execution. In projects such as these, even when roles are defined and assigned, stakeholders may delegate so far down the chain of command that the work is eventually lost within the organization and the project never moves forward.

The antidote to conflicted governance is the same in either case: a clear governance plan and mandate which defines roles, ownership, and impact.

SCORE CREEP

The last and most common error in a marketing technology project rollout is scope creep. Scope creep is the blanket term for when the prior conditions happen simultaneously. A project with unclear goals, insufficient requirements, and conflicted governance is guaranteed to creep beyond scope — turning what was supposed to be a straightforward deployment into an endless quagmire. If the scope creep is significant enough, a project may never see the light of day.

When faced with scope creep, our antidote is to determine which of the three culprits is most problematic. Do we have poorly defined goals? Do we lack necessary requirements? Do we have conflicted or unclear governance? By isolating the most broken part of the project, we might be able to salvage it and force the project back onto the rails. Fix the most broken part first!

The most powerful antidote, and preventative measure, for scope creep is a strong project manager, the "project quarterback," who constantly pushes the project forward. The role of the project manager is to execute the requirements as they align with the pre-established goals, and to pump the breaks if goals, requirements, or governance have gone awry. In concert with the project stakeholder, a great project manager ensures that scope creep is kept at bay.

In this eBook, we've stepped through all the major parts of a marketing technology project. Yet, at the speed at which marketing technology is evolving, it's important to stay vigilant to changes which may impact our operations.

Looking Forward

THE EVOLUTION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND MARTECH

We've covered in enormous amount of ground in this series—from the basics of project management to compliance and enterprise deployment. Let's now turn our eyes forward the future of marketing technology and project management.

AGILE MARKETING

One of the more recent developments in project and workflow management is agile marketing. While we won't delve into the nitty gritty of agile marketing now, the ability to manage multiple, conflicting priorities is an essential part of modern marketing project management. No methodology is better suited for the management of multiple priorities than agile development.

In traditional project management, once we have worked out the scope and plan, we execute the plan. However, this matter-of-fact process has its limitations; if circumstances change substantially between the planning and execution phases, we may not be able to adapt quickly to the new environment.

The agile methodology gives us the ability to pivot quickly to address new priorities as they surface. As a simple example, imagine we are executing a visual marketing plan using Snapchat Stories. We're only been working on the project for a week when Instagram releases its own Stories feature. In a traditional project plan, we would finish executing the Snapchat plan regardless of the circumstances. At best, we might be able to source additional resources in an attempt to adapt what we're doing on Snapchat to Instagram.

In an agile marketing environment, we would simply add Instagram Stories into the next rapid planning cycle, and be ready to act on this new development. For a more in-depth look into agile marketing, read this blog post.

FROM PROJECT TO PRODUCT

As more marketing initiatives move to cloud-based environments, we will see an increase in the transition from marketing project management to marketing product management. Developing tools and software for use in-house is becoming more common. Especially at the enterprise level, very few marketing software packages fulfill our exact needs out of the box. We often customize software or add additional, custom-developed processes in front of, or behind, the out-of-the-box software.

It requires very little imagination to make the leap between in-house software and product for the mass market. The only major limitation for companies that are developing their own marketing software, and transforming it into a product, is whether they want to be in the SaaS software business.

Regardless of whether a company brings its own custom developed software solutions to market, marketing project managers need to incorporate the skills of product managers in order to be as effective as possible.

RISK MITIGATION WITH MACHINE LEARNING

Finally, one of the most interesting developments in project management is the incorporation of advanced machine learning technologies into critical areas such as risk mitigation and compliance. Conflicts between marketing technology and regulatory and compliance issues is increasingly common; one such example is the General Data Protection Regulation or GDPR. This regulation, passed in 2016 and enforced in 2018, will significantly limit the amount of third-party data that marketers can use. It places heavy restrictions and compliance requirements on first-party data that marketers collect—such as customer information.

Auditing our entire infrastructure for compliance will require a massive amount of resources and time. With machine learning technologies such as IBM Watson GRC, we can significantly reduce the amount of time we need to spend bringing our systems into compliance. Watson reads the regulations for us, compares our internal policies, documentation, and systems to the requirements, and shows us where any misalignment with regulations occurs.

THE FUTURE OF MARKETING TECHNOLOGY IS BRIGHT

While some analysts have expected consolidation to occur in the industry, and consequently reduce the number of tools available to us, the opposite has been happening. In the most recent version of [Scott Brinkner's Marketing Technology Landscape](#), the total number of vendors in the marketing technology space has ballooned 40% from 3,500 to 5,381. The reason why is simple: more customers and consumers are using increasingly sophisticated technology in their daily lives. Marketing technology must continue to adapt and evolve to support these customers.

The ever-accelerating pace of change drives an even more rapid evolution of marketing technology. While bewildering, this pace of change is good for us. Rather than be relegated to a few monolithic vendors, we have a higher variety and greater quality of choices available to us to make our marketing as impactful as possible. The marketing technology market is far from reaching maturity; in fact, its future is newer and brighter than ever.

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We would be remiss if we didn't say that if all of this feels overwhelming, we're happy to help. Engage our services for your marketing and earned media needs and we'll show you how your company and brand can shine, get attention from the audiences that will benefit you most, and drive bottom-line results in a measurable way.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christopher S. Penn is an authority on digital marketing and marketing technology. A recognized thought leader, author, and speaker, he has shaped three key fields in the marketing industry: Google Analytics adoption, data-driven marketing and PR, and email marketing. Known for his high-octane, here's-how-to-get-it-done approach, his expertise benefits companies such as Citrix Systems, McDonald's, GoDaddy, McKesson, and many others. His latest work, Leading Innovation, teaches organizations how to implement and scale innovative practices to direct change.

Christopher is a highly-sought keynote speaker thanks to his energetic, informative talks. In 2015, he delivered insightful, innovative speeches on all aspects of marketing and analytics at over 30 events to critical acclaim:

Seriously, I think @cspenn is the smartest #socialmedia marketer I've ever met.

Freaking love @cspenn this guy is beyond smart yet is engaging & can simplify it… Awesome stuff!

@cspenn You have an uncanny knack for bringing relevance and sense of numbers at data. Loved your keynote and session at #SMMW15

Others who recognize Christopher's work include:
- Forbes Magazine and MediaPost recognized him as one of the top 50 most influential people in social media and digital marketing from 2012-2015.
- C-Suite Networks named him a Social Media Legend in 2015.
- PR Week named him one of the Innovation 50, the top 50 most innovative communicators in the world in 2015.
- PR News named him Social Media Person of the Year, Social Media Icon MVP, and Agency Professional of the Year in 2014.

He is a founding member of IBM's Watson Analytics Predictioneers, co-founder of the groundbreaking PodCamp Conference, and co-host of the Marketing Over Coffee marketing podcast.

Christopher is a Google Analytics Certified Professional and a Google AdWords Certified Professional. He is the author of over two dozen marketing books including bestsellers such as Marketing White Belt: Basics for the Digital Marketer, Marketing Red Belt: Connecting With Your Creative Mind, and Marketing Blue Belt: From Data Zero to Marketing Hero. His new book, Leading Innovation, debuts in 2016.

Learn more about him at ChristopherSPenn.com, and find him online:

Twitter: http://cspenn.com/t
Facebook: http://cspenn.com/f
LinkedIn: http://cspenn.com/l
Google+: http://cspenn.com/g