



TOO MUCH TIME SPENT UPDATING; NOT ENOUGH TIME SPENT SELLING

**CYBER
THEORY**

RESEARCH REPORT

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Borrowing sentiment from a very experienced and extraordinarily smart marketing professional by the name of Jill Rowley, the hypothesis here at CyberTheory is that we have over-automated and hyper-analyzed customer interaction and behavior to the point of exasperation. In our search for the elusive galactic selling advantage, we have done everything but outright eliminate the actual sales conversation between a human potential buyer and a human potential seller.

The Genius Behind Marketo, Eloqua and More

Jill is the brilliant former Chief Growth Officer at Marketo (acquired by Adobe for \$4.75B), and the main driver behind Eloqua's phenomenal success. She then became the sales genie who spent almost a year trying to transform Oracle from an inside-out organization to an outside-in organization after their near \$1B acquisition of that market leader in cloud-based marketing automation.

One would think that after seeking out and paying a premium price to acquire a market leader, they might actually want to listen to what that market leader's chief revenue officer had to say about social selling.

But when the top guys running Oracle heard that what Jill had to say contradicted their organizational philosophy and management direction, they couldn't swallow what they had bitten off. Having partnered with the Oracle sales organization myself, I had a deep appreciation for the challenges.

Listen Up

Today, Jill helps companies willing to listen and change their behavior.

Jill in 2017: "I've seen this movie before, over in MarTech. I spent a decade at Eloqua building the marketing automation space from 2002-2012. Scott Brinker coined the term Chief Marketing Technologist in 2010 and has documented the 'category' growth from ~150 applications to over 5,000 in 2017. Anything that could be automated was automated – at least at some companies – often without much thought as to the strategic plan underlying these sparkly new toys."

Now, she says, "the same thing is happening in SalesTech."

Disjoints and Disconnections

The problem as Jill sees it, which is also the foundation for our hypothesis, is that “If we go down this path and create even more siloes of processes and databases within SalesTech, we will create even more disparate systems, disconnected processes, disjointed analytics, and overly narrow views of each customer.”

The Chasm Between Sales and Marketing

We would add that along with those disjoints and disconnections will come a further widening of the gap between sales and marketing.

Where in this stack of tools does it become clear that the fundamental role of sales is shifting in a tectonic fashion? Just as retail stores are closing at an epic pace (when was the last time you went to the mall? Even before the pandemic.), buyers are doing everything in their power to avoid sales professionals as long as humanly possible.



Evolution of the Purchasing Process

Jill opines that “The entire purchasing process has changed. Buyers want to gather information, get advice from trusted sources, watch what others are doing ... all before they admit to a sales professional that they might be in the market.”

This is not a whim or passing fad; it is a fundamental recognition that you can either get a) reasonably unbiased and credible information online in an efficient manner, or b) get biased information in an inefficient manner from someone who is paid to “close the deal”. Hell, I’d chose A. Who wouldn’t?

In Cybersecurity marketplaces, the purchasing process is even more aggravated.

Sales Force of the Future

From our point of view, Jill’s observation and our conviction underscores the desperate need for the modern sales rep to shift from “that other guy” to a trusted partner joined with the customer on the long journey toward problem solution. That means instead of focusing on transactional sales, the sales professional who wants to become part of the relevant sales force of the future needs to focus on lifetime customer value.

Organizationally and structurally, we believe this means a reversal of our current course and a unification of what are now disparate functions within sales and marketing, at least from an infrastructure point of view. Today’s strategic sales professional needs all of the digital tools to support a long term trusted relationship with their customers, without having to re-create or manage a complex universe by themselves.

What's the Value-Add?

Our belief is that every outreach at every touch point in the relationship chain should add value.

This means relevant digital content in a managed outreach campaign that is designed to invoke behavioral response at appropriate times as trust is nurtured. We oppose "Hey, how's your week going" email messages and voicemails that "are just following up on our last discussion." In fact, we oppose emails and voicemails altogether unless and until that trusted customer relationship has been established.

But, this approach to CLV value-add outreach also translates to more time and more effort, both of which are in short supply given the number of digital tools and associated administrative activities the modern sales rep must endure. In fact, as we probably all know, the numbers range from 34% to 50% of a modern rep's time spent actually selling vs. fooling around with CRM maintenance, social research and other digital SalesTech/MarTech stacks.

Form a United Front

Jill suggests that to avoid the trap of selling in that diminishing high-friction, low-value middle ground in which most cybersecurity sales reps find themselves today, we should "Unite sales with all other front office, revenue-generating activities and create a unified, holistic infrastructure to serve all the people on your team who are serving your customers. While technology is important, don't overlook the organizational and cultural changes required to ensure customers become and remain the focus of the selling process."

We violently agree, and we also think that the strategic, quota-carrying rep must be relieved from the extraneous low value support activities preventing them from concentrating on this high-value-add nurturing. One of the most efficient ways to do this is to move all of that automated stuff along with outbound outreach over to a team of people who are trained and skilled and are focused solely on filling the top and middle of the funnel.

Two Options

We believe that in order to succeed in today's noisy and crowded cybersecurity markets, where buyers have tons of useful data at their fingertips, sales organizations will have to either a) build their own sales development teams augmented with many of those automated tools, or b) outsource the function to a provider who is leveraging all of the current best of breed Sales and MarTech tools to accelerate the TOFU/MOFU build process.

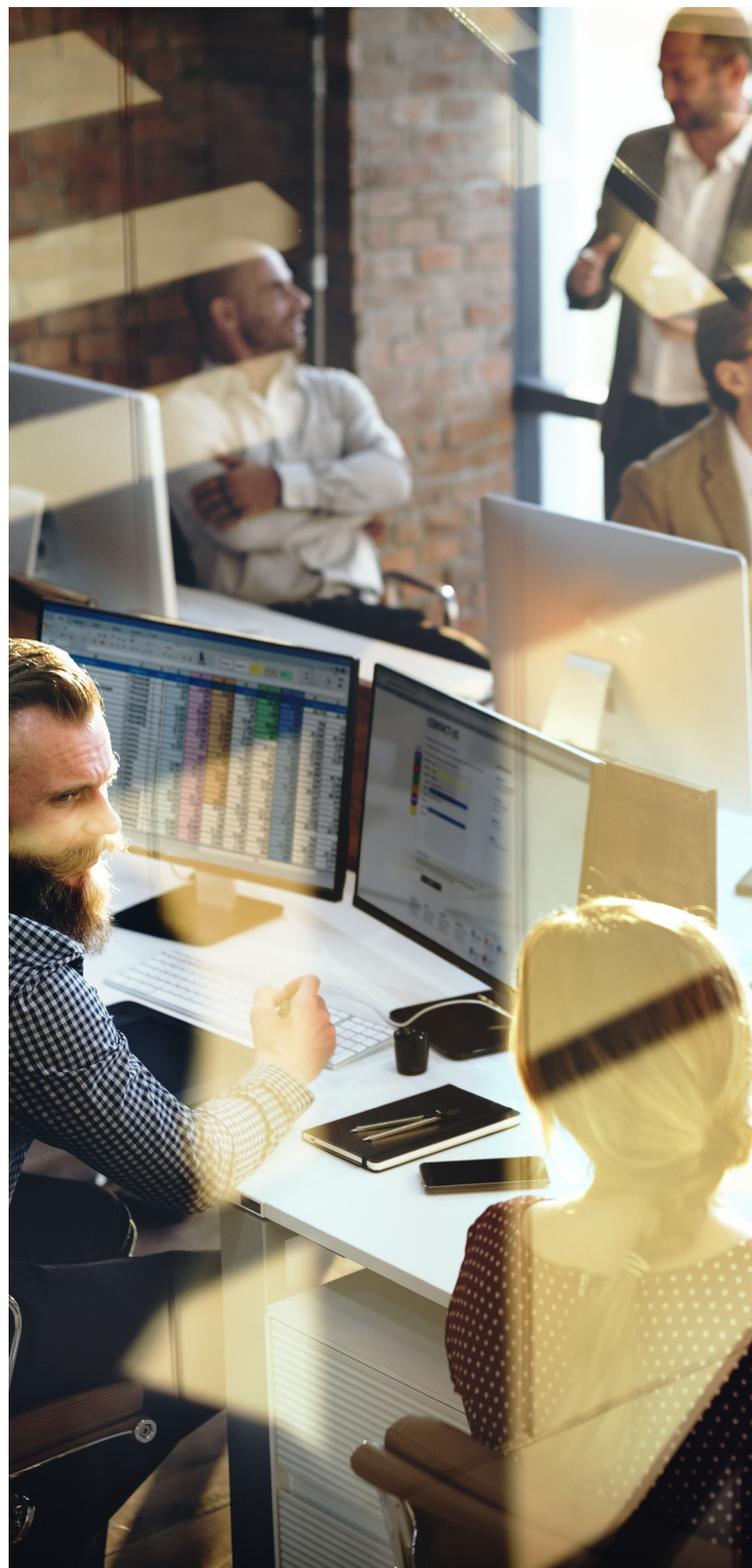
And one that can generate a surfeit of qualified and intrigued leads for the CLV rep to begin developing into future customers.

The days of expecting a sales rep to do cold calls, outbound emails, social media touches, while maintaining six different SalesTech and MarTech tools and still being able to develop and nourish prospect and customer trust are gone forever. If you're wondering why you're not selling anything, look no further than how your sales reps fill their days.

Promise of a Brighter Future

As Jill says, "Bright shiny objects will not protect your company, job or profession. Only wisdom and tenacity hold the promise of a brighter future."

Amen.



CYBER THEORY

We are a full-service cybersecurity marketing advisory firm. We constantly collect and analyze the latest customer data segmented by security practitioner, industry, and region. Our extensive knowledge model allows us personalized targeting of each and every cybersecurity buyer persona. With strategic insights from global education services, media providers, intelligence analysts, journalists, and executive leaders, we're always adapting to the latest industry trends. Our network of relationships encompass all aspects of cybersecurity as well as the related fields of fraud, audit, compliance, and risk management.

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