

Delivering Faster E-commerce Growth

How AI Marketing Automation Accelerates Time to Value and Improves
Business Outcomes



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In such a fiercely competitive e-commerce environment, time is money. So it is uber-critical to roll out a customer experience that wastes no one's time, neither your customers' time nor your own.

The fastest-growing e-commerce brands are built on personalization, convenience, and customer experience. However, human-driven personalization doesn't scale — Amazon, Ebay, Jet.com, ASOS, and Zalando are market leaders because they turn to automation and AI to drive their growth. Every moment you're manually trying to match up behavioral or purchase data with an email address or taking a one-size-fits-all approach to your customer communications because you don't have time to do more, you're losing out to the brands who do it faster, more accurately and in a more personalized way with automated AI systems. You're losing opportunities — and customers — you may never get back.

Speed to market is at the heart of time to value. How long does it take you to start using a new piece of marketing technology? How quickly can you put the tech to work in those very first days after implementation? How many low-value tasks that cost you money can you automate now, immediately freeing up your marketing team (a profit center) to be more productive, creative, and strategic?

The answer many marketing leaders give is "I don't really know," which is a big problem as we travel further into the digital age.

Up to now, marketing platforms have been designed to come to you empty. There's no data inside. Everything you'll need to make it work, you and your marketing team will enter yourselves, and that takes precious time.

But what if you could activate solutions on the first day out of implementation? Over the 90-day timeframe it takes most brands to build and launch solutions, you could already have three months' worth of results.

This whitepaper takes a look at how AI and automation are shaping the future of marketing and how platforms with built-in, e-commerce knowledge, and turnkey solutions reduce time to value (TTV) and improve business outcomes — so that you can automate low-value, time-intensive tasks and bring to market new campaigns quicker and more effectively.



Why Time to Value Is Important in E-commerce

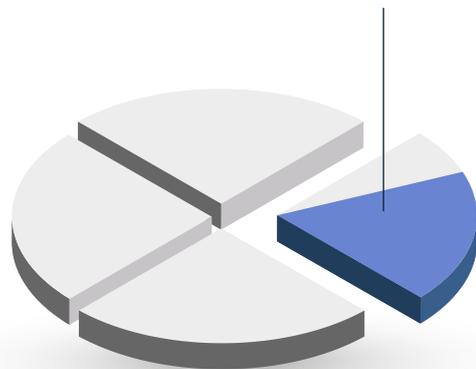
What's the business impact of time? Considering that a financial quarter contains, on average, 66 days in which to impact business results and report back on success, time is the most critical intangible that marketers have to grapple with. Plus in an e-comm environment, customers are won and lost based on the quality of the experience and the convenience and speed of the purchase process.

So what does time to value mean here?

TTV-Centric Marketing Platforms

Time to value is similar to ROI, except where ROI measures the financial success of an investment, time to value measures something more intangible: the effectiveness of an investment. In the case of marketing software, value goes beyond bottom-line growth. If you're faster integrating technology than your competitors, you stand to gain an ongoing competitive edge. Therefore, the shorter the time to value, the faster you'll see revenue growth.

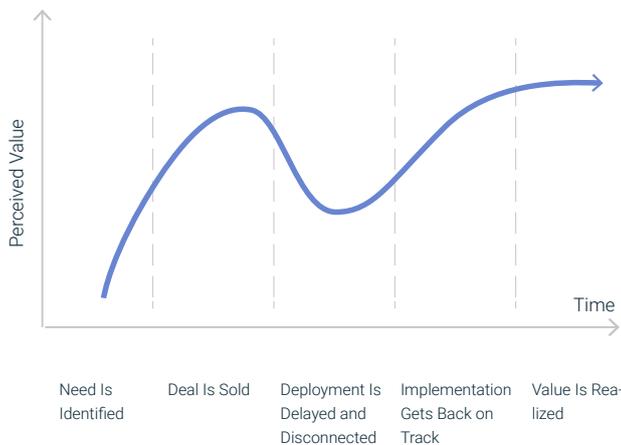
66 days a quarter
to make an impact



In marketing software, defining the “value” part can be tricky. Some might say that getting more open rates or an abandoned cart campaign is the value. Others might argue that increasing revenue is. While both may be technically valid, increasing revenue in the long run is a far more important objective. Still we see marketers around the globe investing in tech that might give them more clicks but not necessarily more conversions.

The Impact of Time on Growth

Not only does intense competition make growth hard and more expensive but being more agile with new initiatives is an equally important competitive advantage. The downside: When those initiatives take forever to put in place, you can see how easy it is to fall behind the brands who do it faster, and the growth you were hoping to claim for your brand goes to someone else.



This is why marketers have to turn to technology. Whether it's automation or analytics, martech is the one thing a brand can use to keep pace with competitors. However, building a tech stack well is a tall order for today's marketer. Their #1 responsibility is getting their message in front of customers, week in, week out, leaving little time for evaluating marketing software and platforms.

The Manual Marketer's Time Deficit

Time can impact marketing teams more than any other department because marketers are often the ones who launch campaigns that

the rest of the sales force will use. That means everyone is relying on marketing to kick things off and quick to blame them for any delays.

But as mentioned previously, marketers are also leaning on technology to help create value for their organization. The problem, though, with introducing more technology to our marketing organizations is that we also introduce the need to manage it all. This has shifted the role of many marketers from creator and strategist to tech integration manager and data facilitator.

They have to manually sift through data to create the segments they want to target and build automations correctly, and launching them within some platforms can take months. Many tools also make creating simple emails difficult, leaving marketers scrambling to find someone in the company who can create the perfect branded HTML email.

This delays the results marketers so desperately want to see and forces them to focus too much on manual, repetitive tasks that are costly for the business and pull them away from the profitable, creative work they are there to actually do.

E-commerce marketers need a lot of outside help to activate new marketing initiatives (in areas that are more IT-centric than marketing-centric), making the process slow and inefficient, while also costing revenue opportunities. This is a huge problem when marketing has to rely on other departments for basic work that technology promised it would alleviate and quickly makes marketers both time- and resource-poor.

The Decision Maker's Growth Dilemma

The good news for marketing leadership is that barriers to entering the e-commerce market are lower than ever before. More than 20,000 direct-to-consumer brands are advertising on Facebook and Instagram, and startup costs are the lowest they've ever been. But with that low barrier comes a tradeoff: it's also more competitive to get someone's attention, more difficult to get their money due to the noise, and more costly because of the rising number of advertisers and channels.

This makes growth even harder and more expensive. Budgets and head count are generally not growing as quickly as new channels and opportunities, so technology needs to better enable companies and their leaders to exploit new opportunities and new markets without requiring a massive infusion of new employees and costs. Many executives say they lack the expertise in data science, analytics, and technology to find and drive efficiencies in their team through automation and AI, and yet they still have to go forward and invest in martech that's becoming more sophisticated and more overwhelming to use.



Why Most Platforms Don't Deliver on Time to Value

Marketing technology isn't really built for marketers anymore. You typically depend on other departments to get the tech to a place where your marketing team can actually use it. Technology and AI can reduce the operational (low-value, low-impact) tasks and optimize business initiatives, but many platforms are still broad, generic clouds built for marketing in general rather than marketers in particular. Without industry-specific solutions, you'll have to customize every piece of tech you acquire and hope the stack integrates.

However, a platform with embedded strategies and tactics built from decades of customer data changes everything. Normally, when you emerge from implementation, you can't just launch campaigns. You have to feed data to the platform and painstakingly set up every automation manually. That's the time problem. On average, it takes 90 days or more to activate marketing strategies using new technology. Think about it. If every tech acquisition takes 90 days or more to work, every future tech acquisition will snowball the time-to-value problem.



Changing the Way Marketing Looks at Time to Value

What we need here is a change in philosophy about what it takes to bring marketing to life, what the most relevant technology options are out there, and how fast and measurable the solution should be. An excellent customer experience is the goal, but there are so many different ways to get there that choosing the best one isn't always obvious. Again, marketers and decision makers don't have the time to fully explore them all. You're looking for the one that will best suit your needs — and these should not be tactical needs but rather objective

needs, like revenue growth and customer retention. You also need the machine to pick up the low-hanging fruit tasks, and wouldn't it be nice if the tech came with some industry-specific use cases already built-in to guide you through proven strategies and tactics?

This shift requires us to rethink the way we evaluate technology acquisitions.

Ingredients for the Time-to-Value Shift

You need good data to glean the necessary insights to create the best CX. You need creative and content to build the campaigns that you'll have to manage and execute. Then there are channel-specific demands you'll have to meet as well as all the required reporting and analytics — and all of this takes a lot of time on top of manually populating your platform with good data.

Marketers must reduce that manual workload and, in doing so, reclaim time to do important strategic work. The only option available is to leverage industry-specific solutions. With all that embedded data from proven e-commerce strategies and tactics, marketers can activate solutions in much less time than platforms that come with no data inside.

Here are a couple key areas that allow you to put your best time-to-value foot forward:

- ▶ **Good data.** You have a better chance of putting new tech to work faster if you have your own clean data to start with. This goes beyond the imperative personalization of contact name, gender, and age. Good data also enables you to make critical comparisons, such as applying your own data to show a complete before-and-after implementation perspective and then using industry data built directly into the platform as a benchmark.
- ▶ **Objective, strategy, tactic.** Lots of marketers focus too much on tactics (welcome series) and not enough on company-wide objectives (customer growth). A platform with short time to value should allow you to map every tactic up into a strategy that then feeds into company objectives.
- ▶ **Strategic KPIs specific to your industry.** To make sure you hit your e-commerce growth objectives in revenue, increased retention, and greater CLV, a marketing platform should have tracking tools right there in the dashboard (for example, YoY growth in strategic KPIs, like AOV, that will feed up into business objectives, like revenue growth). This will not only tell you how well your strategies are performing in real time, but you'll also focus on measurable KPIs that best reflect progress in your particular vertical.

Automation + AI Slashes Time

The change in philosophy should then focus on speed to market, and the best, most implementable option here is automation powered by data-driven AI systems. Setting up a campaign may take a couple days, but then the campaign runs on its own while you monitor real-time performance and can tweak the inputs if it's not giving you the results you expect. Here are the time-to-value benefits of basic automation:

- ▶ By using data you already have, you don't have to manually load it into your marketing platform and can significantly speed up the data-onboarding steps.
- ▶ You save a huge amount of time by letting the platform segment customers and decide send times based on customer behavior.
- ▶ If you're doing complex use cases, you can minimize time to value through predefined automations and content.
- ▶ You can share best practices across accounts and consistently automate all your campaigns.

In an effort to reduce manual processes, marketers have to hunt for technology with better time-to-value capabilities. When brands minimize how long it takes to launch new solutions, automation allows marketers to:

- ▶ Find new opportunities faster.
- ▶ Improve the accessibility of analytics and decision-making without needing data scientists.
- ▶ Accelerate go-to-market strategies by reducing the time spent on low-impact tasks.
- ▶ Provide greater insights and reporting against business objectives.

Quicker time to value means more opportunities that can be optimized, which means more money, more customers, and more profit.



Activate Solutions in a Day

Using AI-powered automation, Emarsys clients are able to launch their solutions faster with our marketing platform than most others. For example, this is what a marketer would have to do in other marketing platforms to set up a Price Drop campaign:

With industry-specific turnkey solutions right there in the Strategic Dashboard, this is how a marketer would launch a Price Drop campaign in the Emarsys platform:

- 1 Load web-browsing data to see who is interested in something.
- 2 Load catalog data to see which prices dropped.
- 3 Load purchase data to see who bought something.
- 4 Calculate who is interested in the products that dropped.
- 5 Aggregate multiple products to a single message.
- 6 Build the automation scenario.
- 7 Connect the triggers.
- 8 Build campaigns.
- 9 Launch.
- 10 Request a custom report.

**Total activation time on other platforms
= 90 days**

- 
- 1 Choose strategy.
 - 2 Select tactic.
 - 3 Activate.

Total activation time

= 1 day

With Emarsys, you choose your strategy (for example, Purchase Frequency, Average Order Value, or Customer Lifetime Value) and then activate pre-populated tactics with content, creative, and cross-channel workflows in clicks.

Brands Killing It in Time to Value

Here are just a few Emarsys clients who have achieved results faster than they thought possible with ready-to-activate solutions.





City Beach, Australia

Within the first four months of the Emarsys launch, fashion outfitter City Beach saw the following results:

1%

undeliverable email rate

Their undeliverable email rate dropped **from 28% to 1%**.

Email collection in-store shot up **420%** over the previous year.

105%

YoY email revenue

Active customers increased **by 38%** with a 36% retention rate

Site sessions driven by email increased **97.6% YoY**.

71%

lifetime spend

Return on Ad Spend (ROAS) exploded in CRM performance (14X growth for Facebook and 11X for Google)

Lifetime spend went **up 71%**.

City Beach integrated Emarsys and hasn't looked back. With a 100% increase in revenue from key channels, improved speed to market, deeper customer insights, and all with a decreased cost base, Emarsys is now the marketing team's ROI engine and one that's clearly designed and tuned for modern communications.



Michael Doyle
Head of Marketing
City Beach



Replacements Ltd. United States

As a retailer specializing in hard-to-find china, crystal, silver, and collectibles, Replacements, Ltd. wanted to improve their ability to help people create memories that last a lifetime. Once the Emarsys platform was implemented, Replacements saw these results:

+100%

Return on Investment

+100% ROI within weeks of implementation.

\$101,000

in abandoned cart revenue

\$101,000 in abandoned cart revenue in the first four months after implementation, with a 13.9% conversion rate.

\$26,000

in browse abandonment revenue

\$26,000 in browse abandonment revenue in the first three months after implementation.

Emarsys gave us a more systematic and efficient way to segment and send out more one-to-one messaging. It's a fairly easy integration, and we are actually seeing how it has created a positive return on our investment in the partnership and the cost of the tools that Emarsys has provided us.



Linh Calhoun
Chief Marketing Officer
Replacements, Ltd.

salling group

The Salling Group, Denmark

Overseeing several grocery brands, The Salling Group wanted to boost e-commerce sales and build better digital experiences. They took all their data and strategy and put it in the Emarsys platform to earn these results:

35%

revenue grow

After a five-week automated email test, The Salling Group grew revenue **by 35%** – from just one email.

20%-30%

email open rates

Using the Send Time Optimization tool, The Salling Group's marketers can ensure that their emails are being delivered at times that customers are most likely to read them, resulting in huge uplifts in open rates between **20% and 30%**.

complete development cycle
directly on the website

By using the Web Channel tool, The Salling Group's marketers no longer have to wait six months for the IT department to complete their development cycle. Now the marketers can edit content directly on the website.

We were drowning in data, but we were missing a very important part. We didn't have the execution platform in place. How do we take all that strategy and data and make it do something? Then I got a call from Emarsys about this new interesting AI platform.



Jens Pytlich
Digital Marketing Manager
The Salling Group

Final Thoughts

Time to value isn't always the primary thing we think about when evaluating and implementing new software. Usually, marketers become overwhelmed by features and just want to get back up and running as soon as possible, be it 90 days or more. The part that needs to change is that marketers and decision makers should look for more robust platforms that come with industry-specific, turnkey solutions.

Try to keep these tips in mind when you're looking for impact-ready marketing technology:

- ▶ Focus on what can be automated and start with low-impact, low-skill repetitive tasks and interdepartmental sources of friction that stop organizations from achieving their goals.
- ▶ Don't repeat the mistakes others have made. Use our free [Benchmarking tool](#) to see how you compare to similar brands in e-commerce.
- ▶ Don't buy empty software. Look for specialized technology that includes proven turnkey solutions that help you match objectives to the best-performing strategies and tactics.
- ▶ Don't settle for "good enough for now" and keep doing the same thing you've always done. Demand better solutions from martech providers.

Our mission is to reduce the time it takes marketers to find new opportunities and improve the accessibility of analytics and decision-making without having to hire specialist skill sets. A valuable marketing platform should accelerate the go-to-market phase by reducing the time spent on low-impact tasks and providing greater insights and reporting against business objectives.

For more on how the Emarsys platform prioritizes time to value, [click here](#).

Activate Tactics and Grow Your Revenue Faster

Why wait 90 days when you can launch effective marketing programs in 1 day?
[Check out a demo.](#)



About Emarsys

Emarsys is the largest independent marketing platform company in the world and the only marketing platform that knows your industry. With embedded, industry-specific turnkey solutions, our software enables truly personalized, one-to-one interactions between marketers and customers across all channels — building loyalty, enriching the customer journey, and increasing revenue. This enables companies to scale marketing decisions and actions far beyond human capabilities.

With more than 1,500 customers and 4.2 billion contacts, our AI-driven platform has the ability to predict what any of your customers will be doing over 360 days.

Using engagement scores, purchase history data, and behavioral patterns, Emarsys is able to predict a contact's potential lifetime value, as well as their likelihood to purchase or churn, in a given time frame. Emarsys AI natively provides channel propensities at a 1-to-1 level for emails, mobile, web, or in-store. Products, content, and incentives are automatically tailored to each individual, for each use case and across all channels, while taking their engagement probability, purchase probability, and next cart value into account.

Resources

<https://baremetrics.com/academy/time-to-value-ttv>

<https://www.proposify.com/blog/time-to-value>

<https://www.cio.com/article/3217711/it-success-means-improving-time-to-value-for-the-business.html>

<http://thinkinformaticsblogspot.com/2009/05/understanding-defining-time-to-value.html>



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