

## **A Survey of MarTech Adoption and Impact during the COVID crisis**

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### **Abstract**

In the simplest approach, the concept of MarTech is at the crossroads of marketing and technology and refers to all the technologies that an organization can use to conduct its marketing activities, generating a significant impact on its marketing plan, its employees, its specific processes and, ultimately, on its customers, by implementing in the fields of advertising and promotion, content and experience, social and relationship, trade and sales, data and management. Among the most important trends in the field of marketing technologies are: data unification - for their processing, analysis and effective use; creating the position of director for marketing data - meant to ensure the quality of specific processes of data collection, integration and use for marketing purposes; integration and use of artificial intelligence and automation solutions on a large scale - to streamline the organization's marketing activities and processes; personalized real-time engagement with the customer - by integrating and using marketing automation solutions based on artificial intelligence to enable an immediate response to customer actions, scenarios and preferences; protection of personal data - in the context created by the introduction and application of GDPR regulations and consumer awareness of the importance of data protection. In the present paper we present the results of a quantitative research for which its main objective was to highlight the perception of potential users on marketing technologies. The results of the research were further used to propose a conceptual model to predict the behavioral intention of users to adopt MarTech-type technologies in the companies in which they work. The conceptual model, together with further research will be used for developing an empirical model for behavioral intention of users to adopt MarTech-type technologies in companies.

**Keywords:** Martech, conceptual model, behavioral intentions, marketing.

**JEL classification:** M31.

### **1. Literature review**

In its simplest sense, the concept of MarTech is at the crossroads of marketing and technology and refers to all the technologies that an organization can use to conduct its marketing activities, generating a significant impact on its marketing plan, its employees, its specific processes and, ultimately, on its customers, by implementing in the fields of

advertising and promotion, content and experience, social and relationship, trade and sales, data and management (Doughty, 2019).

Marketing technologies are the field of customer relationship management that aims to create, manage and use digital tools to automate activities and assist decision-making with informational support to cultivate customers, customize customer interactions and measure the effectiveness of campaigns.

Among the most important trends in the field of marketing technologies are: **data unification**- for their processing, analysis and effective use; **creating the position of director for marketing data** - meant to ensure the quality of specific processes of data collection, integration and use for marketing purposes; **integration and use of artificial intelligence and automation solutions on a large scale** - to streamline the organization's marketing activities and processes; **personalized real-time engagement with the customer** - by integrating and using marketing automation solutions based on artificial intelligence to enable an immediate response to customer actions, scenarios and preferences; **protection of personal data** - in the context created by the introduction and application of GDPR regulations and consumer awareness of the importance of data protection (Optimove, 2020).

In a constantly evolving society, marketing technology is a market trend for efficient customer relationship management, using digital tools in the realization and development of organizations through efficient management of activities in this field. The most important advantages in using these technologies are: democratization, identification through the use of artificial intelligence of consumer trends, a visible exposure to current social networks, more effective advertising and operationalization of marketing in a cognitive context, current, according to research studies which are imposed by the importance given to the visual part and the development of the brain in the context of the arts. Yes, marketing technology is an art that uses visual operating strategies in designing concepts that arouse interest.

A clear goal of Martech is to support marketers in finding solutions and providing customers with customized products, and the interaction is measured in accordance with efficiency standards for companies. Such an objective can be implemented if the tools used in the creation of the Martech are taken into account, which are based on programmatic advertising platforms, marketing automation software, content management systems that need to be structured, web analytics software to attract more visitors, more population for the products made and digital customer experience platforms (Schultz, 2021).

Due to the evolution of customer behavior even during the pandemic, marketers had to find new solutions to build brand confidence, so large companies had to reform their system based (now) on automated solutions to scale information, customize products to the end result presented to the customer to have a visual impact for a quality marketing (Roe, 2021).

Martech's father, Scott Brinker, categorized the solutions to the new concept into six distinct groups that make a clear distinction between technology and the term Martech: advertising and promotion, content and experience, social relations, trade and sales, data and quality management (Brinker, 2015).

In addition to these concepts that describe a new stage, vision on marketing, it is very important to introduce the 4Ps of marketing technology: process, plan, people, platforms. All these words are based on questions that are answered in order to draw a valid result for the current system (Kiwak, 2017).

To be successful in developing a Martech strategy, experts used four steps to a successful practice: building a stack (strategy and goals with a top-down progression range), involving the inclusion of all data collected (sources are very important for a complete profile), integration with all channels, collaborate with IT and measure and optimize your martech strategy. To fully use and develop the concept of Martech, it is important to know the main

types of systems we can operate with: customer relationship management (CRM) platforms, customer data platforms, marketing automation platforms, management platforms of social networks, personalization platforms, analysis and testing platforms (Moore, 2018).

According to the latest data and current trends in Martech, users and developers of concept in the product must unify the stored data, manage customer data through specialized people appointed as marketing data director, use artificial intelligence and automation on a large scale, and personalized involvement must be done in real time (Lukman, 2020).

Using Martech content tools will save time and simplify workflows already using automated tools, improve the internal communication of the entire team, create more intelligent content based on artificial intelligence and state-of-the-art technology used for this purpose, will build better relationships between companies and buyers, but also with the company team.

## 2. Research

Martech is the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) area that creates, manages and uses digital tools that enable marketers to automate tasks and make data-driven decisions. An important goal of MarTech is to help marketers find and cultivate customers, customize customer interaction, and measure the effectiveness of their campaigns.

For a better understanding of the perception of potential users on marketing technologies, a qualitative approach was preferred, as the underlying patterns, beliefs, and expectations could be discovered in an open conversation with the company representative, as opposed to quantitative research.

The main results of the research were the following:

- 74% of them mentioned that they have used MarTech technologies in the last year, that most organizations are found by customers through the media (51%), followed by recommendations (26%) and paid promotion (20%);
- The most used tools to convert customers are digital remarketing ads (49%) and offer optimization platforms (31%);
- to keep their customers, companies use: constantly scheduled social media posts (49%), constantly scheduled ads on Google media (27%), loyalty offers (24%);
- the main factors that affect the intention to adopt MarTech technologies, from the respondents' perspective are: technological factors (48%), organizational factors (39%), environmental factors (13%);
- The main perceived advantages of using MarTech technology are: allows the creation of personalized content, offers and campaigns (29%), the automation of repetitive manual tasks (22%), the efficiency of workflows (21%);
- the results highlight the following perceived disadvantages (mentioned in order of number of respondents): information hacked or stolen by competitors (44%), privacy issues (30%), various information about the activities and meanings of customers using cookies (26%);

Regarding the benefits felt by users after using MarTech techniques, respondents perceived the following:

- find out more easily the trends of consumers (33%),
- convert customers online (23%),
- to measure campaigns becomes possible because of use of Martech (21%),
- build profitable business relationships (21%),
- scalability of the organization is improved (2%);

When respondents were asked for their views on a number of statements regarding MarTech technologies and their use, the statements and responses were as follows:

- When implementing MarTech technologies I had to increase the marketing

- budget within the organization. - YES answer (70%)
- Innovation has been the main attribute in the implementation of MarTech technologies.
  - YES answer (83%)
- After the implementation of MarTech technologies, the time to solve problems within the organization was reduced. - YES (87%)
- We developed a MarTech strategy considering the creation of a plan in line with the organization's objectives. - YES (74%)
- We have developed a team of specialists with specific MarTech skills. - YES (87%)

Asked how they measure the efficiency of using MarTech technologies, most respondents mentioned that this was highlighted by the growth of the organization (45%), while 39% of respondents stated that it measures efficiency through the channels / platforms used.

All companies are different and this means that the needs of companies will vary when it comes to the technology they use. Given the large number of tools available on the market today, it is necessary to know the needs before the research process. Another thing to keep in mind when choosing technology is that many of the platforms used for marketing technology will have more features. Therefore, it may be discovered that a single piece of new technology will have more features. Therefore, it may be discovered that a single piece of new technology may be attached that could replace two or more of the old parts.

In view of all these characteristics, respondents were asked to express their confidence in MarTech-type technologies, and the results indicated the following:

- Trust - 48%
- Have enough confidence - 39%
- They have great confidence - 13%

Regarding the level of perception (knowledge) on MarTech technologies, most of the respondents answered that it is a high one (52%), 30% of them mentioned that their level of perception is average (choosing the answer neither (30%) and only 17% chose the very high variant (17%).

Satisfaction with the use of MarTech technologies was also measured by a question, and most respondents (57%) said they were satisfied with the results, 26% said they were very satisfied and only 17% they chose the neutral answer option (neither).

### 3. Conceptual model

Following the research presented above, a comparative study of the adoption of different categories of marketing technologies was conducted.

The sharp dynamics of the development of the world market of MarTech solutions from 2011- 2018, with an average annual growth rate of 72.54%, registered a significant attenuation in the period 2018-2020, the average annual growth rate decreasing to only 8.23 %, and in 2021 compared to 2020 to only 1.21%, which indicates a possible entry of the market in a stage of maturity, characterized by a rather qualitative development of the solutions offered to the organizations present in the various industries.

At the end of 2021, the global market for MarTech solutions counted, according to the portal <https://martech5000.com/>, 8097 marketing technology providers grouped into the following six categories (we kept their names and specific subcategories in English in the original) as can be seen in Figure 1: Advertising & Promotion - 934 suppliers (11.53% in total), increasing by 4.1% compared to 2019; Commerce & Sales - 1319 suppliers (14.06%), increasing by 9.0% compared to 2019; Content & Experience - 1966 suppliers (24.28%), increasing by 5.6% compared to 2019; Data - 1285 suppliers (15.87%), increasing by 25.5% compared to 2019, Management - 606 suppliers (7.48%), increasing by 15.2% compared to 2019; and Social & Relationships - 1987(24.53%), increasing by 13.7% compared to 2019.

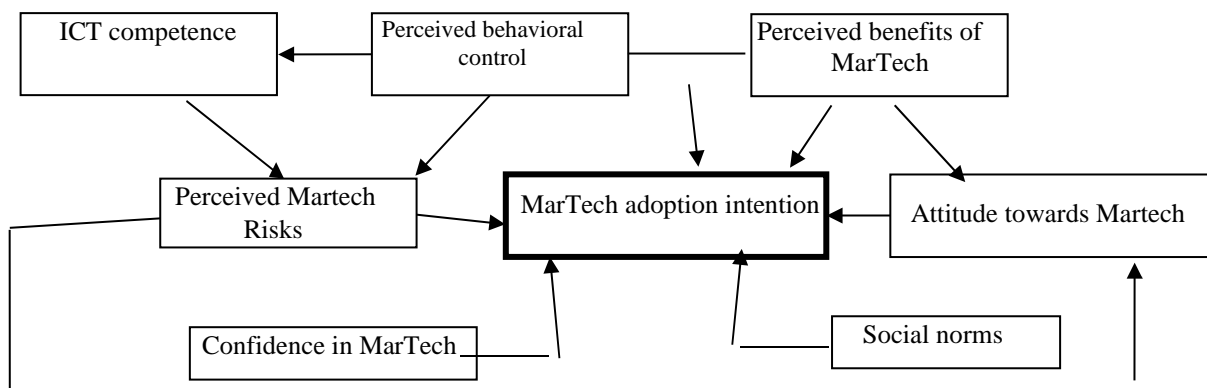
Total Solutions	8,000	Growth Since 2019	Biggest Subcategory Growth (Percentage) Since 2019	
Advertising & Promotion	922	4.1% ↑	Print	35% ↑
Content & Experience	1,936	5.6% ↑	Video Marketing	26% ↑
Social & Relationships	1,969	13.7% ↑	Conversational Marketing & Chat	70% ↑
Commerce & Sales	1,314	9.0% ↑	Retail Proximity & IOT	15% ↑
Data	1,258	25.5% ↑	Governance, Compliance & Privacy	68% ↑
Management	601	15.2% ↑	Projects & Workflow	41% ↑



Source: Chiefmartech

**Figure 1 Marketing technology providers**

In order to predict the behavioral intention of users to adopt MarTech technologies in the companies in which they work, we proposed the following conceptual model, model that together with further researches we will test and based on it will develop an empirical model for behavioral intention of users to adopt MarTech-type technologies in companies, see Figure 2.



**Figure 2 Conceptual model: Behavioral intent of users to adopt MarTech-type technologies in the companies in which they work.**

The MarTech Replacement Survey did discover that the pandemic affected how teams staffed up to manage these new technologies. When asked whether new staff were hired in conjunction with the replacement, no fewer than 43% of the respondents in the 2019 survey reported hiring a new team. Only 26% retrained existing staff, while 24% took a mixed approach. But in this latest survey, the answer was dramatically different. 55% retrained the

existing team. Only 18% hired a new team. 24% reported a mix of new hires and retraining, while relying on an outside agency was down from 8% to 3% (Davis, 2021), as can be seen from Figure 3.



*Figure 3 The MarTech Replacement Survey – selective results.*

Martech's rising importance can be appreciated from the perspective of the pressures that many telecom providers globally are currently feeling. Telco operators achieve growth in two ways – either by acquiring new customers or increasing average revenue per user. Thanks to falling device and data prices, the number of smartphone subscriptions worldwide today surpasses six billion.

Pre-covid, service providers were nudging consumers to go digital, but it is now the other way round -thanks to a surge in demand for digital customer experiences. Martech enables superfast digitalization which is absolutely crucial in a post covid world. When a consumer does not want to go out, they will evaluate service providers by their ability to serve them online (Sanyal, 2021).

## Conclusions

There are many ways in which managers' behavioral intent to use MarTech technologies can be addressed. The adoption of MarTech technologies can be approached as a planned behavior, which is not under the complete volitional control of individuals, so the introduction of perceived behavioral control in the model can increase its predictive power. Not only is the perception of behavioral control able to diminish concerns about the adoption of MarTech technologies, but also users with a high degree of perceived behavioral control tend to report lower degrees of perceived risk. This means that they are more confident in finding ways to protect themselves against the risks of adopting new technologies and exposing them to threats.

Since the adoption of a certain behavior cannot guarantee continuity, it is very important for both the companies producing MarTech technologies and for the third parties that benefit from such a computer system to impose the trust and to increase the behavioral control perceived by the users, taking into account that a user may stop using it at any time.

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