

# Marketing automation drives CRM ROI - but few firms benefiting

Posted by **Natalie Brandweiner**

New research has shown marketing automation drives CRM ROI but less than half of companies using CRM are taking advantage.

Despite marketing traditionally considered a cost centre rather than a revenue generator, Nucleus Research surveyed 223 CRM decision makers and found that marketing automation drives a 14.5% increase in sales productivity and a 12.2% reduction in marketing overhead.

Additionally, the research showed that marketing automations generates more leads at a lower cost per leads, delivers more sales-ready leads with relevant data and reduces the cost and time to develop and launch campaigns.

However, only 49% of respondents claimed to use robust marketing automation. Of those, 21% have robust marketing automation within their core application and 28% have implemented a standalone marketing application in addition to CRM, said the research.

In its research, Nucleus found three main barriers that prevent companies from adopting marketing automation: perceived cost, usability challenges and hesitance to measure.

To maximise ROI from marketing automation, Nucleus has outlined a number of best practices:

- » Realistically evaluate usability and staff skills. Depending on how much you plan to use the application and how complex your campaign strategy is, your needs will be different.
- » Select a solution that has turnkey integration with your CRM and other related applications.
- » Implement analytics and reporting across the pipeline so you can fine-tune your efforts based on real results.
- » Demand a free pilot. A pilot is a great opportunity to test the value marketing automation brings, as well as the application usability and customer service of your vendor, before signing up.

The report concludes: "With a focus on the right objectives, marketing can use CRM and marketing automation data to solve the problems sales doesn't know it has yet. Ongoing analysis of lost sales and other data can help marketing drive greater ongoing sales efficiencies by making the cycle of new sales problem to sales solution shorter and shorter.

“ Marketing automation has the potential to raise the profile of marketers as sales enablers, and drive significant marketing overhead savings and increases in sales productivity. ”

[Read the article online here](#)