

Zoho Looks to Consolidate Marketing Platform Capabilities Under One Roof



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Digital marketers face a variety of unique challenges – from the ever-increasing proliferation of customer engagement channels to heightened customer expectations across every touchpoint. Yet few pain points are felt as sharply by today’s marketers as the unchecked growth and propagation of marketing applications and point solutions.

In days gone by, marketers could expect to run their operations and campaigns on a small handful of solutions (or, in many cases, off a series of spreadsheets or static databases!). As the number of interaction channels has increased, and as the complexity of marketing feature sets has evolved, today’s marketers must contend with a fragmented, disconnected, and disparate set of tools. Most of Info-Tech’s members tell us they have well over a dozen solutions in place for marketing enablement – everything from marketing automation tools to social media management platforms, mobile marketing systems, and customer intelligence applications.

The result? A sprawling, confusing series of tools that frustrates marketing end users and results in wasted technology dollars, duplicate and conflicting data, and untapped potential to better target high-value prospects and customers.

To mitigate technology sprawl, Info-Tech advocates having a focused marketing enablement roadmap that’s driven by a clear understanding of your customer personas, marketing workflows, and critical technology requirements. Rationalization and consolidation of your marketing technology stack will pay dividends in several ways – from helping to create a unified view of your customers across marketing touchpoints to reducing the integration, training, and vendor management complexity associated with juggling dozens of different vendors under one roof. Our members report material end-user satisfaction, cost rationalization, and process efficiency uplift after conducting a marketing technology rationalization.

Zoho is a strong player in the customer experience space, with an admirable focus on unlocking customer value through highly competitive licensing and constant feature innovation. The announcement of Zoho Marketing Plus is a further step in the right direction, aimed at providing savvy digital marketers with a full suite of robust tools and reducing the

need for a disjointed array of one-off point solutions.

In addition to a core stack of features centered on marketing orchestration and operations management, Zoho Marketing Plus has expanded Zoho's capabilities for customer intelligence – a major frontier for marketers that's routinely cited among our members. Augmented capabilities for reporting and segmentation are at the forefront of this expansion and will allow marketers of all stripes to become more proficient with targeting the right customers at the right moments.

Marketing Plus also provides unified collaboration and content curation capabilities. As any marketing professional will tell you, the ability to have a centralized view of project progress and to collaborate with peers within – and outside – the marketing department is a critical ingredient for successful campaign execution. Also receiving a boost is the continuity of interface elements and user experience design across Zoho's marketing suite. Workflow management capabilities also take a front seat, with improvements to rules engines and automation functionality.

Finally, Zoho continues its tradition of product accessibility – unlike some of its upmarket peers, Zoho is highly cognizant of customer value and is priced with that in mind. Starting at US\$25/month for the first user, with subsequent users costing \$10/month, we expect Marketing Plus to see strong adoption across a variety of segments, with strong resonance in value-focused midmarket organizations.

As the marketing arena continues to evolve, we welcome the efforts of leaders like Zoho in providing consolidated toolsets that reduce sprawl while equipping digital marketers with the tools they need to target the right customers and deliver compelling marketing experiences across an ever-growing number of channels and touchpoints.

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