

Magic Quadrant for Mobile Marketing Platforms

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Marketing leaders use mobile marketing platforms to engage customers through meaningful, contextually relevant interactions on their most personal devices. By providing mobile-specific analytics, automation and engagement tools, vendors enable marketers to capitalize on consumer mobility.

Market Definition/Description

Mobile marketing platforms help marketers manage and activate marketing campaigns that target consumers with direct marketing on their mobile device. Mobile's unique ability to provide consumers with contextually relevant, timely and location-specific marketing engagements enables marketers to maximize their efforts. Native or third-party analytics are a critical foundation of this activity to support audience targeting, campaign sequencing, personalization and performance measurement.

Mobile marketing platforms exploit a range of mobile-specific tactics, including mobile websites, mobile applications, messaging (including SMS messaging and devoted applications), push notifications (in-app and off websites), location-triggered interactions and mobile wallet cards. Mobile marketing platforms can operate as stand-alone solutions within a marketing organization or agency. However, they are typically integrated with or operate alongside other marketing technology components, such as customer data platforms (CDPs), or as a set of capabilities in a multichannel marketing hub (MMH) or within marketing automation applications.

Marketing organizations can deploy these mobile tactics by using one of two platforms:

- **An MMH with native mobile marketing capabilities:** Offers mobile marketing as part of a broader marketing cloud. These vendors deliver a range of engagement and analytics capabilities for mobile web and mobile applications. They offer native mobile marketing capabilities but may also partner with third parties to support capabilities around delivery, monetization and measurement.
- **A purpose-built mobile marketing platform:** Enables direct-marketing engagement capabilities including SMS campaign design, delivery and reporting, push notification and in-app messaging, and mobile wallet integration. Additionally, these solutions can link to existing marketing platforms, such as email and social marketing.

Gartner’s Magic Quadrant for mobile marketing platforms views the market as a collection of transformational technologies and techniques. Marketers leverage these mobile technologies and techniques to engage with consumers, who increasingly mediate most (if not all) of their lives with their mobile devices – their smartphone in particular. Due to mobile’s near-ubiquitous use and unique technologies, marketers can be with consumers as they move between online and offline experiences. Mobile technologies and consumers’ behavior are in a state of constant flux, keeping this market dynamic. This Magic Quadrant reflects the evolving nature of mobile technologies and consumers’ behaviors, and reports significant shifts among many of the vendors versus last year’s Magic Quadrant.

Magic Quadrant

Figure 1. Magic Quadrant for Mobile Marketing Platforms



Source: Gartner (July 2019)

Vendor Strengths and Cautions

Adobe

Adobe is a Challenger. With its 2018 mobile-specific enhancements across its Experience Cloud solutions, such as those tied to testing and mobile campaign optimization, Adobe has met our criteria to be included in this year's Magic Quadrant. Adobe primarily serves financial services, retail, media and hospitality industries. Marketers with investments in Adobe solutions seeking robust analytics capabilities and a breadth of mobile marketing functionalities should consider Adobe.

Strengths

- **Breadth:** Adobe's product suite constitutes a near-total solution constructed around user profiles that reflect real-time behavior. Adobe's success across a wide range of vertical industries reflects this breadth, and client references endorsed the completeness of Adobe's overall product suite.
- **Intelligence:** Marketers can design mobile campaigns that go beyond a simple rule-based approach, using algorithms that predict customer behavior and avert "message fatigue" that can result in a poor customer experience.
- **Powerful analytics:** Adobe's analytics package spans mobile messaging, app and web, and includes native web and app attribution. This provides mobile marketers with clear insights into the efficacy of campaigns focusing primarily on engagement and conversion.

Cautions

- **Integration and deployment complexity:** Adobe's solution requires significant effort to make it operational. Client references cited this work as critical to success, yet rated their satisfaction in this category lower than the average customer rating among all vendors. Clients reported an average deployment time nearly twice as long as the average time across other vendors in this Magic Quadrant.
- **Cost and support:** References for this report rated their satisfaction with Adobe's pricing and total cost of ownership (TCO) lower than for other vendors, and Adobe's ratings for service and support were substantially below those for all other vendors. Gartner client inquiries revealed difficulty with the added costs imposed by integration challenges and the opacity in Adobe's pricing, such as variable costs tied to mobile messaging.

Airship

Airship (formerly Urban Airship) is a Leader. Airship's solution has evolved from a push-notification specialization tool to a purpose-built mobile marketing platform. Since last year's Magic Quadrant, Airship has layered in artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) capabilities to augment its built-in analytics for audience targeting and campaign orchestration. Airship also can incorporate its customers' existing analytics stacks through its Open Channels

API. Marketers in retail, media, financial services, and travel and hospitality looking to activate cross-channel messaging should consider Airship.

Strengths

- **Expanded markets, channels and integrations:** Airship expanded its geographic reach and customer base with the acquisition of Paris-based mobile marketing platform, Accengage. In 2018, Airship provided UI and API support, enabling the ability to trigger messages in Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp and rich communication services (RCS). Airship's platform also delivers API support for Internet of Things (IoT) devices such as smart speaker solutions, in-car systems and game consoles. Throughout 2018, Airship brought to market several expanded integrations with Salesforce, IBM Watson Marketing and Adobe, enabling users to view Airship's mobile user data analytics within these MMH offerings.
- **Enhanced web notifications:** In 2018, Airship provided direct API support for WordPress and Drupal content management systems (CMSs), allowing these CMS platform users to create and distribute mobile browser push notifications. Client references utilizing this feature gave it high marks.
- **AI-/ML-enabled orchestration:** Airship provides enhanced AI/ML capabilities that allow mobile marketers to automate the delivery of email and SMS messages. The company made enhanced improvements to its AI/ML capabilities in 2018, enabling cross-channel messaging campaigns guided by its send-time optimization algorithms. Airship also built automation logic into the platform's analytics for tracking customers' apps, reducing the platform's response time when an app user's behavior or usage hits specified threshold triggers.

Cautions

- **Messaging controls and segmentation:** Some client references expressed the need for more robust message prioritization for automation purposes. References also noted a desire for enhanced layering of event tags (e.g., a swipe or tap) for segmentation. Airship is currently upgrading all customers with Accengage's segmentation and message prioritization capabilities. It expects to complete the free upgrade by the end of 2019.
- **Pricing:** Some references expressed concerns with Airship's pricing model. Marketers targeting app-user expansion should carefully model growth plans and resultant pricing impacts when considering Airship.

Braze

Braze is a Leader. Its purpose-built mobile marketing platform delivers personalized real-time customer engagement across a range of channels. The company is positioning itself as a fully featured MMH solution. Braze primarily serves the high-tech, retail and media industries. B2C marketers seeking a mobile marketing platform focused on optimizing real-time experiences should consider Braze.

Strengths

- **Real-time architecture:** Braze's platform is designed from the ground up for real-time engagement. The system is able to process data from points of integration as a stream of events rather than relying on scheduled periodic updates (provided these connected systems are similarly capable). This provides an up-to-the-moment view of the customer and allows mobile marketers the potential to execute campaigns optimized to customer behavior.
- **Flexible integration:** In 2018, Braze introduced its partnership hub, "Braze Alloys," enabling customers to extend the platform's functionality via integrations with other marketing technologies, such as behavioral analytics vendors. These partner integrations help Braze incorporate new channels and deliver additional functionality in certain areas, such as email and personalization. Braze's partnership with Snowflake for data warehousing in the cloud also helps accelerate data sharing for its users.
- **Support and usability:** Client references scored Braze's service and support well-above average and praised the platform's ease of use. Time to deployment was shorter than average across all vendors and, in particular, took less time than the majority of MMH vendors with whom the company competes.

Cautions

- **Predictive behavior:** While Braze is growing its internal AI and ML development capabilities, marketers may find the company's ability to build campaigns that incorporate predictive behavior less robust than their support for rule-based designs.
- **Architectural and organizational readiness:** Braze's real-time data streaming architecture demands that the components of a client's marketing technology environment that connect to Braze's system be able to accommodate this design. Clients considering Braze should carefully evaluate the level of investment and effort that may be required to upgrade existing systems to realize the full capabilities of Braze's platform.

FollowAnalytics

FollowAnalytics is a Challenger. As a purpose-built mobile marketing platform, FollowAnalytics focuses on serving enterprise marketing teams already using robust marketing platforms, such as MMHs. The company's platform leverages its mobile-centric/app-centric usage and behavior analytics and automated segmentation tools to extend MMHs' mobile capabilities. Marketers in retail, media, and leisure and hospitality industries extending their mobile messaging techniques in an MMH should consider FollowAnalytics.

Strengths

- **Triggered campaign creation:** FollowAnalytics offers "dynamic campaigns." This feature analyzes a user's specific in-app or on-site action(s) to trigger offers, allowing marketers to automate offers based on predetermined thresholds. FollowAnalytics' dynamic campaigns feature also can move customers into different segments based on their behaviors or actions.

- **MMH integrations:** FollowAnalytics is best-suited for extending MMH platforms' mobile marketing capabilities. The company's platform boasts native integrations with Salesforce, Marketo Engage, Oracle Responsys, IBM's Silverpop and Selligent Marketing Cloud. FollowAnalytics also provides native connectors for Magento Commerce (part of Adobe Commerce Cloud) and Salesforce B2C Commerce, as well as Shopify.
- **Predictive capabilities:** In 2018, FollowAnalytics introduced a number of baseline AI/ML techniques, such as providing predictive assessments for how new customers may progress in the relationship with a brand over time.

Cautions

- **Trailing AI/ML expectations:** FollowAnalytics' focus on adding AI/ML capabilities addresses marketers' growing demand to relieve their teams of labor- and time-intensive analysis tasks. However, its timeline for delivering these AI/ML capabilities, such as churn analytics and deep segment analytics later in 2019, may trail expectations of more advanced marketing teams.
- **App-centric focus:** FollowAnalytics has a dedicated strategic focus on extending mobile capabilities of larger MMHs by providing mobile-centric and app-centric capabilities. However, the company's platform is also designed for mobile- or app-centric marketing teams. Midsize or smaller mobile marketing teams not looking to develop a mobile-app strategy may need to consider other vendors.

IBM

IBM is a Challenger. It offers native mobile capabilities through the Watson Marketing mobile component of its MMH. The company's positioning of the Watson artificial intelligence engine likewise supports its mobile capabilities. IBM's Watson Marketing mobile platform is particularly suited for marketing teams already invested in Watson Marketing, especially those in retail, leisure and hospitality, and financial services.

Strengths

- **Serves midsize to large-size enterprises:** IBM targets midsize to large-size enterprises with Watson Marketing's extended capabilities in mobile marketing. IBM notes that it is expanding mobile use cases for its Watson Marketing Assistant tool, which provides mobile campaign performance reporting and mobile campaign sentiment analysis.
- **Expanded Universal Behavior Exchange (UBX) ecosystem:** Since 2018, Watson Marketing's UBX – IBM's tool for integrating a client's datasets with any of IBM's technology partners' solutions – added 40 new integrations.
- **Messaging:** IBM showed marked improvements in in-app message handling, particularly for creating in-app content (via a new content API). The company added support for Firebase Cloud Messaging (FCM), Google's cloud messaging service that enables marketers to send messages (such as push notifications) to Android, iOS and web browsers at no cost. IBM also

added support for two-way SMS messaging using the SMPP protocol, enhancing efficiencies for users.

Cautions

- **Overall performance:** IBM's customer references scored the company's mobile marketing platform's performance, scalability and/or throughput significantly lower than all other vendors in the Magic Quadrant. Marketers considering IBM should develop service-level agreements (SLAs) to ensure the platform will scale to satisfy their company's marketing performance requirements.
- **Customer retention:** Customer references gave IBM among the lowest scores across all vendors for the customer-retention critical capabilities use case. Marketers with a strong focus on customer loyalty considering IBM should ensure the platform will realize their ongoing retention and reengagement scenarios.

In June 2019, IBM closed on its sale of the Watson Campaign Automation platform and other marketing, advertising and commerce assets to Centerbridge Partners, a private equity firm. An as-yet unnamed company will include IBM's marketing technology assets, which include campaign automation and mobile marketing.

IMImobile

IMImobile is a Niche Player. Drawing on its heritage of serving wireless carriers, IMImobile offers IMIcampaign as a purpose-built mobile marketing platform that unifies mobile campaigns, customer profiles and offer management. IMImobile typically targets its platform at marketing and IT teams where retention and upsell – as opposed to pure acquisition – are the focus. Midsize or larger enterprises in the telecommunications, retail or financial services industries seeking to deploy a mobile-centric marketing strategy should consider IMImobile.

Strengths

- **Cross-channel campaign management:** IMImobile added a large-enterprise campaign-approval workflow tool in late 2018, as well as a new drag-and-drop SMS campaign creation feature. The company also added native support for mobile wallet campaigns.
- **User experience:** IMImobile has focused on simplifying the overall user experience, particularly workflows around campaign creation. Customer references made special note of the platform's ease of use when creating mobile messaging campaigns.
- **Expanded martech integrations:** IMImobile added integrations with Google Analytics, Amazon S3 and Amazon Redshift, Adobe Experience Manager, and Movable Ink. Beyond data integration, these new integrations mark steps toward improving content management capabilities. Over the last year, the company also acquired two companies in North America, including Express Pigeon – an email service provider (ESP) – to serve customers operating in the U.S. and Canada.

Cautions

- **Message campaign controls:** References expressed a desire for message controls around recency (e.g., control message-sends for a given time frame) and occurrence (e.g., frequency capping).
- **Acquisition use case:** References scored in the neutral to dissatisfied range for acquisition use cases. Given that marketers increasingly rely on the mobile channel for acquiring new customers, marketers considering IMI mobile should press the company for a roadmap with detail on how the company will improve in this area.

Leanplum

Leanplum is a Visionary. Its purpose-built mobile marketing solution offers marketers the ability to manage customers' mobile experiences and orchestrate campaigns within a single SaaS platform, including those extending to channels beyond mobile. The company primarily serves the media, retail and financial services industries. Marketers seeking to prioritize mobile experiences within their native and expanded partnership integrations should consider Leanplum.

Strengths

- **Simple product packaging:** Leanplum's SaaS solution consists of a single product, simplifying decision making for marketers seeking a mobile marketing platform. Prospective customers need only choose among the three tiers of service that Leanplum offers, but they can migrate to a higher or lower tier, if necessary. Client references rated the evaluation and contract negotiation experience well-above average compared to the other vendors in this Magic Quadrant.
- **Mobile-mediated experiences:** Leanplum expanded support to new channels, such as voice-enabled speakers and over-the-top (OTT) boxes, while maintaining marketers' ability to integrate these experiences with those on mobile devices. Customers can design and execute both engagement and retention campaigns for some of these expanded channels.
- **Testing and personalization:** References praised the platform's support for various forms of testing – especially in-app A/B testing. In addition to uncovering insights, these testing mechanisms allow marketers to deliver personalized messaging and in-app journeys.

Cautions

- **Feature discoverability:** References reported finding the tool overly complex and experienced difficulties discerning whether a feature was available and, if so, how to use it. They cited a strong dependence on the customer success team to resolve such issues, indicating that brands considering Leanplum's solution should secure SLAs that assure the responsiveness of the client success team.

- **Usability:** Customers scored Leanplum's ease of use for its solution well-below average. While all of Leanplum's customers said they would recommend the company, nearly half said they would do so "with qualifications." Those in the latter group scored the platform's ease of use significantly lower than those recommending the product without hesitation. These scores may reflect the company's legacy product. Leanplum's current version delivers a revamped and simplified visual campaign creator that was designed to address usability shortcomings.

Localytics

Localytics is a Challenger. Its purpose-built mobile marketing platform functions as a stand-alone solution and as a mobile-oriented extension of MMHs, including Adobe, Salesforce and Oracle. The company has strategic sales and technology partnerships with all three. While Localytics' solution's origins lie in app analytics and engagement, the company reoriented its approach in 2018 to encompass a range of customers' brand interactions beyond just mobile app engagements. The company primarily serves the media, travel and hospitality, and retail industries. B2C marketers seeking to enhance the mobile engagement capabilities of their existing marketing technology stack should consider Localytics.

Strengths

- **Quick start:** Client references rated the solution's out-of-the-box functionality above average compared to other Magic Quadrant vendors. A number of references praised the company's customer success efforts, citing fast results upon installing and using the tool.
- **Enterprise scale:** Enterprises comprise a significant majority of Localytics' customer base (among the highest percentage of vendors in this Magic Quadrant). This reflects the company's value proposition: delivering high-quality mobile connections to customers that have deployed an MMH, but whose ambitions for mobile engagements exceed the capabilities of their MMH.
- **Campaign creation:** In 2018, Localytics introduced Workflows, the company's campaign creation tool. Marketers are able to create complex, structured campaigns that incorporate multiple behavioral triggers combined with Boolean logic and user attributes to deliver highly personalized campaigns.

Cautions

- **Unified app view:** Multiple client references cited the platform's inability to provide a unified view of a company's applications across operating system platforms. Customers said this forced them to export and process data externally to analyze overall app performance across iOS and Android. Localytics states that its 4Q19 platform revision will address this shortcoming.
- **Acquisition focus:** While Localytics' client references all recommended the solution, nearly half did so "with qualifications." All of the latter customers reported a lack of satisfaction with

the platform's support for marketing campaigns focused on acquisition. Clients whose use cases for mobile marketing include not only engagement and retention, but also acquisition should carefully vet the platform's ability to realize these goals.

MoEngage

MoEngage is a Niche Player. Its offering has evolved from its origins as a mobile app point solution serving midsize firms in India and Southeast Asia to a full, purpose-built mobile marketing platform suitable for enterprises in Asia, the U.S. and Europe. The company primarily serves the retail, media, and travel and hospitality industries, and a majority of its customers are still midmarket. B2C marketers seeking a mobile marketing platform as a complete marketing automation solution should consider MoEngage.

Strengths

- **Breadth:** MoEngage made significant additions to its product suite in 2018. The company revamped and expanded its analytics capabilities to include predictive elements and the ability to automatically build a targetable segment based on an insight. MoEngage delivers many advanced capabilities natively within the platform and maintains a rich set of APIs to integrate with a wide variety of martech components.
- **Scale:** MoEngage has shifted its focus to serve enterprise customers, winning a number of large accounts in 2018. The company reports that enterprise customers now represent 40% of its client base. MoEngage's solution consists of multiple levels of control and access, making the solution usable across an enterprise's brands, geographies and digital properties.
- **Partnership mindset:** MoEngage has invested significantly to expand its customer success team, including offering enterprise customers a devoted account manager responsible for onboarding, training and ongoing support. Client references rated their overall experience with MoEngage among the highest of all vendors in this Magic Quadrant. References specifically noted the quality of their account management team as a point of differentiation.

Cautions

- **Complexity:** Client references cited challenges associated with learning and using the full set of platform features. Marketers considering MoEngage may need to rely on the company's client success team beyond onboarding to ensure they exploit the platform's full breadth of capabilities.
- **Performance:** MoEngage has grown rapidly, and its new enterprise client base imposes greater performance requirements on its system. Enterprise clients considering MoEngage should ensure that system SLAs satisfy future ambitions for growth.

Oracle

Oracle is a Niche Player. Oracle Marketing Cloud supports B2B (via Oracle Eloqua) and B2C (via Oracle Responsys) mobile marketing efforts. The company targets global enterprise brands

across multiple industries. Oracle Marketing Cloud's baseline mobile offerings are best-suited as extensions of its multichannel marketing hub deployments. Marketers should consider Oracle when they need adequate mobile marketing and engagement support as part of a broader Oracle MMH deployment.

Strengths

- **Cross-channel optimization:** Oracle Responsys provides B2C marketers a central hub for creating, testing and launching mobile marketing initiatives within a multichannel campaign, including mobile email, SMS and push notifications. Since the publication of last year's Magic Quadrant, Oracle completed its integration of Oracle Maxymiser with Eloqua, extending testing, optimization and personalization capabilities across mobile landing pages and webpages.
- **SMS self-service:** Oracle upped its self-service capabilities for managing SMS campaigns with the introduction of the SMS Public Aggregator Network (SPAN) in 2018. SPAN provides mobile marketers the ability to select SMS aggregators based on region, price or routing type (e.g., customers can designate separate aggregators for inbound and outbound messages, identify a primary and backup provider, and let the system choose automatically based on routing cost). Oracle Marketing Cloud added send-time optimization for push notifications. It analyzes a user's past behavior and preferences to deliver push notifications when the customer is most likely to respond.
- **Unified app development:** Over the last 12 months, Oracle integrated the Responsys and Oracle Infinity analytics (acquired from Webtrends) software development kits (SDKs). This integration enables marketing app development resources to track more advanced app events — such as favoriting a product.

Cautions

- **Integration:** Oracle continues to offer mobile marketing capabilities across the separate Responsys and Eloqua platforms. This can cause integration challenges for B2B2C marketing organizations or brands pursuing various market segments.
- **Support:** Client references gave Responsys and Eloqua mixed ratings in terms of product support. Marketing organizations with limited technology resources and budgets looking to expand their mobile marketing capabilities may find the scale and breadth of functionality of Oracle Marketing Cloud insufficient when accounting for potential implementation and support requirements.

Oracle did not respond to requests for supplemental information. Therefore, Gartner analysis is based on other credible sources, including public information and discussions with Gartner clients that use Oracle products/solutions.

Punchh

Punchh is a Niche Player. Its purpose-built mobile marketing platform solution is targeted primarily toward B2C retailers. Punchh's platform consists of three components for customer acquisition, loyalty and ongoing engagement. The company historically has focused on restaurants, but it has expanded its offering to all retailers, as well as travel and hospitality industries. B2C marketers in need of enhanced loyalty management capabilities that are seeking a mobile marketing platform focused on customer growth should consider Punchh.

Strengths

- **Integration with physical retail:** Punchh's platform is designed primarily for clients with a physical retail presence, and it integrates with a wide variety of point of sale (POS) systems. Marketers can craft customer journeys that span digital and physical touchpoints, analyze behavioral data across these environments, and personalize real-time experiences.
- **Customer lifetime value focus:** Punchh's origins as a loyalty platform mean that marketers can leverage out-of-the-box functionality to craft programs that increase customer lifetime value (CLV). CLV is a core metric across the solution's analytics capabilities, and marketers can easily compose cross-channel programs designed to increase purchase frequency and order value.
- **Customer-oriented design:** Like many other purpose-built mobile platforms, Punchh's platform is architected around a customer database. This incorporates acquisition scenarios that support the transition from an unknown purchaser to a known customer. Client references praised the platform's ability to deliver a single view of the customer across online and offline touchpoints.

Cautions

- **Deployment complexity:** While Punchh is largely able to accommodate the extreme diversity in POS solutions in the market, integrating these solutions poses a complex task that can be time-consuming and challenging. Client references' ratings for integration and deployment (as well as ease of deployment) were the lowest among all purpose-built vendors in this Magic Quadrant, with average deployment time among the highest.
- **Limited vertical focus:** Given that Punchh's primary points of differentiation relate to physical points of presence, the solution may not be suitable for clients outside of the core retail verticals that the company targets. In particular, B2B marketers should look elsewhere.

Pyze

Pyze is a Challenger. Its Growth Intelligence solution leverages AI and ML techniques for multiplatform customer analytics and automation to drive mobile-centric, cross-channel engagements. Media and publishing organizations, and retailers looking to enable digital commerce capabilities are key targets for Pyze. Marketers seeking to automate insights and campaigns based on usage and media consumption across audience, app or site behavior should consider Pyze.

Strengths

- **Cross-platform analytics:** Pyze's cross-platform analytics capabilities enable marketers to track users across multiple channels at individual and segment levels. The company added the ability to export user data to third-party platforms for ad targeting, including Google and Facebook. The company also added support for connected TVs, smart TVs and OTT video streaming services. Pyze redesigned its Growth Intelligence UI to enable multidimensional queries, particularly ad hoc analysis across multiple apps.
- **Expanded reach:** In 2018, Pyze realigned its go-to-market offering by "containerizing" its platform to support complex and white-label deployments. Pyze struck partnerships with several mobile app development and publishing platforms to embed analytics and marketing services, significantly increasing the number of publishers and users on the platform. Pyze also broadened its integrations to include Salesforce Marketing Cloud, Oracle, Adobe and proprietary platforms.
- **Campaign support and simplified interface:** Pyze enriched its ability to support complex master- and sub-brand campaigns across all device types and platforms, enabling corporate marketers to launch, execute and measure campaigns at both the sub-brand and corporate-brand levels. In 2018, Pyze added a new multistep journey builder UI to enable cross-brand, multichannel and paid media campaigns. Customer references cited the redesigned UI as evidence of the Pyze team's responsiveness to customer requests.

Cautions

- **Enterprise-level support:** As Pyze continues to pursue large enterprises with deep martech stacks, enterprise marketers considering Pyze should take care to ensure Pyze's support and service capabilities match the marketing team's requirements.
- **Automated report sharing:** Pyze's platform does not support automated report sharing via email or Slack, which customer references noted was a "need to have" capability. The company plans to deliver the Slack enhancement as a free upgrade to its installed base in 4Q19.

Sailthru

Sailthru is a Niche Player. The company's Mobile Manager extends the mobile marketing functionality of its MMH platform. CM Group – owner of SMB-focused email marketing provider Campaign Monitor – acquired Sailthru in December 2018 to expand its martech portfolio toward the enterprise market. Sailthru targets multiple industries, but focuses on retail, media, digital commerce, and travel and hospitality. Marketers seeking a data-driven approach to personalization and campaign orchestration should consider Sailthru, especially if email is a key engagement touchpoint.

Strengths

- **Profile management:** In the past year, Sailthru redesigned its user profiles, granting mobile marketers the ability to access demographic, behavioral, interest and predictive data. Sailthru's redesigned user profile manager includes a number of mobile data points, such as app installs, mobile list membership, messages received and mobile activity.
- **Messaging analytics:** Sailthru added rich push notification and integrated deep-linking support in its messaging options linked to Lifecycle Optimizer, its customer journey and triggered messaging flow tool. Having improved its analytics for user-behavior tracking, Sailthru's platform includes a new message optimization feature, "last-active channel," which automatically routes messages based on the last-observed channel used by the customer.
- **App tracking and usage:** With the Lifecycle Optimizer integration, Sailthru added the capability to track app uninstall events and trigger multichannel messaging options for retargeting to try and gain reinstalls. A new tag ("mobile-app-installed") enables marketers to check that their company's app is installed and functioning at any point in a customer's journey to ensure the appropriate message is delivered at the right stage in the journey.

Cautions

- **Value:** Client references rated the overall value the product provides, all critical-capabilities use cases and value for money spent below the average among all vendors. Marketers considering Sailthru for basic mobile marketing capabilities need to be precise in developing their mobile marketing requirements and expectations for the platform.
- **Testing:** While Sailthru has improved its message testing capabilities, client references reported a desire for more layers and variables in their testing to drive more sophisticated insights.

Salesforce

Salesforce is a Niche Player. Its solution offers a broad range of core mobile marketing features as part of its cloud-based MMH platform. The Salesforce platform consists of a number of components. Mobile Studio and Journey Builder, which are packaged together, are the primary pieces that deliver mobile functionality. The company serves a diverse set of vertical industries, with a particular focus on retail, travel and hospitality, and financial services. B2C and B2B marketers with an existing investment in Salesforce solutions seeking to expand cross-channel reach to include mobile capabilities should consider Salesforce.

Strengths

- **Native AI:** Salesforce's native AI service, Einstein, continues to expand capabilities like automated segmentation and enhanced journey analytics. In 2019, the company plans to add engagement scoring, engagement frequency analytics and capping to prevent message overload. It also will add send-time optimization to improve response rates and engagement. Salesforce also plans to use Einstein to improve A/B and multivariate testing.

- **Extensibility:** Salesforce has an expansive network of partner integrations that allows customers to connect its platform to a wide range of data inputs, analytics engines and functional extensions. In particular, its 2018 acquisition of Datorama further extends Salesforce's ability to integrate multiple data sources into its reporting capability.
- **Personalization:** In 2018, Salesforce improved marketers' ability to personalize their communications across varied forms of mobile messaging that the platform supports using audience data, including previewing of personalized messages prior to sending. The company plans to extend this capability in 2019 by adding content templates usable across delivery channels.

Cautions

- **Deployment and usage:** Client references gave Salesforce significantly below-average ratings for overall ease of deployment and ease of use. They also cited a lack of flexibility in the platform's reporting capability, suggesting that clients with complex reporting needs that are considering Salesforce may need to add Datorama's marketing intelligence solution to their license.
- **Basic functionality:** Salesforce's mobile solution will satisfy clients' basic mobile marketing needs. However, advanced clients seeking to exploit the complete and continuously expanding variety of mobile experiences will also need to invest in a mobile-focused partner solution, Salesforce products (such as Interaction Studio) or both. This will likely increase cost and deployment complexity.

SessionM

SessionM is a Challenger. The company's platform focuses on extending mobile capabilities for marketers heavily invested in their loyalty programs and specializes in incentive-driven mobile messaging campaigns. SessionM targets B2C consumer brands like retailers and restaurants, travel and hospitality, and consumer packaged goods companies with multiple physical locations. B2C and B2B2C brands that need to support mobile marketing programs with substantial loyalty and offer management elements should consider SessionM.

Strengths

- **Loyalty management:** Loyalty is SessionM's key strength. Taking a mobile-extender approach to its loyalty and campaign management capabilities, SessionM's mobile platform helps marketers manage a variety of loyalty tiers, engagement rules, promo codes and offers. SessionM's customer profile capabilities append these loyalty attributes to each profile to enable (along with purchase and engagement histories) campaign delivery across mobile channels.
- **Reporting and product recommendation:** Since 2018, the company added SessionM Insights, allowing marketers to closely track various KPIs. The company also introduced a product recommendation engine that tracks historical purchase information, redemptions, and other

user event data and implied feedback to the platform's Customers Module to provide a standing snapshot of customers' behaviors and habits.

- **Integration and privacy compliance tools:** In 2018, SessionM extended integrations with multiple Salesforce clouds via Salesforce App exchange. While not mobile-focused, this marks a key platform enhancement that enables SessionM's customers to extend their mobile reach across their Salesforce solutions. The company also refined its privacy toolset to assist customers in achieving and maintaining compliance with the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Cautions

- **Mobile wallet support:** SessionM currently lacks support for major mobile wallet providers, such as Apple Wallet and Google Pay. Marketers looking to leverage SessionM's loyalty capabilities, particularly those in retail or quick-service restaurants, may need to look at other vendors for mobile wallet support.
- **Loyalty and B2C focus:** SessionM's focus on loyalty is served well by its mobile marketing capabilities. However, B2B or mobile marketers that are not looking to build a loyalty program and may still be developing their overall digital capabilities may need to consider another vendor.

Swrve

Swrve is a Leader. The company's purpose-built mobile marketing platform is based on its analytics engine that's designed to help marketers deliver real-time, personalized interactions. Swrve's customers range from midmarket to enterprise organizations, especially in B2C industries such as travel, media, financial services and telecommunications. Marketers seeking to optimize their real-time mobile performance should consider Swrve.

Strengths

- **Customer engagement and retention:** Client references cited Swrve's enhanced customer engagement and retention capabilities as a primary driver for using the platform. References also rated the company above average for push notifications and in-app messaging.
- **Cross-channel campaigns:** Since last year's Magic Quadrant, Swrve refined its cross-channel capabilities by adding cross-channel and cross-device identity aliasing. This capability enables marketers to track how a customer engages with a brand across mobile, email and over-the-top set-top boxes (OTT STBs), for example, while delivering targeted and/or triggered messages based on combinations of observed behaviors.
- **Combating customer churn with AI/ML:** In 2018, Swrve extended its use of AI to enhance the platform's segmentation and personalization capabilities. The company also added an AI-enabled feature that calculates customer churn. Marketers can add the churn-propensity score as a discrete criterion to existing targeting criteria coming from other data sources the customer is utilizing.

Cautions

- **Dashboard limitations:** Client references expressed a strong desire for Swrve to upgrade its dashboard. Some references noted that the dashboard appeared to be hiding richer information contained in clients' raw datasets.
- **Segmentation and integration:** Client references cited a desire for better and deeper automation for repurposing or repopulating customer segments for reuse when setting up multiple campaigns. Postintegration debugging issues were cited by customers and could contribute to Swrve's lower-than-average levels of customer satisfaction with the company's pricing model and/or TCO, and value the product provides for the money spent.

Vibes

Vibes is a Leader. Its purpose-built mobile marketing platform is designed for consumer-facing companies seeking to engage customers across virtually all mobile channels. The company's solution consists of the Vibes Mobile Engagement Platform, Advanced Analytics, AI-Driven Marketing Suite and its Developer Platform. Vibes primarily serves the retail, quick-service restaurant (QSR), and travel and hospitality industries. B2C marketers seeking to deliver real-time mobile engagement or improve the mobile performance of their existing MMH should consider Vibes.

Strengths

- **Mobile messaging:** Vibes has deep roots in mobile messaging, possessing direct connections to the largest mobile operators' messaging networks. The company excels at enabling its customers to natively exploit the rich diversity of mobile messaging options, including SMS, MMS, push notifications, RCS and Facebook Messenger. Vibes plans to expand to other mobile messaging applications, such as WhatsApp and Apple Business Chat, in 2019.
- **Improved analytics and integrations:** In 2018, the company introduced Vibes Advanced Analytics, addressing an acknowledged weakness in the platform, and giving customers greater flexibility and customization in reporting. Vibes also released a data integration framework that facilitates the exchange of data between the Vibes platform and other client systems, including MMHs.
- **Increased scale:** Following its initial expansion outside of the U.S. in 2017, Vibes's reach is growing across Europe and Asia via partnerships with Apple, Google and Syniverse. Vibes reports that 80% of its customers are enterprises. Client references rated Vibes' service and support well-above average and specifically praised the company's client success team.

Cautions

- **Reporting:** Client references cited frustration with the platform's reporting capability, which may be mitigated with Vibes's upgraded analytics release in 2018. Marketers considering

Vibes should evaluate their analytics and reporting tool requirements to ensure the company will satisfy their needs.

- **Deployment:** Average deployment time was among the longest for all vendors in this Magic Quadrant, and clients rated the ease of deployment slightly below average. Marketers considering Vibes – especially those intent on integrating a POS system – should assess the integration resources needed to bring the platform’s solution to life in their enterprise.

Xtremepush

Xtremepush is a Niche Player. The company positions its solution as a purpose-built mobile marketing platform with aspirations to become an MMH. Xtremepush’s platform highlights real-time engagement and message delivery, and supports major mobile messaging capabilities as well as real-time analytics. Marketers in digital commerce, travel and hospitality, financial services, and online gambling should consider Xtremepush.

Strengths

- **Real-time analytics and communications:** Xtremepush’s platform emphasizes synchronized multichannel engagements that flow from its Maxautomation cross-channel journey builder. The company supports real-time data ingestion via a real-time big data analytics (RTBDA) architecture built on Apache Kafka and similar event-streaming service platforms. Xtremepush plans to develop a single-integration method for extending real-time capabilities to every event in a customer’s ecosystem, rather than adding real-time events via SDKs.
- **Scalability and cross-channel capabilities:** In 2018, Xtremepush acquired email service provider (ESP) Emailcenter, bolstering its already robust support for all major mobile and web message techniques. In addition to native email capabilities, the Emailcenter acquisition included the Maxautomation journey builder tool, adding drag-and-drop journey building capabilities to the platform. Some customer references have scaled Xtremepush’s platform beyond outbound marketing campaigns to encompass internal corporate communications.
- **Ease of use:** With a combination of detailed templates and rule-based segmentation, customer references noted the ease with which nontechnical marketers were able to design and execute complex journeys with multiple messaging and communications campaigns. Xtremepush can create direct links to a customer’s CMS, enabling marketers to dynamically assemble localized content for any message, email campaign or offer.

Cautions

- **Campaign analytics and reporting:** Client references reported a desire for greater detail in campaign analytics as well as improvements in the depth and flexibility of reporting capabilities.
- **Robust capabilities require a phased implementation:** Client references desired more mature mobile messaging capabilities from the platform. References cautioned that adding channels requires close work with the support team.

Vendors Added and Dropped

We review and adjust our inclusion criteria for Magic Quadrants as markets change. As a result of these adjustments, the mix of vendors in any Magic Quadrant may change over time. A vendor's appearance in a Magic Quadrant one year and not the next does not necessarily indicate that we have changed our opinion of that vendor. It may be a reflection of a change in the market and, therefore, changed evaluation criteria, or of a change of focus by that vendor.

Added

- Adobe
- Punchh
- Xtremepush

Dropped

No vendors have been dropped.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To qualify for inclusion in the 2019 Magic Quadrant for Mobile Marketing Platforms, Gartner focused on vendors that offer the most relevant and compelling mobile marketing solutions, and evaluated them against the following criteria.

Functionality

Vendors must support all of the following:

- Ability to create, execute and manage mobile marketing interactions
- Campaign planning, tracking and reporting with role/approval capability
- A UI designed for marketing users who create, execute and report on mobile marketing interactions
- User/audience data collection, segmentation, campaign workflow and campaign execution
- **Mobile engagement techniques:**
 - Create, generate, deliver and measure SMS/text, push notifications (for mobile web and mobile apps) and in-app messaging campaigns
 - Deliver mobile-optimized personalized content, e.g., to apps and mobile web engagements
 - Deliver location-triggered messaging campaigns or offers
 - Create, deliver and measure mobile promotion

- **Mobile marketing campaign optimization:**
 - Ability to balance/coordinate multiple constraints to maximize the value from a single campaign, or from multiple campaigns or engagements
 - Functionality that enables marketers to make trade-offs among different campaign options – e.g., SMS, push notification and email – while tracking/controlling number of interactions per user or to determine the next-best action
 - Message automation
 - Message optimization
 - Data onboarding and integration of data from customer’s systems of record, e.g., CRM or customer data platform (CDP)
- **Mobile marketing analytics:**
 - Action metrics: Clicks leading to conversion (mobile web and mobile app)
 - Engagement metrics: Daily/weekly/monthly (D/W/M) mobile website visits, D/W/M app usage, video views, comments, social-media shares and/or “likes” for mobile web and mobile app
 - Location: Utilizing a mobile device’s native location function to identify a customer’s physical position – the platform can utilize device-generated data or a third-party location data provider.
 - A/B testing capabilities for content, communication channels and the timing of message/notification delivery

Advanced Capabilities

Vendors must support at least two of the following:

- Predictive analytics on message (SMS or push notifications) delivery, e.g., optimal time to send
- Multivariate testing capabilities for message delivery (timing/frequency) and message/engagement content
- Attribution capabilities that enable marketers to track events that lead to conversion, e.g., purchase, download of an app and video view
- Mobile wallet card support, including live content and push notification to the wallet card(s)
- Support for rich-messaging interactions, e.g., via RCS/rich business messaging (RBM), Facebook Messenger, Apple Business Chat and WhatsApp

Market Presence and Momentum

For inclusion in the 2019 Magic Quadrant for Mobile Marketing Platforms, vendors must meet at least one of the following revenue or customer criteria:

- **Revenue/customers:** Vendors need to have generated at least \$15 million in 2018 and have at least 10 paying customers using the mobile marketing platform.
- Vendors must have at least 10 paying customers, of which at least five began paying for the product/service in the past 12 months.

Vendor Viability

All vendors need to have at least one year's worth of operating cash to fund operations at the current rate of cash depletion.

Product Criteria

Ability to ideate, create, distribute, execute and measure major mobile marketing campaign types:

- **Core messaging:** SMS/text, push notifications for apps, mobile/desktop web push notifications and in-app messaging
- **Orchestration** (must have all): Ability to design, deliver and measure all mobile marketing (e.g., push notifications, SMS and email) campaigns from customer's marketing system of record:
 - **Personalization:** Ability to apply context, including knowledge about users and their circumstances, to tailor relevant messaging, content, offers and interactions, e.g., rule-based personalization across web, mail, push- and in-app.
 - **Advanced capabilities** (vendors must have at least one):
 - Real-time offers based on user behavior, location-triggers (e.g., public Wi-Fi or geofences) or profile information such as birthdays, past purchases, abandoned shopping carts, transaction history or anniversaries
 - Predictive content, e.g., ability to serve mobile engagements or offers aimed at moving the customer to the next phase of the purchase process or step in a relationship ahead of the customer-explicit request
- **Analytics basic action and behavior analytics** (must have all): Mobile website visits/actions; mobile app action/behavior analytics; and A/B offer testing, segment building and basic personalization:
 - **Advanced capabilities** (vendors must have at least two):

- Multivariate offer/campaign testing
- Real-time analytics to facilitate real-time offers
- Predictive analytics

Honorable Mentions

Two additional vendors demonstrated many of the qualities we associate with mobile marketing platforms, but they didn't meet all of our inclusion criteria. However, given the growth rates and volatility of this marketplace, they are worth watching and potentially evaluating for your own business needs.

The Digital Box

The Digital Box is a purpose-built mobile marketing platform. The company's ADA platform combines robust direct messaging campaign capability with AI-based techniques that retailers and other companies can use to personalize and measure messaging engagements through mobile and social channels. The Digital Box – through the digital marketing agencies that make up the bulk of the company's customer base – focuses on services in several industries. Target companies are, for the most part, smaller enterprises with few technology experts in-house and less-digital-savvy marketers.

The Digital Box failed to meet several qualifying criteria for this Magic Quadrant. The current iteration of the platform does not support in-app messaging nor the two criteria for "location-triggered messaging campaigns" (i.e., ability to generate location-based or geofence-triggered engagements to a customer's mobile app).

Mobivity

Mobivity is a purpose-built mobile marketing platform with a strong focus on companies with a physical retail presence that seek to increase customer lifetime value by developing greater loyalty and accelerating purchase frequency. The platform relies primarily on a combination of messaging and customized web experiences. It can integrate with a variety of POS systems, allowing retailers to exploit printed receipts as an engagement and promotion mechanism. Mobivity has been an early leader in the use of RCS as an engagement mechanism. In 2018, Mobivity enhanced its loyalty offering through its acquisition of Belly.

Mobivity failed to meet several qualifying criteria for this Magic Quadrant. The company's solution does not currently support push notifications (neither on the web nor app), in-app messaging or the ability to generate location-based or geofence-triggered engagements to a customer's mobile app. In addition, the company did not satisfy the above specified "market presence and momentum" criteria.

Evaluation Criteria

Ability to Execute

Gartner analysts evaluate vendors on the quality and efficacy of the processes, systems, methods or procedures that enable mobile marketing provider performance to be competitive, efficient and effective. They look at a vendor's ability to positively impact revenue, retention and reputation within Gartner's view of the market.

Ability to Execute Criteria

- **Product/Service:** This is a key differentiator for vendor selection. As such, product capabilities are given a high overall weighting. We assess vendors for their basic and advanced mobile marketing management functionality, basic/advanced mobile marketing analytics, workflow, and functionality for mobile engagement.
- **Overall Viability:** This criterion addresses overall vendor health including line-of-business offering for mobile marketing solutions. Viability includes the vendor's history of and commitment to the continued success and development of market-leading mobile marketing solutions.
- **Sales Execution:** This assessment considers the overall effectiveness of each vendor's sales channel, including how each vendor deals with presales responsiveness, contract negotiations and pricing for campaign management.
- **Market Responsiveness and Track Record:** This criterion assesses each mobile marketing vendor's success in creating and meeting a consistent demand for its product, measured in continuing client wins and use in its installed base.
- **Marketing Execution:** This assessment considers vendors' overall momentum and perceived mobile marketing focus and market presence. Vendors must show established and continued broad or specific (such as industry focus) credibility in mobile marketing platforms.
- **Customer Experience (CX):** This criterion evaluates the quality of client relationships with mobile marketing platform vendors. Product support/responsiveness and access to best practices, such as user groups, are considered. An important component of the CX is ease of use for customers using the platform. Gartner's mobile marketing platform clients view this as an important aspect of the overall CX.
- **Operations:** This criterion considers each vendor's ability to meet goals and commitments. Factors include organization structure, and experience/skills/systems or processes that enable the vendor to operate efficiently and on an ongoing basis.

Table 1: Ability to Execute Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria ↓	Weighting ↓
Product or Service	High
Overall Viability	Medium

Evaluation Criteria ↓	Weighting ↓
Sales Execution/Pricing	Medium
Market Responsiveness/Record	Medium
Marketing Execution	Medium
Customer Experience	High
Operations	Medium

Source: Gartner (July 2019)

Completeness of Vision

Gartner analysts evaluate vendors on their understanding of how to exploit market forces to create value for customers and capture opportunities for themselves. This includes current and future market direction, innovation, customer needs, and competitive forces and how well they map to Gartner's view of the market.

Completeness of Vision Criteria

- **Market Understanding:** Assesses the vendor's ability to understand the mobile marketing space, as well as its value proposition in the market, and how effective it is at reaching the marketing buying center for companies purchasing mobile marketing platform solutions. Vendors must demonstrate mobile marketing platform solutions that fit the needs of the overall market.
- **Marketing Strategy:** Assesses how well a vendor can differentiate itself from its competition by virtue of its functionality and how it articulates continued leadership in its overall campaign management vision.
- **Sales Strategy:** Assesses a vendor's strategy in using direct and indirect sales channels to sell mobile marketing solutions.
- **Offering (Product) Strategy:** Assesses the mobile marketing platform's features as they map to functionality requirements in mobile marketing, particularly functionality that enables advanced capability in inbound and outbound environments.
- **Business Model:** Assesses each vendor's go-to-market and sales strategies for particular industries or delivery models.
- **Vertical/Industry Strategy:** Assesses how well vendor solutions target the current market and their ability to leverage best practices for targeting new industries.

- **Innovation:** Assesses vendors' expertise or capital for investment for preemptive purposes in developing new mobile marketing capabilities.
- **Geographic Strategy:** Assesses vendor strategies to direct resources, skills and offerings to meet the specific needs of geographies outside their "home" or native geography, either directly or through partners, channels and subsidiaries, as appropriate for a given geographic market.

Table 2: Completeness of Vision Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria ↓	Weighting ↓
Market Understanding	High
Marketing Strategy	Medium
Sales Strategy	Medium
Offering (Product) Strategy	High
Business Model	Medium
Vertical/Industry Strategy	Medium
Innovation	High
Geographic Strategy	Low

Source: Gartner (July 2019)

Quadrant Descriptions

Leaders

Leaders possess the resources and acumen to deliver extensive mobile marketing capabilities guided by a clear, comprehensive view of mobile marketing's crucial role as the dominant engagement point for customers and prospects. Leaders have executed a substantial number of implementations across a variety of industries. They push their customers toward more advanced states of mobile marketing capabilities. Leaders are equally successful in B2B and B2C marketing scenarios.

Challengers

Challengers have strong core mobile marketing product functionality, but their incomplete vision of mobile marketing's role in marketing and how mobile evolves makes it difficult for them to push their customers outside of their "extender" comfort zone. Their solutions may be limited to specific use cases, technical environments or application domains. Their vision may be

hampered by the lack of a coordinated strategy across the various products in their platform portfolios. Alternatively, they may lack the marketing efforts, sales channel, geographic presence, industry-specific content and awareness of the vendors in the Leaders quadrant.

Visionaries

Visionaries have a strong and unique vision for delivering mobile marketing capabilities. They offer depth of functionality in the areas they address; however, they may have gaps relating to broader functionality requirements or lower scores on customer experiences, operations and sales execution. Visionaries are thought leaders and innovators, but they may be lacking in scale, or there may be concerns about their ability to grow and still provide consistent execution.

Niche Players

Niche Players do well in a specific segment of the mobile marketing platform market. In addition to basic offerings, they may offer a few specialized capabilities that target a narrow client set – for example, by industry or business model – that typically utilize a handful of mobile marketing techniques. They may have a limited capability to out-innovate or outperform other vendors, but likely lack depth of functionality elsewhere. They may also have gaps relating to broader platform functionality or lower-than-average customer ratings. Alternatively, Niche Players may have a reasonably broad mobile marketing platform, but limited implementation and support capabilities, or a relatively limited customer base (such as by geography or industry). In addition, they may not yet have achieved the necessary scale to solidify their market position.

Context

This research is Gartner's second Magic Quadrant for Mobile Marketing Platforms. It reflects not only the significant growth of this product category, but also marketing leaders' increasing reliance on mobile marketing techniques for business advantage.

Globally, consumers spend more of their time on smartphones than on desktops, laptops or tablets. ¹ This broad and rapid consumer adoption of smartphones breeds a dependency few technologies have ever enjoyed. As such, mobile marketing capabilities increasingly determine brand marketing success.

This Magic Quadrant is an assessment of vendor capabilities based on past execution in 2018 and future development plans over the next 12 months. However, it may only be valid at a particular point in time as vendors and the market evolve. To that end, readers should not use this Magic Quadrant in isolation as a tool for vendor selection. When making specific tool selection decisions, use it in combination with our companion Critical Capabilities research, analysis publications related to mobile marketing best practices and our analyst inquiry service. Moreover, readers should be careful not to ascribe their own definitions of Completeness of Vision or Ability to Execute to this Magic Quadrant, which they often incorrectly map narrowly to product vision and market share, respectively. The Magic Quadrant methodology factors in a range of criteria in determining position, as shown by the extensive Evaluation Criteria section.

Market Overview

Consumer demand for mobile engagements creates new, identifiable and predictable moments of opportunity, and sophisticated marketers are capitalizing on them. CMOs surveyed in Gartner's 2018-2019 CMO Spend Survey allocate, on average, 6.4% of total marketing expense budgets to mobile marketing, with 68% of CMOs expecting to increase this investment in 2019 (see "CMO Spend Survey 2018-2019: Marketers Proceed Into Uncharted Waters With Confidence"). Previous Gartner survey data from 2017 reveals that mature multichannel marketers spend more on mobile marketing than their less mature peers. ²

Most organizations' mobile marketing strategies fall within one of two types. Defining your organization's mobile marketing type not only helps prioritize mobile goals, but also can help you determine the right mobile marketing platform for your needs.

The two types of mobile marketing are mobile-centric and mobile-extender organizations:

- **Mobile-centric** marketing organizations take advantage of the distinct capabilities of mobile devices and networks, such as cameras, GPS radios and microphones, to engage customers and prospects in compelling ways not possible using desktop techniques.
- **Mobile-extender** marketing organizations extend and adapt existing prospect and customer connections from the desktop to a mobile device. For example, a mobile-friendly version of the desktop website gets created, and mobile lead-generation tactics mirror those on the web.

By and large, both mobile-centric and mobile-extender organizations are underinvesting in their mobile marketing initiatives, often failing to optimize assets across mobile campaigns. Mature marketing organizations ultimately design mobile campaigns to fit the varying needs of the always-on, mobile-first customer (see "2 Types of Mobile Marketers: Which One Are You?").

Mobile Marketing Platform Vendors Make Data Core to Business Value

Mobile marketing platform vendors are addressing the rapid uptick in mobile engagement demands through dynamic, near-real-time mobile capabilities. Mobile behavioral data from mobile search, social media interactions and past-purchase history insights power their solutions. But platform vendors differ depending on whether they offer a purpose-built mobile platform or a multichannel marketing hub (as described in the Market Definition section of this research).

Purpose-Built Vendors Take a Mobile-Centric Approach

Purpose-built mobile platforms (PBMs) — with their mobile-centric perspective — have analysis capabilities to measure behaviors and actions specific to mobile users. But, many vendors aspire to become the next generation of a multichannel marketing hub. These vendors' belief that mobile devices, particularly smartphones, will emerge as the dominant channel for customer engagement drives their perspective.

MMH Vendors View Mobile as One Ingredient of a Broader Multichannel Recipe

MMH vendors aspire to a channel-agnostic position – which, if achieved, renders channel distinctions less important than their hub’s ability to trigger engagements. Leaders within the MMH market often struggle to shed their email-centric heritage (see “Smart Hubs and Dumb Spokes – A New Approach to Multichannel Marketing”). MMH vendors have basic mobile marketing engagement tools, such as segmentation and journey building applications, as extensions of their core hub capabilities.

MMH vendors also have significant investments in customer data acquisition, analysis via artificial intelligence and machine learning, and automation. These investments are spread across multichannel activations, extending core functions, including mobile. As opposed to their purpose-built counterparts, MMH platforms use mobile data in service to all other channels.

Trading Depth for Breadth Comes at a Cost: Diminished Satisfaction

Comparing client reference data among MMH and PBM vendors reveals a stark difference: PBM vendors’ customers express significantly greater levels of satisfaction with their mobile platform choice than do those of MMH vendors. This is not only the case for overall experience – it is uniformly true across every category of client satisfaction. The greatest differences in satisfaction levels are in “ease of deployment” and “service and support” – not a surprise given the greater complexity of the MMH products and supporting organizations.

Beyond levels of satisfaction, the client reference data shows that MMH customers are more likely to rely on point-solution providers to realize their mobile marketing objectives. This reflects the MMH vendors’ overall strategy with respect to mobile but represents a challenge: marketers using an MMH solution that seek mobile excellence must take on additional cost and integration work to realize their vision.

Two Paths of Evolution Point to Consolidation and Elevation

As these two categories mature, Gartner envisions two evolutionary paths unfolding as consumers continue to use their mobile devices as the dominant engagement points for brands. First, MMH vendors will continue to extend their mobile marketing techniques as they seek more-mobile-centric capabilities. This drive will likely entail deeper partnerships with purpose-built mobile platforms or acquisitions, resulting in some market consolidation. Second, PBM vendors will continue to integrate other marketing channel capabilities – note how many of them integrate with email service providers or deliver their own native email capabilities. As this progression continues, Gartner expects that many PBMs will start to compete as MMHs, particularly for marketing teams within “born digital” companies with more-mobile-centric strategies that are not dependent on legacy martech stacks.

Mobile Marketing Platforms Must Differentiate on Data Analytics and Service

Improving customer experience, driving revenue growth, and improving their ability to engage with customers and prospects in real time were among customer references’ most frequently cited reasons for investing in a mobile marketing platform. ³ Advanced analytics capabilities are emerging as a key point of differentiation. As marketers seek to meet customer demands for

real-time mobile engagements, marketing data and analytics are driving platform vendor value and client satisfaction – much of which is dependent on service, support and integration.

In addition to analytics, other key areas of vendor differentiation include:

- **Service and support:** Multichannel and mobile marketing teams expect more than software integration and basic training capabilities. They want partners who understand their business, their business goals and their industry, all of which were cited as a top reason for platform vendor selection. ³ They want mobile marketing platforms – purpose-built or MMHs – with robust customer success capabilities and the ability to evolve with their mobile marketing strategies.
- **Data protection capabilities:** Consumers' dependence on mobile devices lowers their threshold of tolerance for perceived abuse of personal data, intrusive or irrelevant engagements, or poorly designed mobile interfaces. Additionally, the GDPR in the EU is upending how marketers can use personally identifiable information (see "Use Personification to Balance Personalized Marketing With Privacy and GDPR"). Mobile platform vendors must demonstrate dexterity with data privacy and transparency, legal compliance, and brand safety. Enabling that dexterity was a clear theme among vendors in this year's Magic Quadrant.
- **Multimodal device usage capabilities:** The interplay between virtual personal assistants, such as Amazon Alexa, and mobile devices, wearables, OTT STBs and the IoT, makes it imperative that mobile platform vendors grasp the integrated experiences possible with users' myriad devices. Vendors must transition from mobile marketing platforms into "smart environment" mediators and ensure their analytics capabilities keep pace accordingly.
- **A born-digital mindset:** A majority of companies founded after 2008 (when iOS and Android app stores launched) has a mobile-centric marketing strategy. Mobile platform vendors should be able to deliver advanced mobile capabilities for real-time communications and marketing techniques that leverage unique mobile device capabilities, such as camera, GPS radio, microphone and biometric recognition technologies.

Keep Your Mobile Marketing Platform Selection Future-Focused

Marketing leaders seeking a mobile marketing platform must evaluate their mobile marketing strategy – mobile-centric or mobile-extender – and find a vendor matched to their needs. They should explore:

- A vendor's ability to keep pace with mobile engagement innovations and advanced/emerging mobile marketing techniques. Forty-six percent of client references cited "product roadmap" and "future vision" as top reasons for selecting a vendor.
- Their threshold for partnering with an enterprise provider that prioritizes its own integration capabilities over innovation and the impact the slower pace of innovation may have on brand growth.

- The impact of using a platform lacking strong, native mobile marketing analytics, or robust connectors or APIs available to feed mobile data into existing digital marketing analytics and larger data ecosystems (for example, via CDP, data management platform or CRM).

As noted in last year's Magic Quadrant, as MMH solutions look to add mobile-centric capabilities, and as purpose-built solutions seek deeper inroads into the marketing organization, expect increased vendor consolidation. Airship's acquisition of Accengage in 2018 portrays a case of consolidation within the PBM category. As demand for strong mobile and multimodal engagement capabilities grows to keep pace with consumer expectations, so will the complexity for mobile marketers. This means choosing a mobile marketing platform is more important than the average vendor selection: It's a critical strategic decision for the entire marketing team.

Evidence

Gartner's 2018-2019 CMO Spend Survey: The purpose of this survey was to understand the marketing priorities and budget allocations of marketers to help companies benchmark, allocate spend and prioritize. The research was conducted using a mixed methodology (online/computer-assisted telephone interviewing) from July 2018 through August 2018 among 621 respondents in the United States (60%), Canada (5%) and the United Kingdom (35%). Respondents were required to have involvement in decisions pertaining to their company's strategy, activities and/or budget related to marketing. Ninety percent of the respondents came from organizations with \$1 billion or more in annual revenue. The respondents came from a variety of industries: financial services (70 respondents), high tech (68 respondents), manufacturing (67 respondents), consumer products (126 respondents), media (71 respondents), retail (72 respondents), healthcare providers (76 respondents) and travel (71 respondents).

¹ "Global Digital Future in Focus 2018," (<https://www.comscore.com/Insights/Presentations-and-Whitepapers/2018/Global-Digital-Future-in-Focus-2018>) Comscore (download required).

² "Survey Analysis: Mature Multichannel Marketers Prioritize Mobile Investment, Activation and Data," Gartner (subscription required).

³ Customer reference surveys, Magic Quadrant for Mobile Marketing Platforms, 2019.

Evaluation Criteria Definitions

Ability to Execute

Product/Service: Core goods and services offered by the vendor for the defined market. This includes current product/service capabilities, quality, feature sets, skills and so on, whether offered natively or through OEM agreements/partnerships as defined in the market definition and detailed in the subcriteria.

Overall Viability: Viability includes an assessment of the overall organization's financial health, the financial and practical success of the business unit, and the likelihood that the individual

business unit will continue investing in the product, will continue offering the product and will advance the state of the art within the organization's portfolio of products.

Sales Execution/Pricing: The vendor's capabilities in all presales activities and the structure that supports them. This includes deal management, pricing and negotiation, presales support, and the overall effectiveness of the sales channel.

Market Responsiveness/Record: Ability to respond, change direction, be flexible and achieve competitive success as opportunities develop, competitors act, customer needs evolve and market dynamics change. This criterion also considers the vendor's history of responsiveness.

Marketing Execution: The clarity, quality, creativity and efficacy of programs designed to deliver the organization's message to influence the market, promote the brand and business, increase awareness of the products, and establish a positive identification with the product/brand and organization in the minds of buyers. This "mind share" can be driven by a combination of publicity, promotional initiatives, thought leadership, word of mouth and sales activities.

Customer Experience: Relationships, products and services/programs that enable clients to be successful with the products evaluated. Specifically, this includes the ways customers receive technical support or account support. This can also include ancillary tools, customer support programs (and the quality thereof), availability of user groups, service-level agreements and so on.

Operations: The ability of the organization to meet its goals and commitments. Factors include the quality of the organizational structure, including skills, experiences, programs, systems and other vehicles that enable the organization to operate effectively and efficiently on an ongoing basis.

Completeness of Vision

Market Understanding: Ability of the vendor to understand buyers' wants and needs and to translate those into products and services. Vendors that show the highest degree of vision listen to and understand buyers' wants and needs, and can shape or enhance those with their added vision.

Marketing Strategy: A clear, differentiated set of messages consistently communicated throughout the organization and externalized through the website, advertising, customer programs and positioning statements.

Sales Strategy: The strategy for selling products that uses the appropriate network of direct and indirect sales, marketing, service, and communication affiliates that extend the scope and depth of market reach, skills, expertise, technologies, services and the customer base.

Offering (Product) Strategy: The vendor's approach to product development and delivery that emphasizes differentiation, functionality, methodology and feature sets as they map to current and future requirements.

Business Model: The soundness and logic of the vendor's underlying business proposition.

Vertical/Industry Strategy: The vendor's strategy to direct resources, skills and offerings to meet the specific needs of individual market segments, including vertical markets.

Innovation: Direct, related, complementary and synergistic layouts of resources, expertise or capital for investment, consolidation, defensive or pre-emptive purposes.

Geographic Strategy: The vendor's strategy to direct resources, skills and offerings to meet the specific needs of geographies outside the "home" or native geography, either directly or through partners, channels and subsidiaries as appropriate for that geography and market.

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