Bundle Your Services to Grow Your Agency

Tips for Combining Marketing Automation
& Agency Services to Boost Revenue

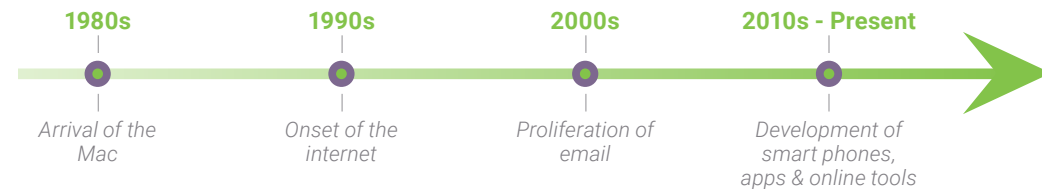Mike Jennings | Founder & President, MoreSALES

About the Author

As the founder and president of MoreSALES, Mike Jennings has a passion for marketing and brings 30 years of experience to support and guide his B2B clients. A perpetual learner, he's driving his firm to be at the forefront of online marketing, and he's been a SharpSpring partner since April 2016.

At the risk of really aging myself, I can tell you that I've seen many of the changes that have affected the world of marketing in recent decades – the arrival of the Mac in the 80s, the onset of the internet in the 90s, the proliferation of email in the early 2000s, and most recently, the rapid development of applications and online tools to keep up with our smart phones. As they each happened, these changes added new opportunities for marketers to reach their audiences, but they also created a more competitive, fast-paced environment.
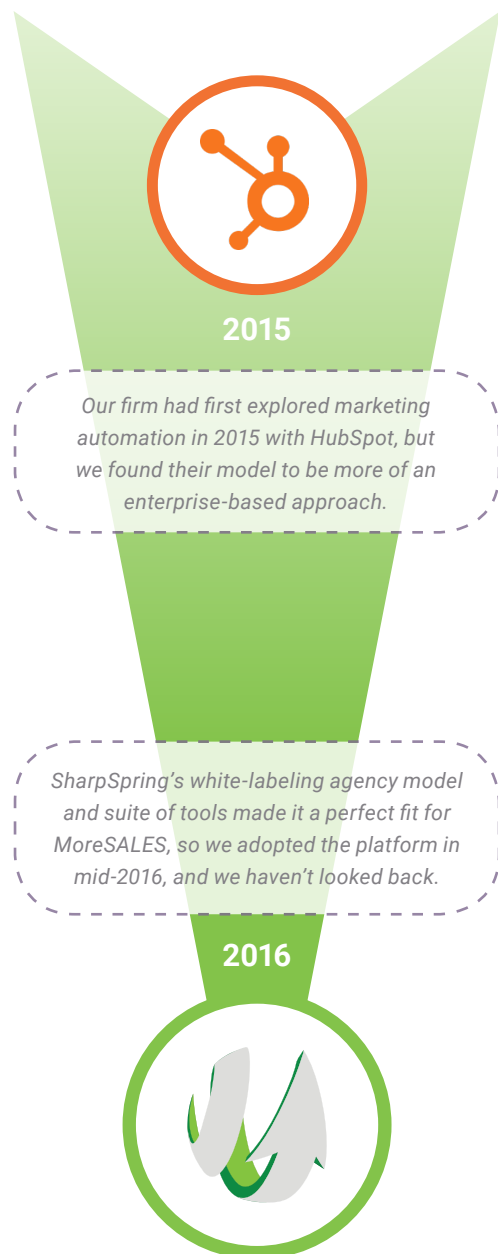
Though the leading marketing sectors such as technology, software and many consumer brands have been utilizing marketing automation for years, there are still many lagging sectors that are only just discovering the power of the software.

1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s - Present
Arrival of the Mac	Onset of the internet	Proliferation of email	Development of smart phones, apps & online tools

Marketing automation is one of the more recent tools that was introduced to help marketers improve their efficiency and better target their leads and customers. Though the leading marketing sectors such as technology, software and many consumer brands have been utilizing marketing automation for years, there are still many lagging sectors that are only just discovering the power of the software.

2015

Our firm had first explored marketing automation in 2015 with HubSpot, but we found their model to be more of an enterprise-based approach.

SharpSpring's white-labeling agency model and suite of tools made it a perfect fit for MoreSALES, so we adopted the platform in mid-2016, and we haven't looked back.

2016

And while it's been adopted at faster rates in the U.S., marketing automation is still a relatively underutilized technology in many sectors in Canada, which is where my client base is. As a result, I have been able to introduce it to my clients as a tool that can help them enhance their service offerings and differentiate their agencies or firms from the ever-growing number of competitors.

Marketing Automation as a Revenue Generator

As a "seasoned" marketer, I was very excited when we first encountered the SharpSpring Marketing Automation model. Our firm had first explored marketing automation in 2015 with HubSpot, but we found their model to be more of an enterprise-based approach.

I'm a skeptic, so I did my homework and discovered that compared to other marketing automation platforms, SharpSpring's white-labeling agency model and suite of tools made it a perfect fit for MoreSALES, so we adopted the platform in mid-2016, and we haven't looked back.

As an agency that focuses heavily on search engine marketing (SEM), we strive to really separate ourselves from firms that claim to be SEM specialists but don't tie in web design to marketing and sales results. SharpSpring has provided us with the tools to help clients of all types attract, capture and convert more leads through their websites.

Identifying Clients That Need Marketing Automation

When we're initially assessing a company's online presence to determine how we might be able to help, there are three basic starting points we consider:

1. **The website is outdated in both style and technology.** Often it is static, brochure-ware and non-responsive. This gives us leverage to discuss Google standards and how the current state of the site is actually hurting the prospect's bottom line.

2. **The website is decent but could benefit from some upgrading to modernize the visitor experience.** We talk to the prospect about tools that can help them increase engagement and drive more meaningful conversations with leads.

3. **The website is updated regularly, and the prospect might be using some analytics tools and/or outreach tools like Constant Contact.** In these cases, we see if we can save them money and simplify their approach with SharpSpring's all-in-one platform.
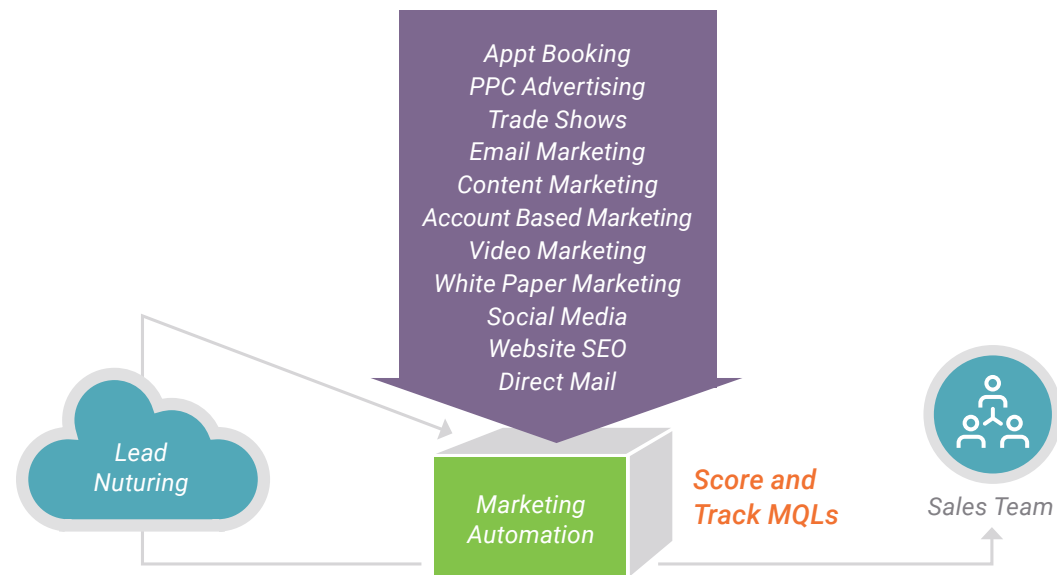
Typically, around 50% of our prospects are using or have used some level of email marketing system (e.g., MailChimp or Constant Contact), and some have used a CRM such as Salesforce, Microsoft Dynamics or ACT.

Web Design

Marketing

Sales

Search Engine Marketing

SharpSpring has provided us with the tools to help clients of all types attract, capture and convert more leads through their websites.

But what I have found in almost all of the above types of prospects is that they have not been exposed to the full power of marketing automation.

Once we have established the prospect's starting point, we are able to walk them through how we can enhance their online presence. As we quickly show them, their website is indeed a critical element of online lead generation, but there are a number of other tools that can help feed the sales funnel.

When bundled with the right services and third-party platforms, marketing automation can dramatically improve online lead gen and help convert that traffic into marketing-qualified leads (MQLs) to be passed to the sales team.

Appt Booking
PPC Advertising
Trade Shows
Email Marketing
Content Marketing
Account Based Marketing
Video Marketing
White Paper Marketing
Social Media
Website SEO
Direct Mail

Lead Nuturing

Marketing Automation

Score and Track MQLs

Sales Team

When bundled with the right services and third-party platforms, marketing automation can dramatically improve online lead gen and help convert that traffic into marketing-qualified leads (MQLs) to be passed to the sales team.

Demonstrating How Marketing Automation Works

It's at this point that we begin to use SharpSpring's rebrandable sales materials to explain how the platform works. We tend to break it down into the three main components SharpSpring brings to the table:

After the prospect has a basic understanding of these tools, our next step is to help them visualize how marketing automation can be put to work to grow their business.

The best way we have found to show clients the intrinsic value of marketing automation is through empathy. By identifying with the client's struggles, we gain their trust and show that we have experience.

For example, we'll say something like:

"Most of the clients we work with have folders, files or drawers full of past quotes and proposals that they didn't win, and the question is how to squeeze some juice out of those withering leads."

We then explain that by combining those "lost opportunities" with any dormant or occasional customers, the client actually has a significant

The best way we have found to show clients the intrinsic value of marketing automation is through empathy. By identifying with the client's struggles, we gain their trust and show that we have experience.

starting point for an account-based marketing (ABM) campaign. All of the contacts already know, and to some degree trust, the client's business, eliminating the need to overcome any credibility hurdles a new business campaign might face.

We can put them on a drip email campaign and sprinkle in some direct mail to re-acclimate this base of potential business. Then, by using the lead scoring feature built into the marketing automation platform, we can clearly identify which leads are interested based on their interactions with the online assets.

Now, the client's sales team can shorten its close cycle by going after the most engaged prospects. Clients love to hear how we can help their salespeople prioritize efforts and improve efficiency, as they're often frustrated with the "order-taking" mentality their sales teams have fallen into.

With lead scoring, the client's sales team can shorten its close cycle by going after the most engaged prospects. Clients love to hear how we can help their salespeople prioritize efforts and improve efficiency.

Multi-Channel Marketing: A Winning Approach

Effective SEM is all about using marketing automation and other tools to generate statistics and evaluate performance. This allows marketers to constantly assess and refine their strategies, and it gives CEOs a tremendous taste of how measurable and effective marketing can be.

Another important factor of SEM is that it's not just about having one lead channel – it's about building many channels that work together to form a continuous and sustainable pipeline. Marketing automation is the engine that amalgamates these channels and helps you manage and optimize your pipeline.

Multi-channel marketing is built largely on these three components:
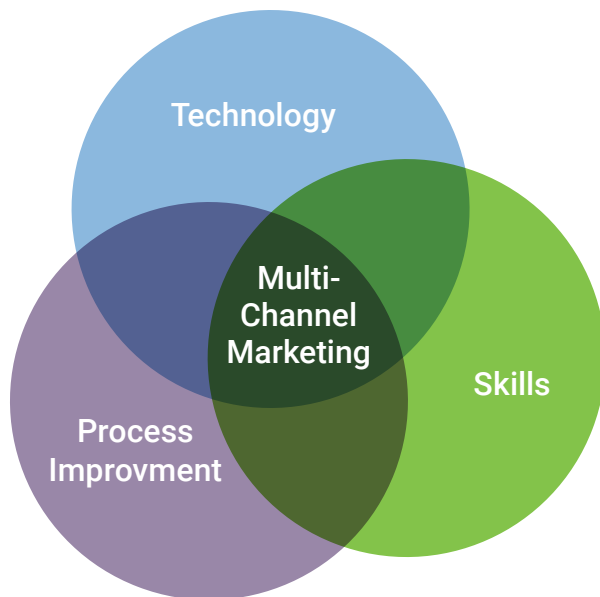
Technology
This allows clients to track lead sources, automate communications, nurture prospects, and determine which ones can be passed to sales. Many clients have a CRM used by the sales team for current customers and leads and a separate email marketing platform that the marketing team uses to prospect and incubate leads. Marketing automation incorporates both into an integrated system where they can communicate and work in sync.
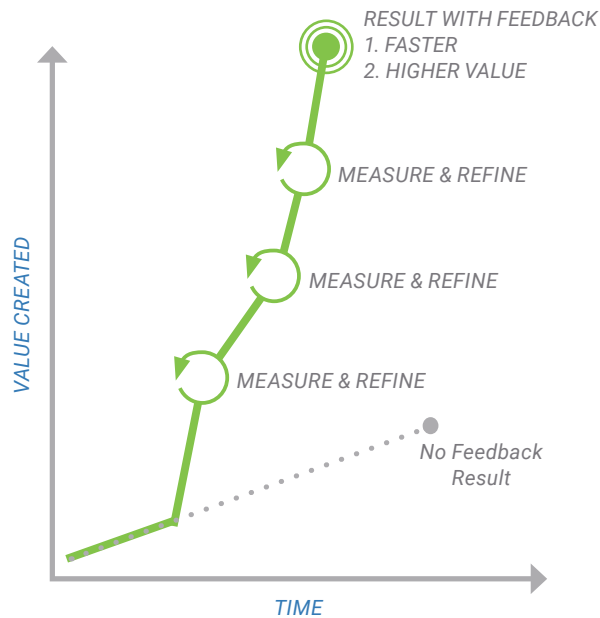
Skills
The right skills need to be in place to develop and maintain a winning SEM strategy that will produce repeatable results within a defined budget. Services in this area are one way we derive a large portion of our agency revenue.

Process Improvement
Companies need to optimize and streamline the processes they use to handle and qualify their leads. The first step is usually to define what makes for a marketing-qualified lead. This is critical, as it makes lead

RAPID ITERATION

RESULT WITH FEEDBACK
1. FASTER
2. HIGHER VALUE

MEASURE & REFINE

MEASURE & REFINE

MEASURE & REFINE

No Feedback
Result

VALUE CREATED

TIME

Effective marketing is about rapid iteration – getting good results quickly and then using those results to fuel the next layer of business development.
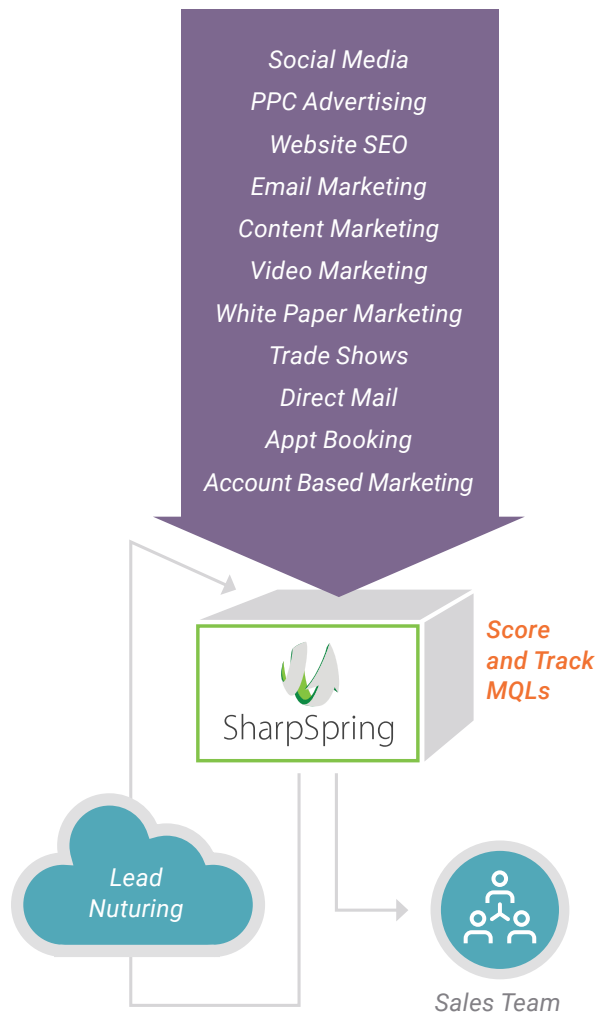
costs more measurable, informs us if there are missing pieces in our organization (do we need inside sales to pre-qualify leads?), and reduces the complaints that typically arise over lead quality.

Marketing automation drives and tracks the right process improvements (through A/B Testing and side-by-side campaign comparisons) and enables the company to deliver more of those MQLs to sales.

For me, effective marketing is about rapid iteration – getting good results quickly and then using those results to fuel the next layer of business development. Rapid iteration is made possible when you have the right tools to help you measure results and refine your processes. Not having a rich set of analytics capabilities is like being a carpenter without a measuring tape – you've got some of the tools to get the job done, but no way to measure your results. And remember, in the marketing world, these tools are changing constantly, so it's important to be constantly on the alert for new ones to ensure you're delivering the most value.

The Bountiful Benefits of Bundling

We've talked about the importance of multi-channel marketing, but how do we convince the client that it can't be achieved without marketing automation? The answer is to show how all of their online tools and assets feed into the marketing automation system, which in turn drives more traffic to their website and through the sales funnel.

Social Media
PPC Advertising
Website SEO
Email Marketing
Content Marketing
Video Marketing
White Paper Marketing
Trade Shows
Direct Mail
Appt Booking
Account Based Marketing

SharpSpring

Score and Track MQLs

Lead Nuturing

Sales Team

After you've convinced a client that they need marketing automation, this is a great opportunity to pitch your agency's services in the form of a "bundle buffet" of capabilities and expertise. Many agencies may offer some or even all of these associated services, but we've found that very few truly know how to combine all of their forces into an effective SEM strategy with marketing automation as the foundation.

For us, this bundling approach is a game-changer and has become the lynch pin to our service offering. We're almost at a point now where we want to revisit our account onboarding process and include marketing automation as the mandatory "base operating system" for tracking, managing and measuring all of a client's online assets.

Bundling Video Marketing With Marketing Automation

YouTube is free to use, is the world's largest video platform, and is owned by Google. So if you want to maximize your SEO value, be sure to post videos regularly to your YouTube channel.

Having said that, there are many distractions on YouTube that can easily lead your viewers astray, such as ads that run before the video, display alongside the video, or pop up in search results (not to mention all the cat videos!). An ad-free player allows you to completely control how your audiences watch your video so you can ensure your message is really getting across.

4X as many customers would rather watch a video about a product than read about it."

– Animoto, 2015

Video marketing platforms like [Wistia](#) can be completely customized to match your brand. With Wistia, you have more control and can gate your content with an email capture field to drive leads into your marketing automation platform. Customizable CTAs and annotation links allow you to link to other pages on your site from within your video, and you can drill down to see the different paths/actions your viewers are taking. Watch how this impacts their lead scores in your marketing automation platform, and then follow up with them based on their behaviors.

YouTube should be used as part of a broader video marketing strategy, rather than just a repository for hosting all of your video content. If you're embedding YouTube videos on your site but not using tracking and analytics tools, you're missing out on the benefits that video marketing has to offer.

## A Killer Combo:
Video Marketing + Email Marketing

We have recently been taking video marketing to the next level by bundling it with our email campaigns. By embedding a personal message from the company owner or a sales representative, we see open rates jump from 10-27% to 47-65% over a 48-hour sampling.

For "high-value" prospects, we even record a personalized video inviting them to demo our marketing automation and video marketing service bundle, and we send a thank you message once they've completed the

By embedding a personal message from a sales rep or the company owner, we see open rates jump from 10-27% to 47-65% over a 48 hour sampling.

presentation. The feedback has been impressive; our close rates have increased and our sales cycle has gotten shorter.

These emails usually look something like this:
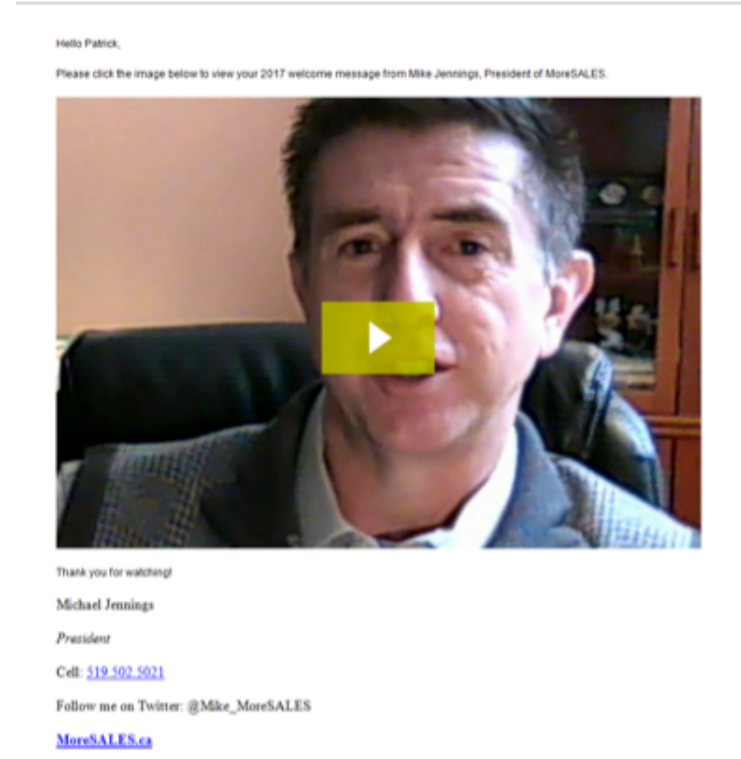
We'll continue to experiment with video, and I'm pumped to see where it takes us. To quote Walt Disney:

"We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths."

Bundle Baby Bundle!

By offering customizable bundles of the latest technologies and techniques, we can quickly prove our expertise and establish trust with prospects. SharpSpring has made that journey even easier, providing us with the means to grow our agency and leverage marketing automation for our clients. We're very excited to see where 2017 takes us as we expand our offering with SharpSpring's support.

See how adding marketing automation to your agency's services can drive revenue from existing clients and help you add new ones. Schedule a demo with a partnerships specialist to chat about your specific needs.

Get a Demo

SharpSpring

SharpSpring is the marketing automation platform of choice for more than 1,000 digital marketing agencies and their 5,000+ clients. Since 2014, SharpSpring has provided its powerful marketing automation solution to businesses around the globe. In the short time since its inception, the company has gained significant market share from industry leaders with its competitive pricing, agency-focused business model, and robust platform.

Visit www.sharpspring.com for more information.

More SALES

For more than 12 years, MoreSALES has created and implemented sales and marketing initiatives throughout the US and Canada for its B2B clients. In 2012, the niche firm located just outside of Toronto turned its focus to online marketing, including marketing automation, content marketing and, most recently, video marketing. With a track record for delivering MQLs to its clients' sales teams, MoreSALES enjoys consistent growth through referrals and reputation.

Visit us at www.moresales.ca