SilverStripe

The Buzz on Best-of-Breed

The benefits of adopting a best-of-breed
marketing technology stack

At SilverStripe, we are seeing a range of benefits from adopting a best-of-breed martech stack. It's not just us either — more marketers are using these integrated stacks to improve their marketing efforts and track their successes. In fact, the 2017 State of Marketing Report showed half of the marketers were using stacks, with only 21% opting for a single vendor suite.

But what are we talking about when we say a best-of-breed martech stack?

BUZZWORD BEST-OF-BREED[1]

Definition:

1. Purchasing software from different vendors to obtain the best offering for each application area.

2. The best choice if an organisation's requirements are so specific, a single software won't meet their needs.

1   What is a Best of Breed System? - Definition from Techopedia. (2018). Retrieved from techopedia.com

BUZZWORD MARTECH STACK[2]

Definition:

1. An integrated selection of technology tools to help marketers do their jobs.

2. Selecting the best tools from every field for your organisation to attract and retain customers.

2   What is martech (marketing technology)? - Definition from WhatIs.com. (2018). Retrieved from techtarget.com

Benefits

1. Change

We know how fast the marketing landscape changes! There's always a new tool, platform, or way of doing things. An integrated digital experience stack allows for this change to be fast and agile. If a new social platform or technology tool pops up, you can adapt it into your stack at speed.

2. Data

For data-driven decisions, you need best-of-breed data tools. Many marketers are valuing being able to treat data tools as an important factor in their own right, rather than an afterthought or add on.

3. Personalisation

We all know the old adage of customer-first strategies. An integrated best-of-breed stack means you can build around your customer lifecycle journey, not around what one vendor offers in their suite!

4. ROI

There are several benefits to an integrated stack approach in the investment area. The ROI of tools can be looked at individually rather than trying to analyse a large "all-in-one" investment. In a Campaign Monitor[3] Report, 95% of marketers using best-of-breed stacks believed they provided greater value for money than a mega-vendor option.

5. Choice

Select the best tool from every field and pick nothing that you don't need! An advantage of an integrated digital experience stack is that you're not going to be paying for any additional functionality that you are not using. Best-of-breed means your stack will be completely customised to your company and ideal customer journey. Having it your way has never looked better!

6. Scale

Best-of-breed stacks can be scaled to suit any organisation size. The advantage, if you're a smaller organisation, is you can start with a few essential tools and gradually add on to create your ultimate stack!

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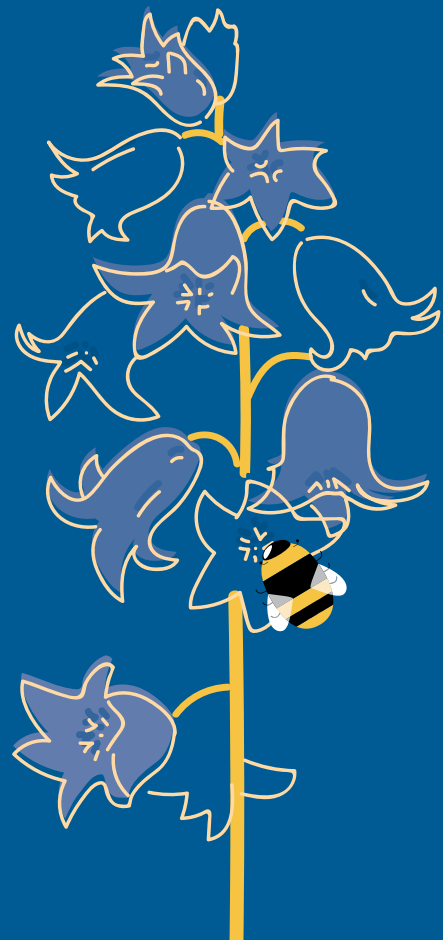
3   Mid-size growing businesses prefer best of breed technology. (2018). Retrieved from campaignmonitor.com

4 Principles to Consider When Building Your Stack

Ready to start creating your own best-of-breed martech stack? Here are a few key principles to keep in mind when you are starting out!

Begin with strategy

It's easy to lead with tools first and think of strategy later. Once you're deep into a demo you suddenly want ALL the features that this tool has. Before you begin, make sure you're starting with your customer strategy. What is it that you want to achieve for your customers? Build your stack around the customer lifecycle journey you want to achieve rather than shiny features.

Map it out

Many organisations find it useful to have a visual representation of their marketing stack that maps the customer activation journey. This is also a useful tool for other vendors to see how they fit into your wider strategy. You could do something as basic as an internal reference, or go more advanced with some inspiration from the annual Stackies Awards!

Openness and flexibility

To reap all the benefits of an integrated stack you'll want to emphasis tools that embrace flexibility. Tech that integrates widely with a range of tools should be a key part of your criteria.

Prioritise

The beauty of an integrated stack is it can be completely scaled to suit your time and budget. Once you understand the strategy and journey you want to create, you may end up with a mile long list of tech! You're not alone: the 2017 Internet Trends Report showed enterprise level organisations using 91 different marketing cloud services! If your budget or timeframe isn't at an enterprise level, you'll want to keep your list focused. Some core categories to consider are:

- Content/CMS
- Email
- Analytics
- CRM/automation
- Social

"The space is changing too fast for any one vendor to keep up with the whole thing."

— Scott Brinker, Editor, chiefmartec.com

# Pitfalls to avoid

Forgetting security

With multi-integration and APIs, you need to make sure that you consider security at the very beginning of building your stack. As marketers within tech, it is important to consider how security and compliance are part of our responsibility. Not just for our organisations, but for customer experience as well. Don't wait until you've chosen and implemented your stack to consider how secure it is!

Vendor lock in

You don't want to be unable to integrate different products because you are reliant on one vendor's product! Using a best-of-breed stack means you are able to integrate different products and customise it for what your organisation needs. You can take full advantage of open technology partners that embrace an integrated cloud environment.

Leaving consumers behind

Amongst all the integration, it can be easy to lose sight of why we operate these technologies. It is important to always keep in mind how your stack enhances the customer lifecycle journey. Whether it be through better collaboration with sales, or reviewing dashboards, focus on how experience and value are being delivered to your customers.
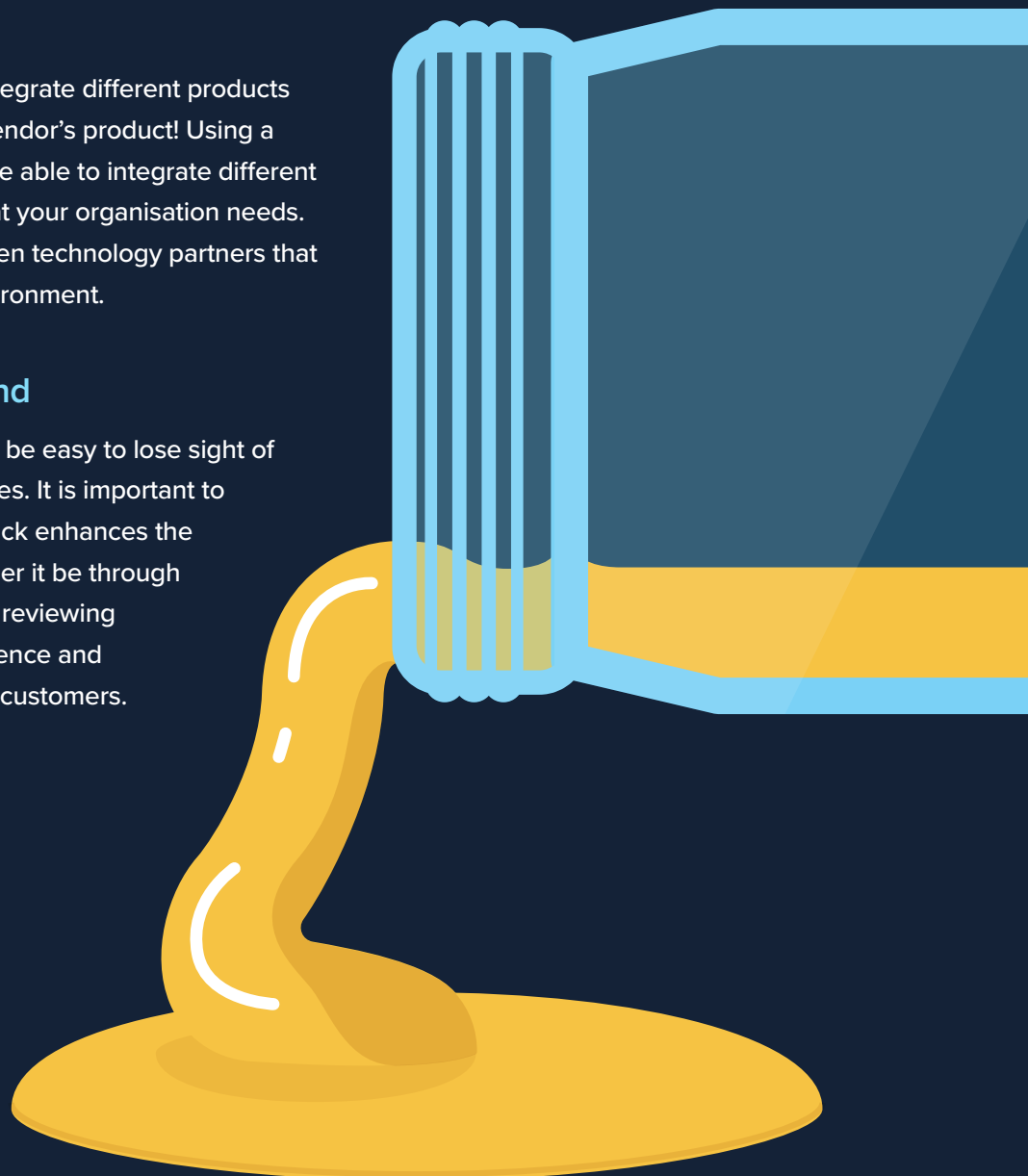
Curious about other stacks?

Free web browser tools will let you take a sneak peek at what technology other organisations are using via their website integration.
Try out BuiltWith.

Inspiration

For some stack inspiration check out the yearly Stackies Awards and some of the visual masterpieces on display.

SilverStripe

Here at SilverStripe, we can help you design the best-of-breed approach that best suits your organisation's needs. Contact us to find out how!

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