

# 3 Tips to Achieve Growth in 2023 Through Data-Driven Marketing Strategies

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In the midst of economic turmoil, CEOs and entrepreneurs are focusing on a bright future. Nearly 75% of leaders surveyed during a joint Hello Alice-Mastercard initiative said they planned to grow in 2023. This means business owners nationwide aren't allowing the heat of inflation to squelch their optimism. However, they can only generate good results with equally good data-driven digital marketing strategies.

Fortunately, this isn't a revelation to most leaders. Everyone has heard about the importance of data. Yet, many companies spend less time mapping out a successful, data-backed, growth-centered plan than the average family does when preparing for a vacation. It's just not enough to choose some data points to measure.

To see growth – and scalability when your team is ready for it – your business needs to know where it wants to go. When you have a destination in mind, you can reverse-engineer your process to determine which data you need to make your growth dreams a reality. You're bound to wander off course when you don't have a destination set in stone. That's costly but fortunately avoidable.

To start, you need to do a deep dive to understand what “growth” looks like for your company. Instead of picking metrics based on what you think you should measure or setting up data reports, answer four questions. First, where do you

want your business to go in the coming 12 months? Pinpoint specific goals. Second, do you have assets in place that are helping you reach those goals? These could be anything from audiences and offers to channels.

With these questions answered, evaluate how your existing assets are working. In other words, where are the gaps? Be very honest with what you see, or else you won't be able to respond to the last question: Is your current plan helping you reach those goals?

Once you've taken this deep dive into your overall sales and marketing objectives and strategies, you can employ data-focused, successful digital marketing measures. Each of these measures will nudge you closer to the growth you want and protect you from preventable roadblocks.

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## **1. Set up metrics that are personalized to your stated goals**

You'll never be confident that you're moving in the right direction unless you measure the right metrics. One of the biggest errors many leaders make is not testing their metrics or KPIs against their overall growth strategy objectives. Your metrics must have an impact and not just be chosen at random.

A 2021 Adverity announcement indicated that around one-third of all CMOs don't trust their marketing data. That is, they're reluctant to believe the metrics their dashboards show. You can't afford to be in this position because it hinders your ability to make informed decisions. This is why you need to be choosy and particular when it comes to metrics.

Run each possible metric that you might measure through an assessment. How will you use the metric? Why will it show

whether you're on or off track? Are there other corresponding metrics that could shed light on the metric?

Spending time on this kind of upfront evaluation will pay off later. Just be sure that you examine your metrics every few months. You may want to decrease or add data points as you move closer to your goals.

## 2. Take a “big picture” approach to your data

With your metrics in hand, you can start getting data insights. The insights may or may not be valuable, though. Plus, they might not say what you think they're saying. Believe it or not, sometimes you have to interpret the numbers. This is where stepping back and being able to look at everything from a 35,000-foot view makes sense.

Our company works with many leaders who, in their eagerness to examine the data, haven't skimmed it beyond the surface. As a result, they've sometimes been surprised when they discover that their data is showing red flags – and that they've ignored those red flags.

For instance, one of our clients was showing high-profit margins via the metrics and assumed the company was on a serious growth trajectory. Just in case, we poked around a few additional data points. What was really happening was that two or three of the client's customers were very profitable, but about 10 other customers were dropping in profitability.

The company realized that it had to get to the bottom of why such a high percentage of customers were unprofitable. If their leaders hadn't been open to the big picture, they could have found themselves without the growth they sought.

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### **3. Include catastrophe management in your data-driven digital marketing strategy**

Catastrophic things can happen to any company. Just ask the countless companies that reported a collective total of 1,802 data breaches or compromises in 2022 per Identity Theft Resource Center. Every time you add a new data entry or endpoint to your workflows, such as a cloud-based software tool, you're opening the door to being hacked. Nevertheless, you shouldn't allow fear to shut down your data-driven digital marketing campaigns. Instead, leverage the experience of vendors and partners who've seen it all and want to help you avoid being a worst-case scenario.

You can use certain metrics to help you shed light on the unknown and be proactive. Being able to get real-time data on internal and external security protocols, subscription sign-ons and more can help you avoid heartache and headache. Remember, not all catastrophes come from nefarious places.

Another client of ours said their product turnover was 90 days. They built a thriving, data-driven digital marketing strategy around that belief. Orders started coming in, and their metrics, including SEO-created online authority, looked amazing. All except one: fulfillment. They were wrong about the 90-day prediction and couldn't fulfill orders. Their business tanked because they couldn't support the growth they sought and we achieved.

Essentially, your job is to unveil buried information so you can grow without faltering. Let others pay the "school of hard knocks" tuition. You have better places to spend your money, like consistently tweaking and honing your digital marketing plan throughout the year.

Getting bigger and better requires that you identify your

baseline objectives and then construct data-driven strategies around them. It's the healthiest way to keep your business ticking and humming straight toward your goals.

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