ENJOY THIS COMPLIMENTARY
WHITE PAPER
SPONSORED BY KAON INTERACTIVE

kaon®
INTERACTIVE

MARKETING 4.0:
ADAPTING TO THE CHANGING BUYERS' EXPERIENCE

WHEN BUYERS ARE IN CONTROL, **HELPING IS THE NEW SELLING**

ABOUT THE SPONSOR

Kaon Interactive is a B2B software company. Our interactive sales & marketing applications simplify our clients' complex product and solution stories in a visually engaging way.

SUPPORTED PLATFORMS

www.kaon.com • 978.823.0111

kaon ®
INTERACTIVE

Dawn of the Experience Age

The past 40 years have seen us move from the Digital Age (80s and 90s) through the Post Digital Age (90s, 00s, 10s) to the dawn of the Experience Age. In the Digital Age, technology delivered greater efficiencies to production, product assortments, pricing and promotions. Ecommerce of the Post Digital Age led to greater customer insights – retailers and marketers learned more about their buyers' trends and unique buying tastes. Profiling algorithms created personalized marketing. This eventually gave rise to a legal pushback as demonstrated by the failure of the Google Glass, the Cambridge Analytica case in 2018 and the passing of the GDPR legislation.

In this Experience Age, relationships are critical. Customers demand the autonomy to manage their own experience, and customer experience starts with customer engagement, which, in turn, is built on trust. Trust and security are key drivers in forging strong bonds between company and customer. Ana Andjelic and Rachel Conlan of Havas advise companies to "use data like a butler, not a stalker." It is becoming an economic necessity to treat customers like valued human beings. Customers will share their data voluntarily only once

they are satisfied there is value in the relationship. Companies that succeed here are the ones who derive insights for their customers from aggregating and analyzing customer data – something individual customers cannot do themselves. They are the companies who provide creative, innovative and pertinent solutions to their customers. Companies must prove they want a relationship for life, not just for one transaction. Successful companies have a single, consistently articulated identity.

So, you have to ask the question: How do companies satisfy these needs for customer engagement and dialog without impinging on customer privacy?

The solution needs to be an open, yet secure, digital environment that provides the necessary information customers seek and the avenues for them to reach out to when they are ready to buy.

Technology Drives Change

Profound changes to the buyer have precipitated a rethink of the buying and selling relationship. Technology has been the most significant catalyst of this change.

Industry 4.0 is a major disruptor of manufacturing. Smart factories will use digital

intelligence in real-time to optimize the manufacturing and supply chain processes. Automation and access to ever-increasing amounts of data have sped up the rate of production as well as the diversity of product. Globalization and digitization have made it easier for new players to emerge in markets, thus increasing competition. Cloud computing and micro computing puts technology in almost everything. Complexity is hidden in micro units that drive and connect to everyday appliances making technology ubiquitous. Today, customers are less focused on product features and more on how the technology will lead them to improved outcomes. It becomes more challenging for companies to articulate their complex products' value without defaulting to "speeds and feeds" or "feature/functionality" descriptions.

The Struggle to Have One Voice

B2B buying models have changed, too. Manufacturers are becoming omnichannel retailers and service providers. Company-owned stores like Apple, Tesla and Nike are a testament to a trend of B2B (business-to-business) becoming D2C (direct-to-consumer), bypassing the middleman. The creation of D2C stores cre-

kaon INTERACTIVE

ated a "layman" salesperson who struggles to master the corporate voice due to lack of training and distance from the company's "core". Ecommerce has fused the B2B and B2C roles so much so that today's buyers are users, and users are buyers.

Companies and divisions act inter-de-pendently and intro-dependently — just like markets do. Industry consolidations, mergers and acquisitions have created new pools of available financial resources but also have created convoluted relationships among competitors, providers and part-ners. There is now a web of relationships that has led to an inability to articulate a corporate value story. Individual teams with siloed skill sets, culturally misaligned, try, in vain, to work together to map a compre-hensive, cross-product solution for the cus-tomer. It falls to marketing to create consol-idated messages and value differentiation stories that enable corporate citizens to speak with one voice; this solution has to be flexible and extensible to incorporate the constant ebb and flow of corporate transformation essential to survival, while easily accessible internally to its constitu-ents, prospects, partners, and customers.

Decision Making by Committee

Decision-making itself has undergone a transformation. One of the major chal-lenges is the variety of decision makers. Differences in location, function, or seniority can create confusion about who is truly going to help drive the decision.

Sales' biggest challenge is helping custom-ers overcome their inability to reach collab-orative agreement, which often leaves or-ganizations stalled and defaulting to their status quo. Sales professionals can struggle to identify who the real decision makers are. The rise of procurement and consensus buying has changed the act of selling. It is no longer the sales person's role to con-vince these stakeholders of the value of the solutions, since they do not have the reach into the organization to do so. Companies should enable key customer and prospect champions with engaging tools to enable internal selling. Putting case studies, ROI calculators, proof points, product details and clear value differentiation messaging in the hands of these champions speeds up the sales cycle and improves the chances of arriving at a buying decision.

The Buyer/Seller Transformation

Buyers are now in control of the major-ity of their own sales/buying process. They research vendors, compare products and secure buy-in from other stakeholders. Forrester estimates that 74% of B2B buy-ers carry out half of their research online. LinkedIn Business complied data that indi-cates that 76% of buyers prioritize vendors suggested by their peers, and 53% of buy-ers rely on peer recommendations. In addi-tion, the number of people making buying decisions has increased from 5.4 stake-holders in 2015 to 6.8 in 2017. (HBR, 2017).

From this, we can conclude that:

- Self-service, digital content is critical to creating brand awareness (solutions, products, services) among prospects

- Peers, friends and colleagues play a vital role in the buying process

- Consensus buying is getting more difficult with differing constituents and requirements now in the mix

It's unlikely that any single technology provider will deliver a comprehensive solution to address all of the above re-quirements. Most companies already

kaon INTERACTIVE

have point solutions in place to address various challenges. These however are often siloed, providing individual databases and analytics for each function in the marketing and sales processes.

Companies can no longer take these singular, sliced views of the buying journey where marketing views prospects through web analytics and profiling tools while sales views customers through the lens of CRM suites. The solution needs to be an ecosystem of point tools, platforms, hubs and suites that work together, new and old, across the sales and marketing solutions stacks to provide insight into the total selling and buying journey.

So, the new Buyer 2.0 is better informed, influenced by peers and industry analysts, part of a bigger group of stakeholders, and seeks a high level of personalization and customer messaging. At the same time, corporations are in flux, industries are consolidating and being commoditized, risk increases, budgets shrink, and technology drives rapid innovation and new competitors while there is a shortage of resources and skillsets. In this environment, success depends on a constant flow of new customers combined with loyal, returning customers. Corporations look to their market-

ing teams to be their scout bees who reach into new nourishing markets and who, with their virtual megaphones, amplify the company's differentiation story to the masses.

The Sales and Marketing Need for Evolution

Marketing must take on the responsibility of actually educating the customer and prospect, not just generating awareness of the product and its capabilities. Marketing and sales both share the responsibility to drive revenue. This makes it even more critical that sales and marketing speak with a single voice, in a single continuum.

With the customer in mind, sales and marketing should ensure that web sites and applications facilitate easy information sharing, since prospects tend to provide information when they're ready to buy. Marketers can, going back to the "data butler" analogy, serve up straightforward ways to collect customer information and not miss out on valuable conversation opportunities.

Sales must also guide the prospect with insights and knowledge that are both personalized and relevant to their challenges. Ideally, the same tools and content should be used by sales and prospects, with deeper insights brought to bear by

the sales person. If peers are to be proxy sales people (making product/solution recommendations), they should be enabled by the companies they reference. As the number of stakeholders grow, it becomes increasingly difficult for sales to reach them all to articulate their value proposition. Companies, therefore, have to penetrate that inner peer conversation with tools and content that can be shared easily, and used simply, to convince naysayers internally.

Consistent messaging and tools move prospects seamlessly through the buying funnel; therefore, the same solution should be available to marketing, sales, customers and prospects. Each constituent should find value tailored to their unique perspective. These tools MUST be integrated into the ecosystem of marketing and sales (website analytics, application reviews, customer profiling tools, CRM suites) so there is a 360-degree view of the entire buying cycle, eliminating yet another silo.

How Going Digital Will Transform Marketing

Digital-centric globalization has disrupted the worlds of commerce and industry. It is the battlefield on which companies compete for the hearts and minds of

consumers. Digital engagement affords opportunities to create iterative and collaborative insight communities. Marketing content needs to exist in the digital, social worlds that customers and prospects frequent. Since websites drive 3% of pipeline/closed business and Google's Zero Moment of Truth states most B2B customers use over 10 sources of information to make purchasing decisions, it is essential that companies are featured prominently in the digital world. Furthermore, digitization has enabled interactive content that engages prospects and customers in ways that brochures and presentations do not. These interactive applications not only provide customers with sensory interaction (tactile, visual and even auditory), but they also enable engagement on two other dimensions: intellectual (the information being exchanged is useful and relevant) and emotional (the customer enjoys engaging with these applications, as opposed to sitting passively listening to someone else talk).

AR and VR: Turning Marketing on It's Head

Today, there is a need to extend these interactions with increasingly immersive experiences. Augmented reality (AR) applications (a technology that superimposes a comput-

er-generated image in to a user's view of the real world) extend engagement beyond interactivity. Along with the virtual product, key messages are displayed to reinforce what the customer is seeing and experiencing. Putting virtual products into their real-world environments provides a clear, unequivocal expectation of the product's value for that customer. Captivating engagement is achieved with virtual reality (VR) applications since they are fully immersive. Using VR, simulated spaces can be designed to help explain and show customers what it would be like to interact with and use products or solutions in an environment that represents their actual use-cases. This level of immersion is unequalled when it comes to focusing the customer on the message and giving them the ability to absorb the value that they would receive.

Successful companies are investing in these technologies to enamor their prospects and compel their customers to remain engaged.

Marketers are exploring various means to achieve these successful engagements with a few core requirements:

- Available online and offline

- Supports multiple channels and technologies (browsers, operating systems, devices)

AVAILABLE ONLINE/OFFLINE

UNLIMITED GLOBAL USERS

COLLABORATION TOOLS

www.kaon.com • 978.823.0111

kaon INTERACTIVE

- Easily updated and configured to speak to each buying persona effectively and appropriately, involving minimal effort to maintain

- Self-service tool for prospects, sales tool for sales professionals, and, simultaneously, a decision-making tool for stakeholders in their internal decision and approval processes

- Consolidates information about products, solutions, insights and proof points in a central place

- Easily shared and accessed

- Integrates with existing systems to eliminate redundancy and feeds into analytics to provide a complete and consistent view into the entire buyer's journey

- Extensible (with new technology integration and engaging content)

- Customizable (open to integrating with existing tools and processes)

- Economical

A Marketing Platform that Amplifies Your Chance for Success

Kaon Interactive follows the ancient Chinese proverb, **"If you tell me, I will forget; If you show me, I will remember; If you involve me, I will understand."** They believe in the power of interactivity and engagement to help buyers really comprehend the unique value that their customers deliver. Kaon has a laser focus on interactive, engaging applications that bring marketing, sales and prospects together to collaborate towards a common goal. The Kaon Interactive application seamlessly weaves together compelling, virtual, 3D product demonstrations (that look and behave like the actual products), environments, panoramas, flow diagrams, videos, embedded marketing collateral and presentations in a branded, digital environment.

With interactivity at the core, the content is no longer "one size fits all." It becomes specific to the customer. For example, when navigating in a personalized, non-linear fashion, the customer does not have to step through a pre-determined sequence of visuals or messages (as he or she would with a video or slide presentation). This means that each person focuses on that part of the content that is relevant and interesting and each

SCALE YOUR MESSAGE

FUTURE PROOF

DRIVE USER ADOPTION

www.kaon.com • 978.823.0111

kaon
INTERACTIVE

can take a deep dive into the important value stories. The same interactive application will deliver an entirely different user journey to someone else, because they may have different needs. In this way, marketing can create one set of value messages that are consistent in the articulation of unique differentiators but that are experienced in the most relevant and effective way by a wide variety of global users. This not only saves the company a great deal of money – by eliminating the need to create buyer-specific content pieces or applications – but it also makes their investment that much more valuable. If executed well, these interactive marketing applications will have the effect of increasing sales velocity

by compressing the amount of time that it takes to deliver relevant value messages to every constituent in the buying process.
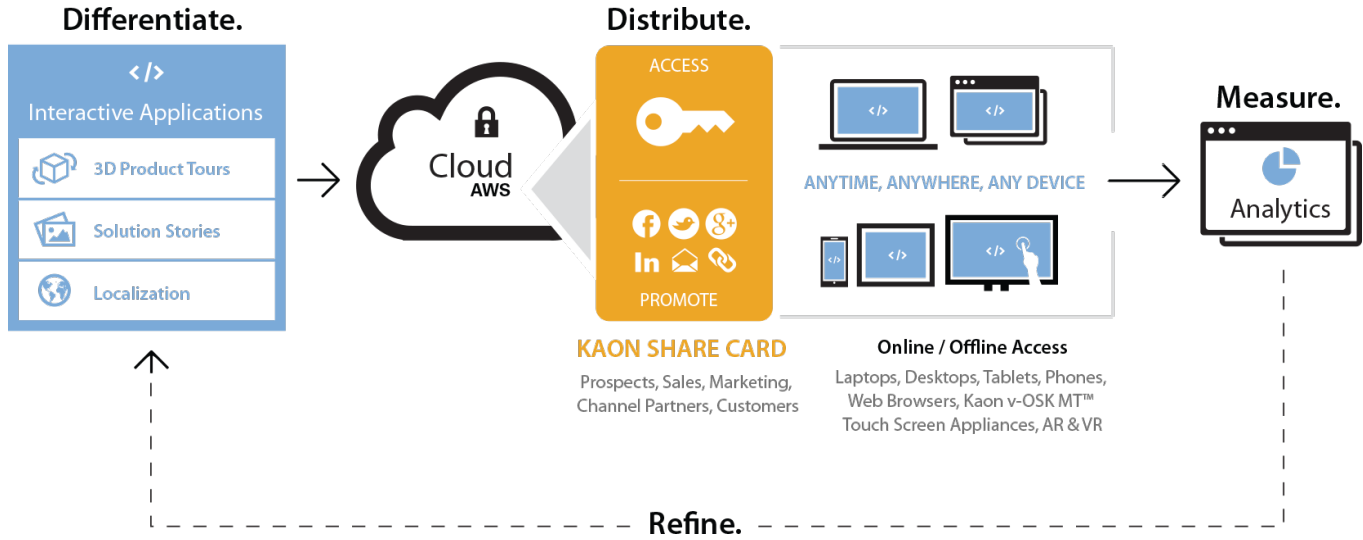
Ongoing Platform Innovations Aiding the Customer's Journey

Kaon has expanded their solution beyond "engaging" to "immersive." With the use of AR and VR as an integral part of (and now no longer a separate experience from) the digital customer toolset, prospects can now become totally immersed in an experience that tells the brand story or demonstrates the value of a solution.

Every sales and marketing application Kaon builds is deployed and maintained on the Kaon High Velocity Marketing Platform®. The Kaon SaaS platform enables companies to create, deploy, engage, share, personalize, measure, update, and extend their applications for maximum reach, reliability, and value.

The **Kaon High Velocity Marketing Platform®** is the world's ONLY platform that can deliver online or offline access to UNLIMITED users on ALL devices, from ONE universal location, WITHOUT re-development fees.

The Kaon cloud delivery solution immediately updates all application content

Differentiate.

Interactive Applications
- 3D Product Tours
- Solution Stories
- Localization

Cloud AWS

Distribute.

ACCESS

PROMOTE

KAON SHARE CARD
Prospects, Sales, Marketing, Channel Partners, Customers

ANYTIME, ANYWHERE, ANY DEVICE

Online / Offline Access
Laptops, Desktops, Tablets, Phones, Web Browsers, Kaon v-OSK MT™ Touch Screen Appliances, AR & VR

Measure.

Analytics

Refine.

www.kaon.com • 978.823.0111

kaon
INTERACTIVE

on all devices, across all geographies and to all users in real-time. This eliminates the hidden costs of re-creating and maintaining interactive applications on multiple platforms, ensuring that these engaging experiences always work and are delivered into the hands of prospects, customers, sales teams, channel partners, and marketing professionals, regardless of their geography or device.

In the applications themselves, the key to providing a great customer experience is to conform to corporate brand standards and ensure the messaging is on point. Corporate messaging around products and solutions is constantly evolving, so having a platform that allows for quick and painless updates and instant deployment to a global sales force and customer base across all devices is critical.

The other key component of great customer experience is to ensure you provide value at every customer engagement touch point. If the customer first learns about your products on an interactive kiosk at a trade show, they should be able to continue that experience when they meet with a salesperson using a mobile application. And, they should be able to access that same content themselves via the web and share it easily through business communication tools and social media. Making a great UX is important, but you cannot provide the customer experience (CX) you need without an enterprise platform. That's Kaon's "secret sauce" for CX.

Kaon makes applications that work cross-platform out of the box, authenticating users or pushing global updates instantly without waiting on app store approvals. **"Our platform is the only one that works at the enterprise scale and also delivers the latest 3D AR and VR technology. Going forward, our customers can be confident that they are always on the leading edge of these exciting new technologies,"** said CTO and Founder Joshua Smith.

Achieving High Velocity Marketing (and Sales)

Kaon interactive is not just a SaaS provider of interactive, engaging marketing and sales applications. Their applications satisfy the requirements essential for a superior customer experience, as highlighted above.

Kaon's High Velocity Marketing Platform ensures that these applications are:

- Available online and offline

- Support multiple channels and technologies (browsers, operating systems, devices)

- Extensible to grow from interactive 3D product models to AR product tours and, even further, into VR experiences

- Economical, with the ability to evolve and update instantly via the cloud

Kaon recognizes the need to have these applications function effectively within their customers' ecosystems and develops them to be customizable and open to integrating with existing tools and processes. Therefore, this is an extensible API SaaS platform that interfaces with existing marketing tools, CRM systems, and business intelligence and reporting environments. Rather than creating additional data and security siloes, Kaon builds into the existing customer ecosystem – thereby maximizing the use of existing assets and reducing costs, while streamlining ongoing maintenance. One such example of this is Kaon Salesforce Connect®, which captures the user's navigation of the application directly within the customer's existing CRM database. This both aids in the understanding of where users are in their buyers' journey (by highlighting their needs and interests) and eliminates post sales meeting data entry, as

"Our platform is the only one that works at the enterprise scale and also delivers the latest 3D AR and VR technology"

Kaon Interactive CTO & Founder — Joshua Smith

it is automated within their CRM profile.

Brand alignment is an underlying philosophy that drives a holistic approach for customers. Kaon's team has two decades of intuitional best practices in designing and building applications to uniquely highlight the stories, products and services that customers want communicated. It forms that single perfect vehicle that prospects, sales and partners use to navigate the buying journey.

Kaon recognized the demand for greater efficiencies and accountability in the sales and marketing process. Stakeholders and executives look for measures of ROI across marketing and sales. There is an expectation that these applications have successful implementations and continued use and benefits. Kaon's training and end-user adoption service ensures that the various user populations adopt and grow with these applications. Customer success is an integral part of the Kaon solution.

In Summary

Modern marketers need to help prospects find what they are looking for, capture and showcase the great things people say about their organizations and solutions, cater to the new decision-making process, help sales

and prospects facilitate their own decision-making process to a successful end, and better target prospects based on their behavior.

Kaon Interactive enables its customers to speak with an authentic voice across many platforms (web, social media, mobile, events) to their prospects and customers by building adaptive and flexible interactive applications. Sales and marketing teams use these applications to help buyers in three major areas:

- Available online and offline

- Support multiple channels and technologies (browsers, operating systems, devices)

- Extensible to grow from interactive 3D product models to AR product tours and, even further, into VR experiences

- Economical, with the ability to evolve and update instantaneously via the cloud

As discussed above, these interactive applications MUST interface with existing marketing and CRM suites to show a complete 360-degree view of the customer. The applications MUST be easily updated and seamlessly rolled out (via the cloud), updating user content effortlessly. Not only are these applications multifunctional (sales, marketing, training), they MUST also seamlessly integrate into ongoing strategy (events,

product launches, website) for effective multichannel sales and marketing activities.

Our job as marketers is to understand how the customer wants to buy and help them do so. So, with buyers in control, helping is the new selling.

To learn more, visit
WWW.KAON.COM.

www.kaon.com • 978.823.0111

kaon
INTERACTIVE