

How Legacy Systems Stifle Marketing Analytics

Outdated technology stands in the way of marketers' goals

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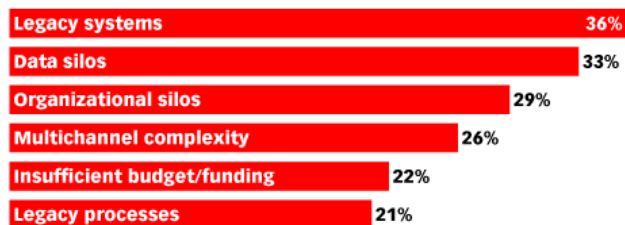
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Marketers want to follow customers in real time, but outdated technology often stands in their way.

In a July survey of 560 marketing professionals worldwide conducted by [Harvard Business Review Analytic Services](#), 36% of respondents said that legacy systems were one of the biggest roadblocks preventing them from implementing real-time analytics. A third of respondents reported that data silos also stifled their progress. The results indicate that old technologies and organizational structures make life more difficult for marketers who want to utilize user data in novel ways.

Real-Time Customer Analytics Challenges According to Marketers Worldwide, March 2018

% of respondents



Source: [Harvard Business Review Analytic Services](#), "Real-Time Analytics: The Key to Unlocking Customer Insights & Driving the Customer Experience" in conjunction with SAS, Intel and Accenture Applied Intelligence, July 8, 2018

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Although the marketing tech landscape is perpetually changing, marketers aren't typically too aggressive about adjusting their technology setup. In a [Walker Sands Communications](#) survey of 300 US marketers conducted in Q1 2018, 53% of respondents said they [adjust their tech stacks once or twice per year](#). One in 10 respondents said they never implement new marketing tech products.

Marketers who rely on programmatic ad buying may have to update their technology sooner rather than later. Last week, the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) Tech Lab [released its OpenRTB 3.0 spec for public comment](#). The spec is intended to overhaul the underlying technologies that empower programmatic ad exchanges.

OpenRTB 3.0 is not backward compatible, which means that ad buying and ad targeting platforms will have to rewrite their code if they wish to comply with the new standard. The spec's timeline isn't officially set, but OpenRTB 3.0 could go into effect in 2019.

Another common obstacle preventing innovation in marketing is data silos. Marketers are making some progress on this front, however.

Just 17% of the 104 US digital media buyers Centro and Forrester Consulting surveyed in May said their [direct and programmatic sales teams have fully converged](#). But three-fourths of respondents said they're starting to unify them.