

How Are Marketers Successfully Shaking Last-Click Attribution?

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The **inaccuracies of last-click attribution** are well-documented, yet many marketers still rely on it.

In 2019, we expect 87.0% of US companies—with at least 100 employees using more than one digital marketing channel—will use digital attribution models. But just 58.3% of companies will use multichannel attribution models—a form of digital attribution that assigns marketing credit to more than one marketing channel or touchpoint. Multichannel attribution provides a clearer picture of a customer’s online journey vs. last-click attribution, which credits a purchase to the last ad a customer clicks.

Companies Using Attribution Models

US, 2019

% of US companies using digital attribution models

87.0%

% of US companies using multichannel attribution models

58.3%

Source: eMarketer, December 2018

www.eMarketer.com

Marketers want better insight into how their dollars are spent, but replacing last-click attribution models with more advanced approaches can be challenging. Marketers recognize the dangers in limiting ones' measurement lens to a single influence, but a host of organizational problems prevent many marketers from adopting more advanced attribution techniques, according to Jon Schulz, CMO of ad tech company Viant.

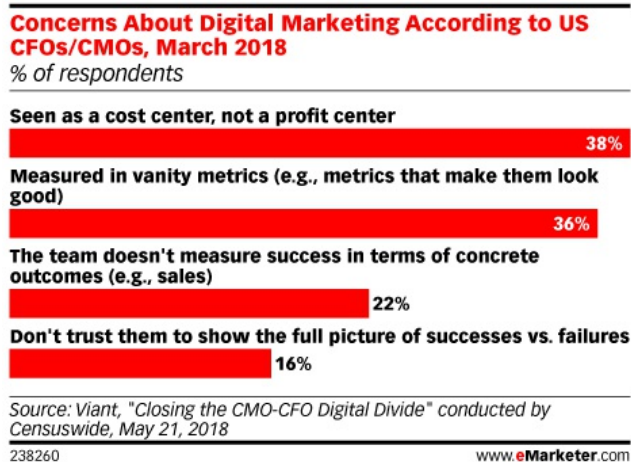
Due to organizational silos at large companies, marketers often lack incentive to share data across the organization. "The organizational silos—I can't stress enough—are more often than not what makes advanced attribution efforts fall down." Schulz said.

Also keeping last-click efforts afloat? Company executives who fail to adjust those same marketers' compensation or bonus structures away from last-click reporting.

"If the executives haven't bought into [more advanced attribution efforts], then the channel marketing teams, especially the ones who might be negatively impacted with this new methodology, have no incentive to go along with it," said Anthony Ching, who heads product management of experience intelligence services at Adobe. "No one wants to see their level of contribution reduce. We spend a lot of time with executives explaining this from a methodology, technology and outcome standpoint."

Shifting to a more holistic attribution practice focused on business outcomes, rather than channel-specific efforts and metrics, can help to

allay C-level executives' concerns. A March 2018 poll by Viant found 36% of the US CFOs and CMOs surveyed cited the use of vanity metrics as a digital marketing concern. And 22% of respondents said a lack of focus on concrete outcomes, such as sales, was another concern.



As noted in our upcoming attribution reports, such a shift is neither easy nor quick, but it is essential if companies want to understand the totality of their marketing efforts on driving core business outcomes such as customer lifetime value or increased revenues.

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