# CMO to CIO:
# "I want to friend you"

## Why better collaboration between IT and marketing makes sense

JANET C. JESSEN

A recent issue of *Forbes* magazine posed the question, "Are CMOs the New CIOs?" The article appeared shortly after the president of my company assigned me, an archetypal right-brained marketer, responsibility for our IT department.

Clearly reflecting the rapid and continuing convergence of marketing and technology, his decision gave me pause. After all, unlike today's Gen Z which has grown up with the internet, smart phones, iPads, iPods, etc., I had only a workaday knowledge of the digital world.

My president was quick, however, to reassure me he wasn't looking for another techno wizard—we already had excellent IT talent—but rather someone who could provide the leadership to engage that talent in the real issues of our business. The objective was to bring IT into the fray and have our needs and norms placed high on their priority list.

Yet our situation was not uncommon. IBM recently surveyed 1,700 CMOs, 45% of whom cited a lack of marketing-IT alignment; some 70% felt unprepared to deal with social media and the data explosion; and 65% felt unprepared to deal with the growing number of channels and tech devices. Perhaps the most significant finding of the study, however, was that the respondents ranked the impact of technology on their businesses second only to that of market factors, and ahead of even macroeconomic factors and globalization.

These results point to a crying need for closer collaboration between marketing and IT, a need identified by another study conducted by the CMO Council. This study found that marketing and IT executives agree digital marketing is important to their companies, but neither felt they were partnering effectively with the other. Not surprising, considering that marketing and IT respondents both claimed ownership of their companies' digital agendas, revealing a major disconnect in how they view their respective roles, and raising the question as to who's in charge.

Notwithstanding fundamental differences in the nature of marketing and IT— I've heard them referred to as the odd couple— rapprochement is in order, and CMOs and CIOs should become best friends if not one and the same person. In this digital age greater alignment between marketing and IT can yield tangible benefits for companies and their customers alike.

For example, our company's website, previously owned by our IT department, is now much more customer-friendly, featuring improved functionality and faster, easier access to vital information. While we still provide detailed product information, the focus has shifted to the industries we serve, such as chemical processing, oil and gas, power generation, pharmaceutical processing, pulp and paper and others. Resources and tools are more centrally located so customers can find the information they need more quickly and accurately. Our extensive archive of published technical articles is just a click away from the home page. In addition, the site has also been formatted for compatibility with mobile phones and tablets.

Before marketing took ownership of our website, it ran on code, making it difficult to update with new products and other important developments. Now we can make changes on the fly to keep it fresh and engaging. We also are launching a number of mobile

IBM recently surveyed 1,700 CMOs, **45%** of whom cited a lack of marketing-IT alignment;

some **70%** felt unprepared to deal with social media and the data explosion; and

**65%** felt unprepared to deal with the growing number of channels and tech devices.

applications to accommodate increasingly younger customers, many of whom no longer travel with laptops and are not inclined to call our toll-free number. These apps will provide instant information to remote field locations where our products are being used. Our IT people are also working with a leading provider of collaboration solutions to bring our applications engineering to the field digitally, instead of having our field sales and customers call and say, "Fax me a drawing."

In addition we re-architected our CRM system for sales lead management to make it a more effective tool for segmenting and gaining a competitive overview of our markets.

At the same time, we have been educating our IT people about our products, customers, markets and applications, while involving them in crafting our social media policy, all of which has them highly motivated to enhance our customer-connectivity. As a result, they are bringing us closer to our emerging customers, and enabling us to engage them on their terms.

Today marketing professionals who are not conversant in digital technology run the risk of rendering themselves obsolete. At a minimum, we need to work closely with our IT counterparts, not only for job security, but for the substantial benefits a robust CMO-CIO relationship can deliver.

*Janet C. Jessen is vice president of global marketing, engineering, innovation and IT for Palmyra, NY-based Garlock Sealing Technologies, which manufactures high-performance sealing products for the world's process industries. She also has served as vice president of business development for WaterfordWedgewood USA. She can be reached at 800-448-6688 or janet.jessen@garlock.com.*

## COOL TOOL:
## Control your mobile identity

"In sales," says James Alexander, CEO of Vizibility Inc., "we are who Google says we are." The Vizibility Mobile Business Card is an all-in-one kit for promoting yourself through QR codes and Near Field Communication (NFC) cards. Vizibility's Personal QR codes and Microsoft Tag barcodes instantly share a salesperson's mobile business card, and sends real-time text or email alerts whenever someone scans the code, including organization name, type and location. NFC Mobile Wallet Cards use a person's smart phone to load Web pages, maps or apps. Find out more at Vizibility.com.