



# DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING

## Part 5: Move Beyond Last-Click Attribution

6 Experts Tell You How to Transform  
Your Marketing Organization

# FOREWORD

Welcome Fellow Marketer:

Every day I encounter marketers who are working to create a data-driven organization. Some are at the very early stages and just starting to scratch the surface; others are many years into the process and leveraging advanced techniques—and technologies—to help them achieve their goals.

At Visual IQ, we wanted to create a resource to which marketers could turn for advice on this process from their peers who have already done it, whether at a brand, an agency, or a solution provider. The result is *Data-Driven Marketing: 29 Experts Tell You How to Transform Your Marketing Organization*.

We asked each expert for the advice he or she would give a peer if that person were seeking to make his or her marketing organization more data driven, and I'm thrilled with the incredibly diverse advice these experts gave. The insights range from internal change management and breaking down channel/departmental silos to advice about technology and the implementation process. Underlying these topics are insights around the need for marketing attribution and a holistic view of your overall marketing ecosystem.

We think there's something useful for everyone, and we hope you'll find a few specific gems within these pages that you can use at your organization.



Regards,

**Manu Mathew**

Co-Founder & CEO, Visual IQ



As a pioneer in the space, Visual IQ has been producing the world's most powerful cross channel marketing attribution software since 2006. Its hosted IQ Intelligence Suite of products combines a user-friendly interface with advanced attribution management and predictive modeling functionality to provide clear recommendations for marketing optimization. Recognized as a leader in cross channel attribution by a leading market research firm in 2014, Visual IQ won The Drum's 2015 Digital Trading Award for Best Attribution Solution, won the 2014 ASPY Award for Best Data or Analytics Solution, and was a finalist in the Digital Analytics Association's Excellence Awards in 2013, 2014 and 2015. For more information, visit [www.visualiq.com](http://www.visualiq.com).

# INTRODUCTION

Content has long been king in marketing, but that king has now been dethroned. The new king is data. With technologies making it possible to track individual actions, from first contact to final transaction, in an omni-channel marketing environment, marketers are able to shape and personalize content in near real-time so that it drives desired business outcomes. New marketing analytics and automation tools are changing how companies use their huge stores of data. All this progress is great, but many businesses still struggle to realize the full potential of their marketing initiatives.

In this e-book, which is generously supported by Visual IQ, we have endeavored to discover how companies use data to help ensure the success of their marketing strategies. We asked marketing experts the following question:

***If you had to give someone advice on how to turn his or her marketing organization into a data-driven marketing organization, what advice would you give?***

I am confident you will find many rich and useful insights in these essays. Two key ideas are the importance of a data-driven culture within the business and management allowing the time needed for a new marketing strategy to prove itself. One cannot enter into this process expecting instant results. Given the proper time, however, data-driven marketing models can deliver impressive, game-changing results.

I hope you find these essays as informative as I have.



All the best,  
**David Rogelberg**  
Publisher



**Mighty Guides make you stronger.**

These authoritative and diverse guides provide a full view of a topic. They help you explore, compare, and contrast a variety of viewpoints so that you can determine what will work best for you. Reading a Mighty Guide is kind of like having your own team of experts. Each heartfelt and sincere piece of advice in this guide sits right next to the contributor's name, biography, and links so that you can learn more about their work. This background information gives you the proper context for each expert's independent perspective.

Credible advice from top experts helps you make strong decisions. Strong decisions make you mighty.

© 2015 Mighty Guides, Inc. | 62 Nassau Drive | Great Neck, NY 11021 | 516-360-2622 | [www.mightyguides.com](http://www.mightyguides.com)

# Move Beyond Last-Click Attribution

---



**Arjun Dev Arora**  
Immediately.....6



**Jerome Sutter**  
Weekendesk.....13



**Woody Meachum**  
OMD.....8



**Adam Cahill**  
Anagram.....15



**Michele Elrod**  
Regions Bank.....10



**Jan Carsten Kuhnke**  
catchyou® GmbH.....17

# ≡ NICE ≡ STATS

THE RIGHT ATTRIBUTION  
PARTNER CAN HELP YOU

≡ DELIVER CRAZY-GOOD ≡  
MARKETING RESULTS



LEARN THE  
**8 KEY CONSIDERATIONS**  
FOR CHOOSING THE RIGHT ONE

DOWNLOAD THE GUIDE





**ARJUN DEV  
ARORA**  
Co-founder,  
Immediately

Arjun Dev Arora is the co-founder of Immediately, a mobile application that enables sales people to focus on building meaningful relationships. Previously, he founded ReTargeter, an Inc. 500 fastest-growing company in 2013 that was acquired in 2015. He has also worked as the head of business development for Yahoo! Real Estate and was an investment banker as well. He is a notable angel investor and advisor to various startups.

 |  |   
Twitter | Website | Blog



Download the full eBook:  
***DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING***

A few years ago, my former company created a display ad retargeting solution. The company wanted it to track impressions, clicks that indicated interest, and conversions. It wanted the metrics it shared to align with those goals.

Attribution was absolutely core to measuring the effectiveness of those efforts. The organization tracked everything—where site traffic came from, what drove it, etc. The company put a premium on insights that could actually change the way it did things. It was aware that there were numerous points of possible attribution: a single channel rarely leads to a conversion. Therefore, understanding the influences within and across multiple channels was critical.

At the time, of course, marketers did not have as much technology to track and measure all the multi-channel interactions they would have liked, but that's changing. Today, as organizations move beyond basic last-click and other traditional attribution methods, marketers are growing much more comfortable with algorithmic and probabilistic attribution models.

*“One goal of data-driven marketing is to ensure that data are captured and shared with the organization at large and with its partners.”*



## KEY LESSONS

- 1 FOCUS ON INSIGHTS THAT WILL LEAD TO OPERATIONAL CHANGE.
- 2 DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING IS ABOUT TRANSPARENCY. IF YOU DON'T SHARE DATA AND LET IT DRIVE BUSINESS RESULTS, YOU MIGHT AS WELL NOT EVEN COLLECT IT.

# ANALYSIS TO ACTION

If I were to give someone advice about creating a data-driven marketing organization, it would be:

- **Get organizational commitment.** Philosophical alignment from the top down is the first order of business.
- **Set up the infrastructure.** Implement the right tools and solutions for data capture in a way that is as frictionless as possible for the end user. Make the effort up front to select the right tools and solutions to capture data as effortlessly as possible.
- **Determine your core metrics.** Figure out what you most want to measure and understand. Instrument your systems such that you can track all the way through monthly recurring revenue, average customer lifetime value, or whatever else is important. Non-obvious or tangentially important metrics—Twitter engagements, for example—can also be crucial. Avoid gathering non-actionable data.

One goal of data-driven marketing is to ensure that data are captured and shared with the organization at large and its partners. Data transparency is vital. Dashboards are one way to achieve that; weekly meetings and other kinds of structured points of communication also are important.

Be creative. We actually installed TV screens throughout the building, displaying various metrics that the organization tracks for anyone to see.

Ultimately, data-driven marketing is about transparency and letting the organization synthesize data to drive business results. If you aren't sharing your data, you might as well not even collect it.

“

*Philosophical alignment from the top down is the first order of business.*

”

# FINDING YOUR DATA'S TRUE STORY WITH THE RIGHT ATTRIBUTION METHOD



**WOODY  
MEACHUM**

Group Director,  
Digital Strategy,  
OMD

Woody Meachum serves as group director, digital strategy at OMD, where he is responsible for leading the planning and execution of programs focused on impactful and measurable results to positively affect his client's brands and overall business. Woody has overseen the digital strategies for State Farm, H&R Block, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, BMO Harris Bank, and the Illinois Lottery. He also oversaw the digital analytics practice for three years at OMD-Chicago, creating measurement strategies for multiple clients.



Website



Download the full eBook:

***DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING***

To build a data-driven marketing organization, you have to grant marketing full access to the data systems it needs. This way, marketing staff can put the correct tracking in place, collect their data in a central repository, and access the necessary information to do their work. One way to do this is by implementing new internal operational systems that can provide access to a broader set of people in the company.

Another way is to restructure your organizational key performance indicators (KPIs). First, you have to establish the goals for your organization, which will then lead to the actual metrics and KPIs that are used to measure progress toward those organizational goals. Start with a set of hypotheses that then will inform the data structure so that the data you're capturing is useful and serves your goals. This provides holistic business alignment.

Attribution also plays a huge role in adopting a data-driven marketing strategy. There are essentially four attribution methods. The first is *last-ad*, which is widely used. When you get into the multi-touch attribution space, you have the *even method*, in which you give the same amount of weight to every touchpoint. Then, you have *rules-based weighting*, in which you arbitrarily assign a weight to each touchpoint.

“ I find the algorithmic method of attribution the most accurate. ”

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 YOU MUST START BY DEFINING YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS; KPIS CAN FLOW FROM THOSE GOALS.
- 2 THE ATTRIBUTION METHOD YOU CHOOSE CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE IN HOW WELL YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR DATA.



# FINDING YOUR DATA'S TRUE STORY WITH THE RIGHT ATTRIBUTION METHOD

The last method, which a lot of the major software platforms in our industry use, is *algorithmic*. I find the algorithmic method of attribution the most accurate because it uses science to assign fractional credit to all of the touchpoints that contribute to a conversion.

Five years ago, we were working with a client that embraced last ad, so it put a lot of weight into the last touch that led a customer into the conversion. The client was spending a lot of money on paid search. I noticed the TV weight and asked why we weren't buying digital video as well, so we bought digital video.

When we created our first set of dashboards for the client, they thought the digital video wasn't driving any conversions. I pointed out that our engagement rates showed that a lot of people were watching the ads and clicking through to our site. I explained that this trend was likely influencing conversions, but the client insisted that our analytics told us none of those people were converting. They cut digital video from the plan.

The next year, I recommended that we buy digital video again but that this time, we should also bring in an algorithmic attribution system to show the true results of our efforts. We were able to show that people who were exposed to digital video had a four times greater likelihood of converting than people who did not. This proved to the client that there was top-of-funnel benefit to running the digital video. From this experience, we learned that if you only look at the last touchpoint, you're missing the whole story.

We kept digital video on the plan and started using it as an incremental reach channel above TV, because we also found that the demographics of the people who were responding to the videos were a lot younger than those people who responded to TV. We said, "Those are your new customers. That's where your new customer base is coming from. It's this digital video exposure." That helped us drive the overall macro-strategy that, as far as I know, is still in use today.

“

*From this experience, we learned that if you only look at the last touchpoint, you're missing the whole story.*

”

# AN EXCITING TIME FOR MARKETERS



**MICHELE  
ELROD**

Head of Marketing,  
Regions Bank

Michele Elrod provides strategic marketing direction and management as the head of marketing for Regions Bank. A graduate of MOMENTUM, the Birmingham Women's Leadership Program, and The J. Mack Robinson College of Business Executive Program for Advanced Leadership Development, she is the recipient of the 2014 Outstanding Alumna Award in Advertising from the University of Alabama and was recognized by the *Birmingham Business Journal* as a top CMO in the C-Suite Awards.



Download the full eBook:

***DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING***

My company has been talking internally with our IT and data people, strategists, product operations manager, and a host of others about the customer journey. How, we've been asking, can advanced data-driven marketing help us better engage our banking customers?

The discussions have led to a complete rebuild of our marketing technology stack. We've rethought how our database is organized and what should be in it. We are building a new business intelligence database, known as our *insights platform*. We've added new campaign management and optimization tools to coordinate and broker campaigns across our channels.

In addition, we've hired an outside firm to analyze our marketing, sales, and media investment data. That firm does a lot of work around algorithmic modeling that helps us understand how our media mix is performing, giving us insights for adjusting within campaigns.

The goal of all these efforts is to understand, incrementally, which of our investments are contributing most to conversions. Obviously, this goes well beyond the traditional last-click attribution model. We know that when a customer clicks a display ad, and then opens an account, it's not the whole story. That customer might be exposed to three other marketing touchpoints before that. If so, we need to know.

“Fundamentally, a scientific attribution-based marketing strategy eliminates a lot of guesswork.” →

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 THE PRIMARY GOAL IS UNDERSTANDING WHICH INVESTMENTS CONTRIBUTE MOST TO CONVERSIONS.
- 2 THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A TIME WHEN MARKETING WAS BETTER POSITIONED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

# AN EXCITING TIME FOR MARKETERS

Fundamentally, a scientific attribution-based marketing strategy eliminates a lot of guesswork. If we understand conversion factors earlier in the event stream, we become more effective and efficient at assembling our media mix. And we probably save money.

Capturing and using the right pieces of data to measure your sales impacts and incremental contributions is imperative. This is especially true if your organization is shifting marketing from an expense to a revenue generator.

In summary, here's my advice for becoming more data driven:

- **Think incrementally.** First, quantify and assess the data you already have. Then, focus your early efforts on improving things you're already doing. From there, move on.
- **Engage customers.** We are very customer-centric and believe strongly that developing trusted customer relationships is more important than simply selling services. That attitude has a powerful influence on our marketing approach.
- **Don't think it's all about data.** Becoming data driven isn't just about collecting ever-increasing depths of information. It is about using data intelligently to conduct more frequent and in-depth measurements. In the end, it's about better strategies.

This is a challenging time for marketers. Consumers have instant access to many alternatives. If your company is to become a consumer's top choice, marketing will be the difference maker, but you will have to constantly examine and reexamine your data set and adjust your strategic priorities. There simply is no end to this in the digital world.

Conversely, I think this probably is the most exciting period in history to be a marketer. The data, the science, and the new approaches to marketing that we can bring to bear today give us greater opportunities than ever to really make a difference.

*The opinions expressed in the essay are statements of the author's opinion, are intended only for informational purposes, and are not formal opinions of, nor binding on Regions Bank, its parent company, Regions Financial Corporation and their subsidiaries, and any representation to the contrary is expressly disclaimed.*

“

*Becoming data driven is not just about collecting ever-increasing depths of information. It's about using data intelligently to conduct more frequent and in-depth measurements.*

”



# YOU SHOULD BE DANCING

— ★ ★ ★ —

HARNESS THE POWER OF  
MARKETING ATTRIBUTION  
TO IMPROVE MEDIA  
EFFICIENCY BY 15-35%



FIND OUT HOW

**DOWNLOAD THE EBOOK**



# YOU MUST RULE BY THE NUMBERS



## JEROME SUTTER

VP Marketing, Acquisition and CRM Europe, Weekendesk

Jerome Sutter is vice president of Marketing, Acquisition & CRM Europe at Weekendesk. He has 15 years of experience in marketing, media, and e-commerce in Europe and Latin America for such brands as Nokia, Nestlé, Microsoft, Diageo, Lacoste, and SFR. Jerome is also a professor and conference speaker.

 |  |  Blog



Download the full eBook:  
***DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING***

Since joining Weekendesk, my mission has been to optimize customer acquisition by strengthening our digital marketing strategy. To accomplish that, I have taken the following steps:

### 1. Develop a data-centric approach to decision making.

When optimizing your engagement strategy, you must rule by the numbers. In other words, you must understand the numbers from your analytic solution as well as the numbers from each acquisition channel. You have to clean your data, which may be coming from older web analytics and customer relationship management solutions that predate your marketing analytics solution. You must make sure that your data are clean before you can gain deep visibility into the numbers related to all your channels, even if you are not managing every channel internally.

**2. Dive into each acquisition channel.** When you have visibility into the metrics from all your channels, you must conduct a deep-dive analysis of each acquisition channel to understand click-through rates, conversion rates, attribution values, and channel costs through metrics such as cost per mille, cost per click, and cost per action. Such an analysis of each acquisition channel gives you a clear view of the actual cost and effectiveness of each channel.

“Develop a data-centric approach to decision making.”

## KEY LESSONS

- 1 WHEN OPTIMIZING YOUR ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY, YOU MUST RULE BY THE NUMBERS.
- 2 WHEN YOU HAVE THE DATA FOR EACH CHANNEL AND A DEEP ANALYTICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE DATA, YOU MUST STOP USING LAST-CLICK ATTRIBUTION.



# YOU MUST RULE BY THE NUMBERS

**3. Stop using last-click attribution.** When you have the data for each channel and a deep analytical understanding of the data, you must stop using last-click attribution. Based on a recent survey conducted in the French markets, 79 percent of advertisers are using last click. This rate is comparable to other European countries and countries around the world, including the United States. Last click does not allow you to see the different touchpoints that lead up to final conversion. To do that, you have to follow from the first touchpoint to the last touchpoint. Many web analytics solutions, such as Google Analytics, do not allow you to track this information. You need to have multi-touchpoint attribution so you can understand the contribution of each channel and how display advertising affects it.

Many kinds of attribution models exist. I favor a U model, which allows you to assign weights to the first and last clicks and lesser weights to the many different touchpoints in between. This model seems to work well for many businesses because it is easy to personalize for different business practices. We are also testing an algorithmic attribution solution side by side with our current model to see how it performs.

It takes time to become more data driven in this way. When my organization decided to implement an attribution model, it took three or four months for us to really understand the data we needed and to build the model to the point where we could make decisions based on the attribution analysis. Then, it took another two or three months to refine the model and become fully functional. In the end, it took us about six months from the time we started to the time we were using the attribution model day to day.

“

*In the end, it took us about six months from the time we started to the time we were using the attribution model day to day.*

”



**ADAM  
CAHILL**  
Founder,  
Anagram

Adam Cahill is the founder of Anagram, a marketing technology company purpose built to help brands and publishers win in a programmatic world. Adam was previously the chief digital officer at Hill Holliday and is a recognized industry thought leader who has appeared in such publications as *Advertising Age*, *AdExchanger*, and *ClickZ*. He has been named a Media AllStar by *Adweek* and a Media Maven by The Ad Club. Under his leadership, Hill Holliday's media team was twice named Media Agency of the Year.

   
Twitter | Website



Download the full eBook:  
***DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING***

If you knew exactly to whom you were talking, what would you say?

That question sits at the heart of a data-driven marketing strategy.

You certainly wouldn't say the same thing to everyone or the same thing over and over to the same person. Yet that's just what happens when marketing lacks a foundation in data. With a proper data foundation in place, the potential for crafting communications and experiences that people actually enjoy is limitless.

As a person who has spent his career working on the agency side of the business, I have been part of countless presentations that revealed and explained a beautiful customer journey diagram detailing how a mythical set of personas interacted with a brand over time. Here's the thing, though: those diagrams were all thought exercises, grounded in not much more than syndicated research and a few interviews. They were directionally true but not at all actionable. We were describing an ideal outcome we hoped would happen with no way to actually *make* it happen.

*“With a proper data foundation in place, the potential for crafting communications and experiences that people actually enjoy is limitless.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1** USE A DATA-LED UNDERSTANDING OF THE REAL INTERACTIONS PEOPLE HAVE WITH YOUR BRAND TO CREATE A FLUID, SEQUENCED SET OF MESSAGES THAT ARE INTELLIGENTLY DELIVERED BASED ON WHERE THE USER IS IN HIS OR HER JOURNEY.
- 2** THE ONLY WAY TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF A SEQUENCED JOURNEY IS TO HAVE A HOLISTIC ATTRIBUTION SOLUTION IN PLACE THAT HELPS YOU VALUE THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS IN YOUR PORTFOLIO.



Just a few years later, it's entirely possible to use a data-led understanding of the real interactions people have with your brand to create a fluid, sequenced set of messages that are intelligently delivered based on where the user is in his or her journey. We strive to create a system that aspires to deliver the next right piece of communication based on what we know about the person receiving the message.

This approach means that as marketers, we're making many more creative assets than we used to and relying on ever more targeted forms of media distribution. Simply determining what "worked" is too simple: the truth is that many things are working together over time—the sequence of messages, the media environment, the context of the user at any moment in time. The only way to improve the performance of a sequenced journey is to have a holistic attribution solution in place that helps you value the contribution of the elements in your portfolio.

“

*Simply determining what “worked” is too simple: the truth is that many things are working together over time.*

”

# GOODBYE BIG DATA, HELLO SMART DATA



**JAN CARSTEN  
KUHNKE**

Co-Founder and CEO,  
catchyou® GmbH

A true digital native, Jan Carsten Kuhnke entered the online world in Germany in 1988. When the Internet started to boom, he discovered his true passion for online marketing. Jan is the Co-Founder and CEO of catchyou® GmbH, and has previously held roles at cOmVoice NetSolutions, Philipp und Keuntje GmbH, and lawinenstift GmbH.

 |  |   
Twitter | Website | Blog



Download the full eBook:

***DATA-DRIVEN MARKETING***

In data-driven marketing, the biggest challenge is not collecting data as much as it is effectively using and monetizing the data you have. In addition, much of the data that marketing organizations gather are either incomplete or incorrect and channel specific, with each marketing channel considered individually. To get the big picture of all marketing activities and a detailed performance overview, marketing attribution is essential. In short, goodbye big data, hello smart data!

Last-click attribution is still one of the most commonly used types of marketing attribution. With it, the entire conversion value is attributed to the last touch, with all other touchpoints ignored. In the search channel, for example, this approach places virtually no value on generic keywords because such keywords are more expensive than branded keywords and often do not generate conversions. Studies show, however, that these generic keywords pave the way for conversions that eventually take place. Through more advanced marketing attribution methodologies, brands can recognize the importance of these extremely valuable keywords in the entire conversion process.

*“In data-driven marketing, the biggest challenge is not collecting data as much as it is effectively using and monetizing the data you have.”*

## KEY LESSONS

- 1** APPROPRIATE MARKETING ATTRIBUTION IS ESSENTIAL FOR ANALYZING USER BEHAVIOR, WHICH CAN BE USED TO PREDICT HOW TO ENGAGE WITH YOUR PROSPECTS AND INCREASE PERFORMANCE.
- 2** CLEARLY DEFINE YOUR GOALS, AND CHOOSE YOUR RELEVANT DATA SEGMENTS, ATTRIBUTION MODEL, AND INFORMATION WISELY.



# GOODBYE BIG DATA, HELLO SMART DATA

Going a step further to look at a company's marketing mix, attribution should be at the center of all marketing activities. By analyzing the synergies among all your marketing channels and tactics within the conversion process and assigning a certain value to each, more efficient budget allocation is made possible, resulting in the generation of more leads, sales, and revenue.

Marketing attribution is a discipline that shows the combination of channels and tactics that works for the audience that is relevant for your business model. The attribution model analyzes user behavior, and your goal should be to use the output of that analysis to predict how to engage with your prospects.

The core task in becoming a data-driven marketing organization is to analyze your data to determine which are actually applicable to helping achieve your defined goals. Quantity is not quality. Through the right attribution model, you can target smaller, more defined segments that give individually defined key performance indicators (KPIs) a substantial growth spurt. Based on the results and your experience, you can build new sources of information step by step. That way, you can comprehend and, more importantly, prove which data would lead to increased performance at any time.

From my experience, I know how tempting it can be to try to use all possible data from your analytical tools to try to get a boost in marketing performance, but this approach is not advisable.

My advice? Clearly define your goals, and choose your relevant data segments, attribution model, and information wisely.

“

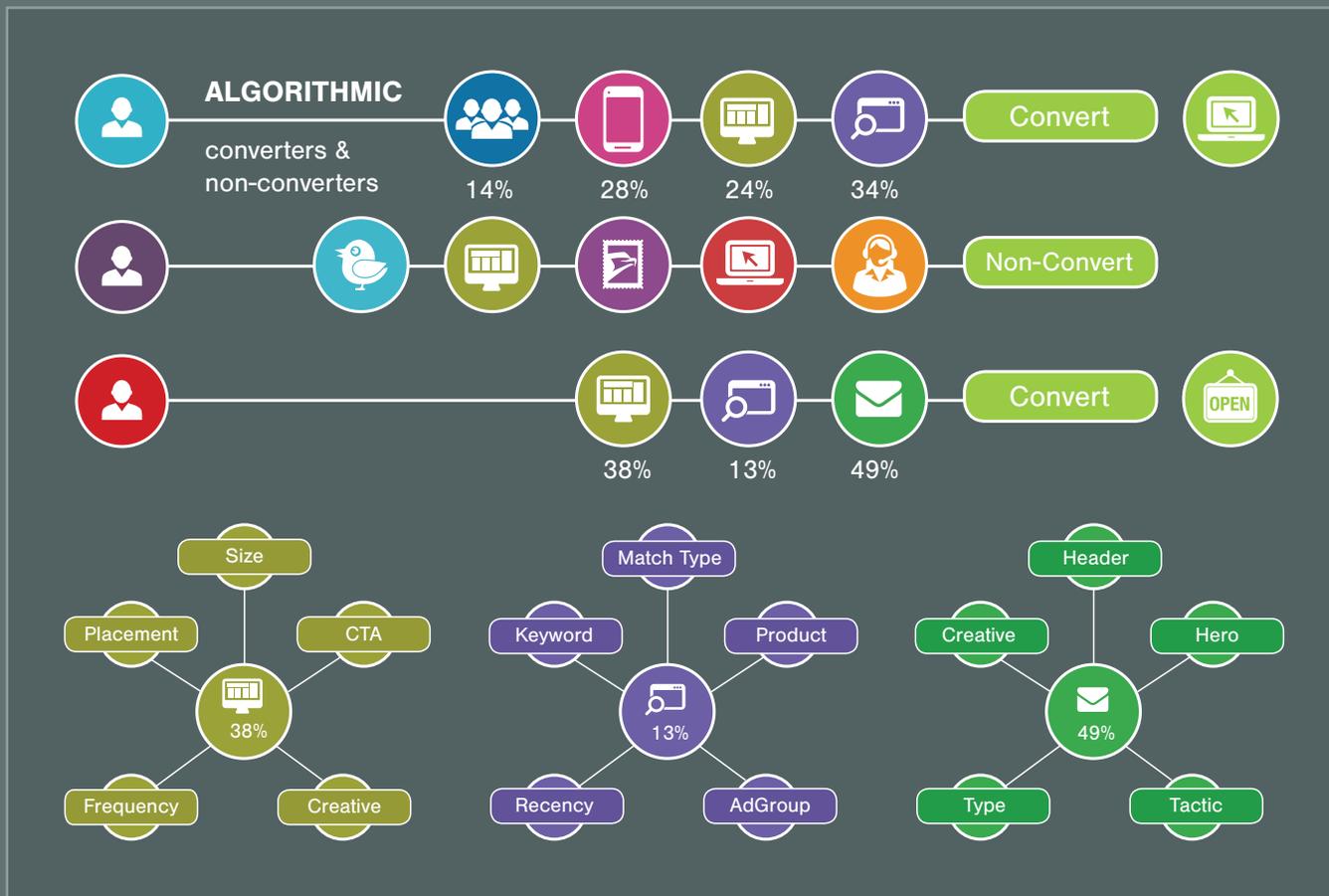
*The core task in becoming a data-driven marketing organization is to analyze your data to determine which are actually applicable to helping achieve your defined goals.*

”

# ADVANCED MARKETING ATTRIBUTION DEFINED

Default marketing measurement standards rely on last click or subjective, rules-based methods that handicap marketers by giving all the conversion credit to the last touchpoint, or by arbitrarily assigning weights to each interaction based on chronology alone.

Advanced attribution offers a far superior approach. Using sophisticated mathematical models, advanced attribution scientifically calculates and fractionally assigns conversion credit to every touchpoint and attribute (ad size, placement, publisher, chronology, etc.) experienced by every converter and non-converter across all channels. The result: a truly holistic, accurate view of marketing performance.



## ADVANCED ATTRIBUTION:

- Includes every available touchpoint (online, offline & across devices)
- Calculates the impact of every single touchpoint & attribute
- Measures & predicts high-value audience segments
- Delivers actionable insight, as well as tactical & strategic recommendations for optimization
- Integrates seamlessly with media buying platforms