

## Martech Visionaries Series

# Simon Butt

## Marketing Director

### Tell us about your role and responsibilities at Reuters Events.

I'm primarily responsible for the marketing technology and marketing operations strategy. My focus is enhancing customer experience and ensuring Marketing's goals are aligned to sales and product objectives.

We're organised in a slightly unusual way; We rely on event project managers (who sit outside of marketing!) to use their industry domain expertise to craft value propositions and marketing copy, i.e. craft messaging that is tailored to our customers in specific markets.

They are then supported by a central team of Marketing Managers and Marketing Assistants, who take responsibility for refining the copy, executing the marketing campaigns, and reporting on marketing engagement / sales progress against targets.

### How important is martech to your organisation and team?

Fundamental. Everything is focused towards a world of data benchmarks and performance targets through Marketing, supporting Sales.

But technology alone isn't enough to drive success.

Even before I'd kicked off the due diligence project to select the systems that would make up our martech spine, I spent two years developing a culture of transparency, and data-driven decision-making.

Once we migrated to Salesforce and Eloqua, we were able to collect more data, and do more with it. People adapted to the new systems quickly, and with little fuss, because they were crying out for more information. Not only could we speed up their access to the vital data they needed to run the business, but we provided significantly more insights ... which they saw great value in.

### What technology makes up your stack/spine?

It's a Salesforce CRM, with an Oracle Marketing Cloud (Eloqua).

We witnessed the evolution of Salesforce's Wave, through Einstein and Data Analytics to now Tableau. The Insights tool plays a big part in the marketing function here at Reuters Events by showing what's happening against key metrics to not only the marketing team, but also our stakeholders, in an easy to digest format.

### Is there an area of the business where Martech has the greatest impact?

Everything we have in the systems is all about reporting back performance, whether that's marketing engagement and marketing qualification, "foresight" to future commercial performance, measuring and reporting on NPS scores, through to both pre-sales qualification and post-sales qualification pipelines so that we can understand what revenue we have and what revenue we will achieve in the short to medium term.

This helps to pace the business and lets us understand whether we will be hitting our business quarterly targets, and individual event targets.

**"Martech is fundamental. (It provides the) data benchmarks and performance targets through Marketing, to support Sales."**



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## From a measurement and control perspective, how has Martech helped marketing?

It's crucial that marketing can explain how it's contributing to the commercial success of a business. If you don't measure, then you cannot report and attribute success.

In addition, measuring progress means that you can adjust your campaigns to address under/over performance to give you the best chance of delivering success. We would not have been able to be as agile as we are, if we didn't have platforms in place that allow us to view and interrogate data.

Working as part of a global corporate, we need to think about how we generate revenue quarter to quarter, as well as hitting an individual event target; the martech plays a big role in helping us manage this.

## Describe how your Martech setup has improved your reporting effectiveness on marketing activity

I've heard before that the human brain can understand a graph in under a second, but it may take 10 minutes to understand the underlying table. I'm a huge fan of data visualisation as a mechanism for highlighting performance, both good and bad.

We spend a lot of time making sure everyone is, in some way shape or form, aligned to either specific targets or their role is involved with the critical evaluation of dashboards.

These dashboards inform decisions to either take advantage of an opportunity, or to fix something that's not quite working. The technology and the data are fundamental to the way the team works here.

## Do you look to martech as a source of innovation and insight?

Insight, yes; innovation, no.

The danger of all technology implementations is that once something works, innovation can stagnate because people gain access to just enough information they need to do their jobs, and don't push for more.

Half the battle is getting systems to work in the first place, so often users don't have the energy or inclination to want to innovate further once they've achieved a satisfactory outcome.

So, once again, technology isn't the driver of change, culture is.

For any business, innovation is driven by employing stakeholders who are interested and constantly asking different and sometimes difficult questions; Often making demands of the systems.

My job is to provide the data that drives the insights and then listen to those questions/demands about innovations that we can begin to evolve.

If you can help non-technical people understand something complex, with a chart, or a dashboard, that's a huge advantage.

Many of our team members have worked here for a good amount of time and progressed into different roles with different levels of responsibility. We have a great culture that constantly pushes for innovation and asks questions, asking for more from the technology.

Between senior stakeholders and my own team, I'm constantly being kept on my toes!

**"Martech helps to pace the business and lets us understand whether we will be hitting our business quarterly targets."**



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## What does martech success look like to you?

This is a very easy one. Martech success is when you don't even know the technology is there. If your stakeholders don't acknowledge the platform, if your team don't get concerned about what software they are using, if your internal audience are just looking at the data to see their commercial performance against their benchmarks, if they can access the information they need, you have delivered a successful system.

People only notice I.T. systems when they are not working, or it's a frustration, or they don't do what they need it to do.

Systems change as businesses change. Therefore, you do need an iterative process of innovation to develop your system to continually be hiding in plain sight. But if no-one is questioning the technology, the better the product you delivered.

We worked with Clevertouch for roughly a year planning on how to make the technology work for our business, rather than shaping our business to fit the technology.

**"If you can help non-technical people understand something complex, with a chart, or a dashboard, that's a huge advantage."**

## What advice would you give others looking to deploy and build their careers through Martech?

The key to successful career in martech is not in the technology piece at all. I think if you are technically minded or technically skilled then you are going to have an interest in systems, platforms, software, APIs etc.

But that interest alone is not enough.

What you need is to be a translator, to explain to senior people in an organisation what the technology can do, and how it can further their business. Equally as important, is to be able to understand the strategic and commercial goals of the business and explain that back into the technical people why certain things need to happen.

That last bit is interesting, because I've found that the logic of a technically minded person, doesn't always fit with the thinking of a commercially minded one. The best martech strategists and operatives can take both perspectives, technical and commercial, and coherently communicate to both sides, and get a platform in place that performs well technically to deliver commercial results.

You do need to be technically proficient, but get involved in the commercials, develop your commercial acumen, and become comfortable at dealing with people.

The better you can understand and empathise with people, and work with them, understanding their motivations and goals, and apply that to the technology, your systems will be hugely successful, and you'll be seen as the essential piece between technology and the rest of the business.

