

# Go Beyond Traditional Email

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## with Marketing Automation

White Paper

## Introduction

It's a fact—almost all companies are using email to communicate with leads, clients and partners as part of their overall marketing strategy. But it seems as though some companies are doing it better than others by sending more than one-off, batch-n-blast emails. Those companies are using marketing automation to send multi-touch, branched email campaigns that respond and react to each recipient's interaction.

Studies show these “smarter” email campaigns provide open and click-thru rates that dwarf the traditional mass-send methods, yet the cost of many marketing automation solutions make them too pricey for marketing budgets. The good news is there are full-featured marketing automation solutions available—and they are providing great results without breaking the bank.



## Features that Streamline, Score and Alert

Every marketing automation platform will differ in its feature set and end-user experience and methodology. By virtue of the space, however, all solutions should be able to automate multi-step email campaigns based on triggers and interactions. Rather than send follow up emails or sort lists manually, the technology completes these processes for you. While some solutions use decision trees, others may help you configure Visio-type diagrams to map out the automation campaign. As an end-user evaluating multiple solutions, it is a good idea to draw the proposed actions of a sample lead nurture campaign so you can see the necessary steps and build-out required within each platform.

Another important feature of marketing automation solutions is the ability to automatically score leads based on recipients' unique interactions. As you develop lead nurturing campaigns, you can assign values for each interaction a recipient has with an email, landing page, completed form, etc. Once the lead has completed enough activities to reach a certain score, the lead is deemed qualified and ready to be transitioned to the sales team.

The ability to configure customizable, real-time alerts is a useful feature, too. Many marketing automation platforms allow you to set an internal notification email when leads are completing highly desirable actions. Alerts can be configured and triggered when specific pages are viewed, forms are completed or a lead's aggregate score rises to a certain threshold. Just as important

as automating emails and scoring leads, this alert feature is immensely valuable because knowing the moment that a lead reaches “sales-readiness” enables sales to follow up quickly, and at the height of engagement.

Other features included with many marketing automation platforms include lead database management, CRM integration, landing page development tools, form mapping, etc. With all of these bells and whistles, it really makes sense to pick and choose the ones that are most important to you in order to keep the price point more reasonable. For example, if you already have a CRM tool that you like, it may make sense to consider a marketing automation provider that has integration capabilities as opposed to functioning as a standalone marketing automation/CRM combined tool. Additionally, if you maintain your website via CMS or a developer, selecting a marketing automation platform that builds landing pages might not be necessary because you can build/maintain forms yourself.

## Evaluating Marketing Automation Platform Providers

Now that you’ve established a baseline of features and tools that are most important to you, the next logical phase is the vendor selection process. If you are like most companies today, price is likely a primary consideration. Prices can vary from greatly depending on the provider, set-up fees, contracts, etc. It makes good financial sense to select a provider who offers customized pricing plan to suit your company size, volume of emails and level of account management.

While price is a major consideration, the importance of a potential provider’s longevity and stability cannot be overlooked. Even though a pure start-up might offer amazing prices, you also need the trust and confidence of working with a company who has been successful within the industry. As your company’s marketing automation needs change and evolve, it follows to ask questions about planned feature upgrades, product roadmaps, customization, etc. In addition to price and stability, it makes sense to look for a track record of proven customer support and positive feedback from actual users. The people who use the product on a daily basis are the ones who can really articulate the end-user experience and tell you about their successes...or challenges.

Finally, with the rapid growth of the marketing automation space, finding experienced professionals who have hands-on experience using marketing automation tools can be really difficult – and expensive. A practical solution is to identify whether any of your potential marketing automation providers offer project management hours or best practice examples on how to implement and use your new solution. This type of support ensures your new solution is utilized as quickly and efficiently as possible.

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## Marketing Automation with Net-Results

One provider that keeps its marketing automation solutions at a price point that is accessible to companies of almost any size is Net-Results. While affordable simplicity hasn't necessarily been the marketing automation industry norm, Net-Results has worked to build a solution that is:

**Feature-rich.** From lead scoring and visitor alerts to conditional statements and trigger-based email nurturing campaigns, Net-Results strives to provide all of the features and functionality you need in a marketing automation platform.

**Straightforward.** In order for a tool to work, it must be easy for you to use on a daily basis. Account set-up is quick and streamlined so you can begin experiencing the benefits of the platform immediately – no IT degree required!

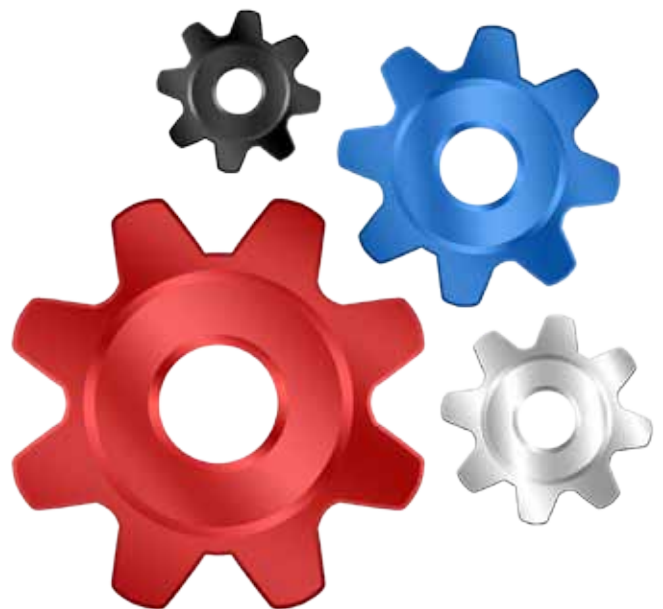
**Price Accessible.** Net-Results is determined to bring the benefits of marketing automation to companies of all sizes and budgets. Price points are surprisingly budget-friendly.

## Conclusion

Marketing automation technology is truly the next evolution of online marketing. Rather than just send “one-size-fits-all” communications, marketers can now deliver individually relevant communications and track leads with amazing detail—and follow up when the lead is truly engaged. Marketing automation is often thought of as a tool that only big companies can afford, but many providers are leveling the playing field with the concept that everybody can benefit from marketing automation.

If you are ready to learn more, spend 8-minutes with us for a quick demo. Visit [Net-Results.com/demo](http://Net-Results.com/demo) or call us at 877.946.4487.

Be sure to check out our many upcoming webinars to see firsthand how marketing automation is the best way to reach your customers.



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MARKETING AUTOMATION

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