



Delivering on customer expectations.

Nissan builds long-term, trusted relationships with customers through Adobe Experience Cloud.



"If we can understand each customer's needs, we can provide infinite options."

Mr. Moyuru Kudo, Head of Japan Digital Customer Experience, Nissan Motor Co, Ltd.

SOLUTION

Adobe Experience Cloud solutions including:

- Adobe Marketing Cloud solutions: Adobe Experience Manager, Adobe Target, and Adobe Campaign
- Adobe Analytics Cloud solution: Adobe Analytics

RESULTS



Increased **CONVERSION RATES** with optimized content

200% **HIGHER** open rates and click rates with custom emails



Increased vehicle **SALES** with ability to analyze content



Improved communications to **REDUCE** the sales cycle



Nissan Motor Co., Ltd.

Established in 1933

Employees: 152,421 (consolidated basis)

Yokohama-shi, Kanagawa, Japan

www.nissan-global.com/EN/

CHALLENGES

- Improve understanding of customers in light of decreasing in-person interactions
- Appeal to customer needs by marketing various aspects of the same vehicle to different customers
- Develop greater understanding of the sales funnel and what content encourages sales

USE CASES

- Connected Experiences
- Customer Intelligence
- Email Plus
- Journey Management



技術の日産が、
人生を面白くする。

ものづくりの情熱を、受け継がれてきた技術力を、
日産は自動運転・電気自動車の未来へ。
世界から事故が消える。CO₂排出がゼロになる。
そんな時代はもう夢じゃない。

Changing customer touchpoints

Nissan Motor Co., Ltd. is a global business, operating in more than 160 countries and running manufacturing facilities in more than 20 countries and regions. Global car distribution volume topped 5 million vehicles a few years ago and grew to more than 5.5 million in 2016.

One of the driving forces behind Nissan's growth has been marketing. In Nissan's business plan "Nissan Power 88" covering a recent five-year period, Nissan established both "enhancing brand power" and "increasing sales power" as two pillars of its strategy. To accomplish these goals, Nissan needed to elevate marketing and sales activities.

Consumer behaviors and the business environment are changing dramatically, particularly in the automotive industry. Companies must radically rethink traditional marketing activities. Nothing illustrates this change better than the number of times a customer visits a dealer when considering a new car.

"Previously, customers would visit dealers over and over again to research cars, but according to recent reports, customers visit dealers an average of 2.6 times," says Mr. Moyuru Kudo, Head of Japan Digital Customer Experience, Nissan Motor Co., Ltd. "Now, consumers do their research on the Internet and only visit a dealer when they have a better idea of the car they want. As a result, automobile manufacturers have lost opportunities to talk directly with customers."



“Through digital marketing, we can gain a greater understanding of our customers’ needs and create a custom approach to reach them effectively. This will be a major objective moving forward.”

Mr. Moyuru Kudo, Head of Japan Digital Customer Experience, Nissan Motor Co., Ltd.

With less direct interaction, it can be harder for Nissan to identify interested consumers or provide the most relevant information during the purchase process. Because of this, a consumer might end up choosing a car from another manufacturer or even give up buying a car all together. Given these industry trends, digital marketing is more important than ever.

“Websites can tip the scales for a consumer who is car shopping,” says Mr. Kudo. “If we can predict the actions and thought processes that a customer will follow on the website and really understand the customer’s journey, we can determine the best strategy to engage customers. If we do this, we can increase the number of customers who visit dealerships as they’re ready to close on a deal.”

Traditionally, automobile marketing has focused on mass advertising campaigns on television and in newspapers or magazines. Mass advertising helps a company reach a large number of customers, but these ads push the same message to all customers.

“For example, the simplest way to explain our X-TRAIL SUV model to a large number of customers is to always use an image of a tough car with two rows of seating,” says Mr. Kudo. “However, customers are also interested in using the X-TRAIL SUV as a three-row car for big families. Through digital marketing, we can gain a greater understanding of our customers’ needs and create more tailored approaches to reach them effectively.”

Connecting physical and digital

Before embarking on the digital transformation, Nissan reviewed its organizational structure and processes. Previously, the advertising, sales promotion, and IT departments each played a part in marketing, but customer databases and the data management platform were handled by the Japan Digital Customer Experience department. By placing all of these departments under the direct control of the executive operating officer for the Japan region, Nissan increased agility and created a structure where the company can eliminate information silos and look at all activities from the customer’s point of view.

Nissan started building a digital platform to serve as the foundation to support digital marketing. The key ideas behind the platform were “time to market” and “context” based around the idea of being able to instantaneously analyze customer journey data. Nissan’s goal was to create a digital platform that would enable employees to create compelling, personalized experiences based on real-time customer information. Additionally, the digital platform would enable marketers to identify where a customer was in his or her purchasing process and provide information to better inform and engage him or her on the journey.

“We rated Adobe Experience Cloud highly because we could build a digital marketing foundation that was consistent globally. Furthermore, we appreciated that we could expand functionality to accommodate the growth of our strategy.”

Mr. Moyuru Kudo, Head of Japan Digital Customer Experience, Nissan Motor Co., Ltd.

The key to achieving this goal is to connect physical and digital touchpoints

“The importance of digital continues to increase, but that does not mean that physical touchpoints such as dealerships are no longer important,” says Mr. Kudo. “Previously, we asked our teams to name a time when they were emotionally moved. The thing that all of these experiences had in common was that they all involved other people. For example, rather than receiving a generic ‘Happy Birthday’ email from a company, hearing the same words from an employee of the company made the recipient far more happy. Nissan’s goal is to refer to digital information while providing related customer experiences through in-store or in-person channels. Ideally, we will also use information gathered during in-person experiences to provide feedback to digital channels to continue improving customer experiences.”

To bring this digital platform strategy to life, Nissan leverages Adobe Experience Cloud on a global scale. Mr. Kudo explained the following reasons for selecting Adobe.

“We rated Adobe Experience Cloud highly because we could build a digital marketing foundation that was consistent globally,” says Mr. Kudo. “Furthermore, we appreciated that we could expand functionality to accommodate the growth of our strategy. We could start by introducing a first set of tools, and then gradually enhance the solution as our needs and experience grew.”

Understanding the customer journey

Nissan first concentrated on understanding the customer journey on its website. With Adobe Analytics, Nissan can analyze the behavior patterns of customers online, such as how the customer entered the website and how the customer moved through pages. Based on this information, Nissan can build a profile of the customer and apply the discoveries to content presented online.

Optimizing content

To optimize web content, Nissan conducted A/B testing and multivariate testing with Adobe Target. A/B tests included design elements, such as the position and shape of buttons on the website, as well as the phrasing of copy text. Through testing, Nissan decreased bounce rates and abandon rates to increase conversion.

Nissan used multivariate testing to optimize how content was ordered in the web catalog. The web catalog is made up of numerous parts. By discovering the optimal order for these parts, taking into account the different trends for each vehicle model, Nissan greatly improved the conversion rate.

“If we know what type of content corresponds highly to both visits and contracts, we can determine the efficiency of content and plan for next steps.”

Mr. Moyuru Kudo, Head of Japan Digital Customer Experience, Nissan Motor Co., Ltd.



Email newsletters delivered to registered users consist of three layers. Sections within them are automatically arranged into an optimal combination based on customer segment, and then delivered. For example, the top row shown to the left shows the sections for vehicle technology, color, and fuel economy. The middle row shows the sections for user comments, a trade-in calculator, and comparisons with other manufacturers. The bottom row show the sections for a price estimator and loan financing.

One-to-one email marketing

As email has become an essential part of communication, Nissan is actively working to improve email marketing. Nissan prioritizes personalization through one-to-one marketing. “We automatically change the timing and content of the email campaign based on the customer segment,” says Mr. Kudo.

Using the email address that a customer registers for contests or promotions, Nissan can understand the interests of consumers and recommend options based on that understanding. One customer might view the colors the vehicles come in. Another might look at fuel economy, while another will pay attention to technical specifications.

Based on analysis of this information, Nissan can create customized content blocks around color variations, fuel economy, and specifications. When combined with other content blocks—such as user comments, comparisons to other manufactures, price estimates, and loan financing—and prioritized based on the interests of the customer, Nissan can easily create multiple patterns for a single email campaign. Nissan uses Adobe Campaign to create these customizable email newsletters.

“Initially we prepared a huge variety of content blocks, but we discovered that increasing the number of blocks didn’t necessarily lead to cost improvements, so we evaluated the data to create the best combination,” says Mr. Kudo.

Through these personalized, one-to-one email newsletters, Nissan increased open rates by 1.3 times, click rates by 2.6 times, and open and click-through rates by 2 times.

“If we can approach customers at the appropriate times, we can increase both satisfaction and trust in Nissan and its dealers. If we provide useful and relevant data to customers during the long period after a purchase, we believe that this will help to improve overall service.”

Mr. Moyuru Kudo, Head of Japan Digital Customer Experience, Nissan Motor Co., Ltd.

日産自動車株式会社は1933年に神奈川県横浜市に設立され、現在、日本を含む世界20の国や地域に生産拠点を持っています。そして、160以上の国や地域で商品・サービスを提供しています。



Analyzing content attribution

As stated previously, one important goal for the digital marketing team at Nissan is to increase the number of customers who visit dealerships when they are ready to purchase a vehicle. Nissan analyzes the customer journey leading up to a purchase, finds winning patterns, and takes actions to reflect that knowledge in marketing activities.

“There are some people who visit the website out of curiosity, and there are others who look up dealerships and get payment estimates, indicating that they are one step away from purchase,” says Mr. Kudo. “We look at the metrics at each stage of the funnel to decide what measures we can take to improve conversion. Then we create a hypothesis and test it.”

For example, Mr. Kudo notes that by analyzing digital browsing history of customers before and after they visit a dealership, Nissan can start to visualize the sales funnel. “We can see if there are any differences in web activities between a customer who visits a dealership and signs a contract versus a customer who simply visits the dealership,” says Mr. Kudo. “If we know what type of content corresponds highly to both visits and contracts, we can determine the efficiency of content and plan for next steps.”

Wider data utilization

The next big challenge for the digital marketing team at Nissan is utilization of wider data sets. The first step involves consolidating distributed data from all internal systems. By connecting the data held by each system, Nissan can turn points of data into information that clearly shows an overall view of customers.

The most striking example is the integration of data held by headquarters and the dealers. “Dealers have data that they have been able to gather because they are dealerships,” says Mr. Kudo. “There is also a variety of rich data that can be gained strictly through digital marketing. By linking both types of data, we should find many complementary areas.” Dealers and headquarters already share a certain amount of data, but Nissan is currently looking into the next step of how to best analyze and utilize this data.

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

Adobe Experience Cloud, including:

Adobe Marketing Cloud

- Adobe Experience Manager
 - Assets
 - Sites
- Adobe Target
 - A/B and Multivariate Testing
- Adobe Campaign
 - Integrated Customer Profile
 - Personalized Targeting

Adobe Analytics Cloud

- Adobe Analytics
 - Marketing Reports and Analytics

Furthermore, Nissan is also looking into how it can use external data, not just data gained internally. Recently, the number of data sets available for purchase have increased. By combining third-party data with internal data, Nissan anticipates that it can create new value.

“One of the challenges for Nissan is the lengthening of customers’ purchase cycles,” says Mr. Kudo. “As a result, there are many instances where the customer will contact Nissan for the first vehicle inspection, but then there will be silence for the next five or ten years. However, there is still information that the customer might want during that period. If we can approach customers at the appropriate times, we can increase both satisfaction and trust in Nissan and its dealers. If we provide useful and relevant data to customers during the long period after a purchase, we believe that this will help to improve overall service.”

The organizations that have this information are service operating companies or communications carriers. Using this data to understand changes in a customers’ lifestyle, such as marriage or childbirth, Nissan can provide even better suggestions. Mr. Kudo is exploring the best ways to broaden horizons and utilize both internal and external information.

Driving long-term trust

Customers are visiting dealers fewer times, thus reducing the opportunities for a vital touchpoint. Nissan is looking to the digital world as the new place where consumers make purchases and where Nissan gains opportunities to learn about customers.

Nissan is using information about customers’ individual needs, their desired timing, and their optimal touchpoints to send useful information to customers. Nissan’s marketing teams handle the full customer cycle, from gathering information about vehicles, to purchasing, to after-sales service. It’s not just about selling cars. It’s also about building long-term trust with customers.

“If we can understand each customer’s needs, we can provide infinite options,” says Mr. Kudo.

Nissan has high expectations for Adobe Experience Cloud as the platform to accomplish these goals. The company decided to also deploy Adobe Experience Manager to manage content on a global level.

By using Adobe Experience Cloud as an integrated platform for marketing, Nissan gains an understanding of customer behavior, deep analytics, personalized content, and management of content across the company.

Nissan will continue to build long-term trust with its customers while leveraging its many years of expertise with the solutions and the collaboration with Adobe to its fullest.

For more information

www.adobe.com/marketing-cloud.html

www.adobe.com/data-analytics-cloud.html



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