Assessing campaign management maturity
Highlights from the 2014 Adobe Benchmark Survey

Survey highlights include:

- 80% can engage with customers in outbound channels, and 75% can engage with customers in inbound channels, but 69% struggle to combine these channels in an orchestrated, consistent fashion.

- 71% can maintain a full customer history of the marketing actions each customer has taken, including preferences, demographics, and transaction history.

- Less than a quarter (24%) use self-learning technologies to gain more knowledge about the customer from their various channels.

- Although 70% have business rules in place to serve customers personalized content, only 23% have "fatigue" rules that prevent them from wearing out the customer with too many messages and offers.

- 66% of survey respondents indicated that they don't view their marketing engagement strategies as customer-centric.

- Only 35% have someone with profit and loss (P&L) responsibility for campaign management programs, a foundational requirement for success.

- The financial services industry, with 71% indicating skepticism about having a marketing owner with P&L responsibility for campaign management, lags behind all other industries.

- With over 50% indicating high certainty, the media and entertainment industry indicates a strong ability to continuously enhance customer profiles, higher confidence than all other industries.

- 81% of organizations with more than 5,000 employees struggle to forecast campaign results compared to organizations with fewer than 5,000 employees.

- Only 21% indicate that they use A/B or multivariate testing to determine the optimal campaign, content, or offer to deliver.

Cross-channel campaign management is the practice of organizing, designing, executing, and measuring marketing communications that span digital channels, such as email, websites, mobile devices, social media, as well as traditional channels, such as direct mail, call centers, and point of sale. When done effectively, cross-channel marketing can result in consistent, personalized campaigns that deliver the best customer experience in real-time through all the brand's channels.

To measure the competency levels of organizations, Adobe developed a maturity model that outlined key campaign management dimensions—channels and execution, automation and orchestration, campaign optimization, real-time engagement, reporting and analytics, and organizational strategy—and included best practices across the dimensions based on the experience of Adobe campaign management experts and consultants, conversations with Adobe customers, and insights from industry analyst research on cross-channel campaign management.

Any organization can use the self-assessment tool to survey its own campaign management effectiveness, compare results against others in their industry, and help determine where marketers need to focus their energy and resources to grow and improve cross-channel marketing programs.

Campaign Management Maturity Study

To evaluate the maturity level of campaign management practices across several key industries, Adobe surveyed 278 management-level and higher marketing professionals working for North American organizations or agencies with over $100 million in revenue and at least 500 employees.

In the survey, marketing organizations rated their competency across various best practice areas to assess their level of campaign management maturity, from just starting to world class. The goal was to establish industry benchmarks for campaign management effectiveness and to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses for all industries and within specific industries as well as size and annual revenue.

Key dimensions of campaign management

Adobe identified seven key dimensions and 35 associated best practices for cross-channel campaign management. The survey respondents were asked to rate themselves on statements addressing these key areas.

Customer knowledge and data

Data is essential to the success of a campaign management strategy. A marketing organization must have ways to easily access and manipulate customer data to determine the right engagement strategy and personalize customer experiences. Tactics to consider include maintaining an actionable marketing database, consolidating multiple databases, having easy access to demographics and behavioral data, cleansing and deduplicating data, and progressively building customer profiles over the entire customer lifecycle.

Channels and execution

An organization must have the ability to communicate across channels to deliver great customer experiences and orchestrate the various touchpoints from a centralized marketing platform. An organization must understand its customers' preferred channels, what makes sense for the business, and develop marketing goals to optimize a channel delivery strategy. Each customer is unique, so personalized communication is important. Inbound and outbound channels and how they interact to close the loop with customers should also be considered.

Automation and orchestration

The best way to convert prospects into customers is by delivering the right message at the right time. To do this, an organization must automate its marketing processes—everything from transactional messages to seasonal campaigns. It must also be able to dynamically change the customer journey based on customer actions. By orchestrating all the campaign pieces, data, and channels, an organization can gain significant program efficiencies.

Campaign optimization

The processes involved in optimizing campaigns and providing customers the absolute best content at the right time do not have to be complicated. To remove the guesswork of how campaigns will perform, an organization should be able to run high-level campaign simulations all the way down to a specific message or offer before, during, and after execution. Building business rules helps avoid fatiguing customers.

Real-time engagement

Customers demand experiences in real time and on the channels they prefer. Brands that are able to seamlessly deliver customer experiences immediately at the point of contact and continuously interact across inbound and outbound channels will be positioned to win. Each customer interaction is contextual and relevant based on the customer's individual profile. The organization must also monitor and adapt the experience based on real-time customer feedback.

Reporting and analytics

Reporting and analytics are crucial to the success of a marketing campaign and to inform future activities. Not only is it important to monitor campaign performance, but it is also vital to monitor data in real time and take action based on it. Custom reporting dashboards inform marketing decisions, allowing an organization to modify a campaign as it is, instead of waiting until the next campaign. Campaign reporting should also provide visibility into business performance and capture everything from budget monitoring to revenue generation.

Organizational strategy

How an organization communicates with its customers is critical: Is it talking at them or facilitating a two-way conversation? Someone within the organization must own this customer engagement strategy. A holistic strategy includes having dedicated roles that are responsible for campaign management tactics, technology budgets, and a customer engagement process that spans channels and touchpoints.

Survey methodology

The survey respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement across the 7 areas with the following designations:

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Don't know
- Does not apply

All statements were weighted. Some questions were weighted more heavily based on what Adobe and industry experts indicated were the most important areas within a dimension. The overall maturity score ranged from 0.00 to 5.00, with the following delineations:

- Just starting (0.00–0.99)—Just beginning the journey of campaign management effectiveness
- Beginner (1.00-1.99)—Achieved some basic tactics of campaign management, but still has a lot of room to improve
- Intermediate (2.00–3.49)—Beginning to deliver effective marketing campaigns
- Advanced (3.50–4.74)—Very strong in cross-channel customer engagement strategies, but could further optimize
- World class (4.75–5.00)—Best in class in delivering cross-channel customer engagement strategies

Study highlights

The survey results indicate good news in several areas—organizations are making progress toward adopting many of the practices outlined by the maturity model. However, the data also revealed several areas for improvement and growth.

The participants represented the financial services, media and entertainment, retail and commerce, and travel and hospitality industries. The Other Industries category included respondents from mass merchandising (5%), manufacturing (4%), professional services (3%), and telecom (2%).

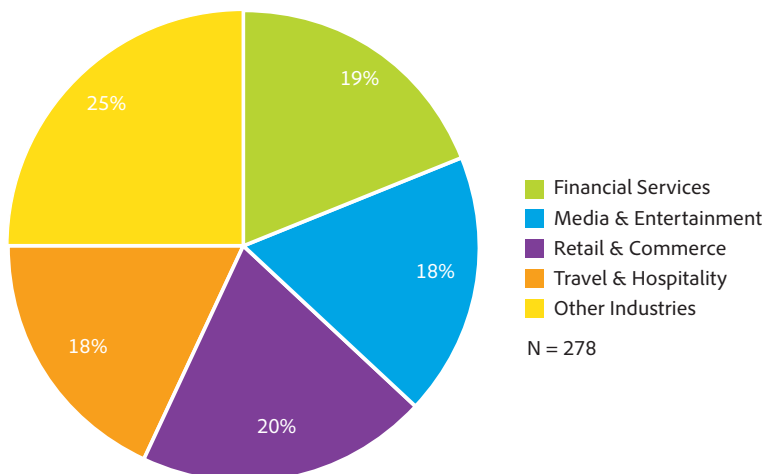**What is your organization's primary industry?**

Figure 1. Primary industries of the participants

Adobe Campaign benchmark data									
NA Total		Overall	Knowledge & Data	Channels & Execution	Automation	Optimization	Real Time Engagement	Reporting	Organizational Strategy
TOTAL SAMPLE	Laggards (bottom 30%)	2.2	2.1	2.5	2	1.9	1.9	2.3	2.3
	Average (middle 50%)	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.8	3.6
	Top performers (top 20%)	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.5

Figure 2. Overall average scores across industries

Pockets of success across industries

When viewed from a cross-industry perspective, the results reveal that marketing organizations are experiencing significant success in the areas of customer knowledge and data, channels and execution, and optimization. In this assessment, the Somewhat Agree and Strongly Agree categories were grouped and compared to the other responses combined.

Customer knowledge and data—Over two-thirds (71%) of those surveyed can maintain a full customer history of the marketing actions that each customer has taken, along with any associated customer preferences, demographics, and transaction history. As a result, they are able to better personalize the customer experience and drive higher engagement and effectiveness rates.

Channels and execution—A noteworthy 80% and 75% can engage with customers in outbound and inbound channels, respectively. Organizations are taking full advantage of all the different ways to communicate outwardly with customers. They are everywhere that the customer is and able to deliver a consistent message, whether the customer is at the point of sale or calling the contact center.

We have the ability to engage with customers in outbound channels such as: email, direct mail, SMS, mobile app push, social posts and others.
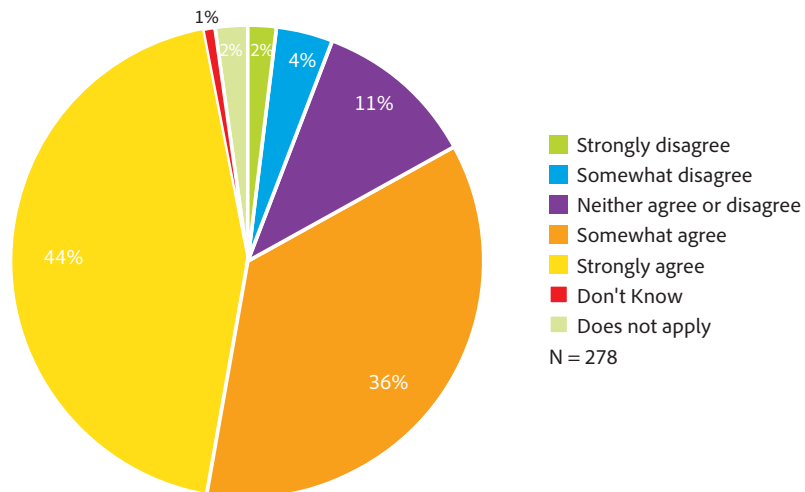

Legend:
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree
- Don't Know
- Does not apply

N = 278

Figure 3. Most marketers said they can engage with customers in outbound channels, like email, direct mail, and SMS.

Optimization—A full 70% of marketers surveyed use business rules to define the logic behind the targeting and content that they serve to customers, indicating that marketers are doing extensive targeting to ensure that each customer gets the best offer. This is important because the more personalized the offer, the more likely the prospect is to take advantage of it.

Areas for improvement across industries

When looking at some of the challenges marketers faced in the different areas, Adobe grouped the responses by Certain versus Uncertain, indicating how strongly they agreed or disagreed in each area. Organizations with Somewhat Agree responses were perceived as fairly uncertain about the practice. In many cases, the weaker areas relate more to marketing technologies and organizational strategy.

Customer knowledge and data

Almost two-thirds (64%) of the respondents struggle at some level with leveraging multiple external data sources, which is critical for gaining a single marketing view of the customer to deliver the right content based on all the available information.

Similarly, 68% have difficulties putting in place extract, transform, and load (ETL) processes that support data cleansing and deduplication. So even when marketers are able to leverage external data sources, the quality of that data is a challenge. When the Don't Know/Doesn't Apply category is added, the uncertainty is increased to 78%.

With these technical challenges, it's not surprising to find that 62% of the surveyed marketers cannot continuously enhance their customer profiles over time.

We have the ability to continuously profile our customers and continuously enhance our engagement strategy with them.
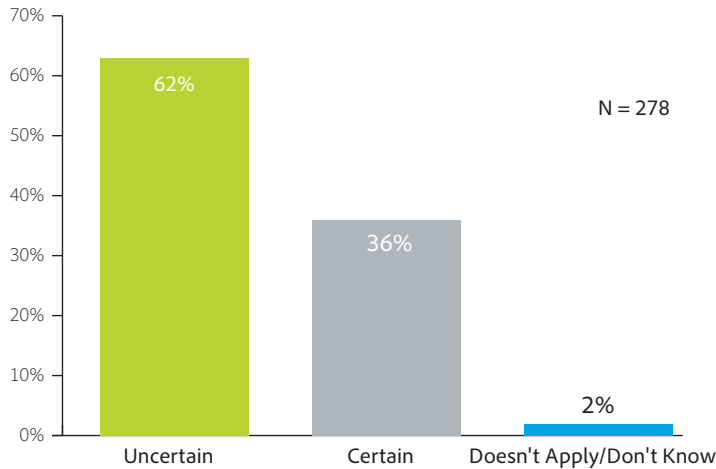

Figure 4. Marketers struggle to continuously enhance customer profiles.

Channels and execution

While many marketing organizations engage with customers across both inbound and outbound channels, 69% struggle to combine these channels in an orchestrated, consistent fashion.

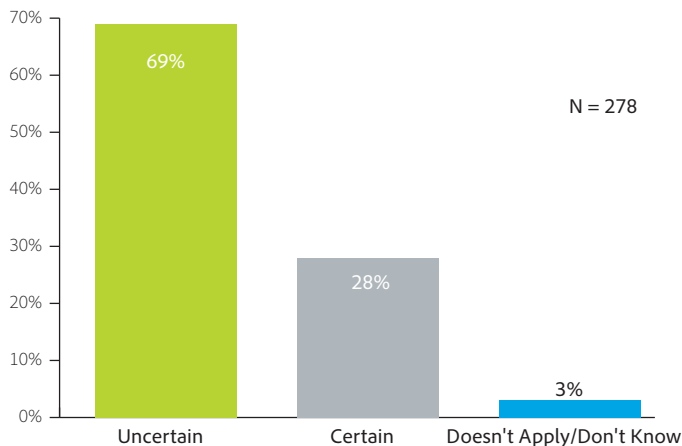**We currently coordinate and orchestrate messages across inbound and outbound channels.**

Figure 5. Marketers find combining inbound and outbound channels difficult.

Automation and orchestration

Engaging in cross-channel marketing at scale requires a great deal of automation. Unfortunately, only 29% indicated that they are very confident in using automated follow-up and triggered messages to connect with customers.

Similarly, only 27% of participants can easily orchestrate and manage multiwave campaigns. Many have difficulty designing the required content, determining the customer segments to target, setting up the necessary cross-channel workflows, and developing personalized landing pages for the various segments.

It's no surprise then that 70% lack the ability to start, stop, and restart campaigns on the fly as circumstances dictate. Basically, organizations need to focus more effort on using technologies that support automation and orchestration of cross-channel campaigns.

Optimization

Many marketing organizations responded that they have business rules to serve customers personalized content, but only 23% indicated that they have fatigue rules to prevent them from wearing out the customer with too many messages and offers. In addition, only 21% indicate that they use A/B or multivariate testing to determine the optimal campaign, content, or offer to deliver to the customer.

Real-time engagement

Not even one-quarter (24%) of marketers surveyed use self-learning technologies to gain more knowledge about the customer from the organization's various channels. These technologies are powerful because they automatically re-decision offers and content using real-time feedback about the customer based on the customer's interactions. The low score here means that marketers are relying on manual tactics to monitor the performance of offers and are possibly struggling to make agile changes to offers.

We leverage self-learning technologies to automatically re-decision offers and content based on real-time feedback.
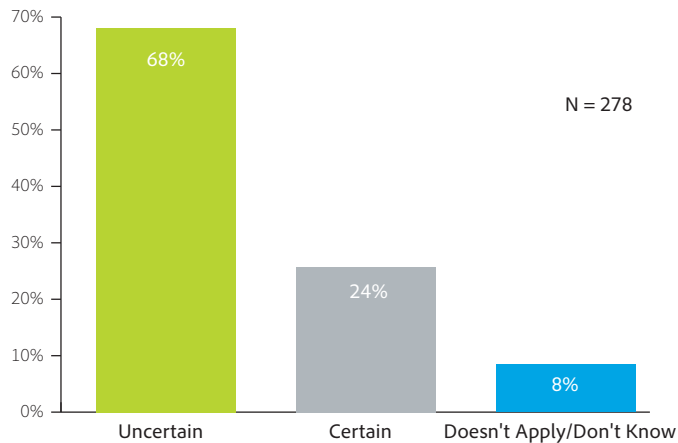

Figure 6. Marketers are uncertain about self-learning technologies.

Reporting and analytics

Just 31% use reporting to automatically forecast results of a campaign or offer, including the potential revenue they could generate, before execution. This means that they have limited visibility into campaign profitability because they are waiting until the campaign completes and the results come in before reporting.

Organizational strategy

Having an organizational strategy is a key to successful campaign management. As with most initiatives in an organization, having someone who has ownership of the program with P&L responsibility is essential. Yet, the survey reveals that only 35% of organizations have someone with this level of ownership and responsibility for campaign management programs.

**We have someone with profit and loss (P&L) responsibility
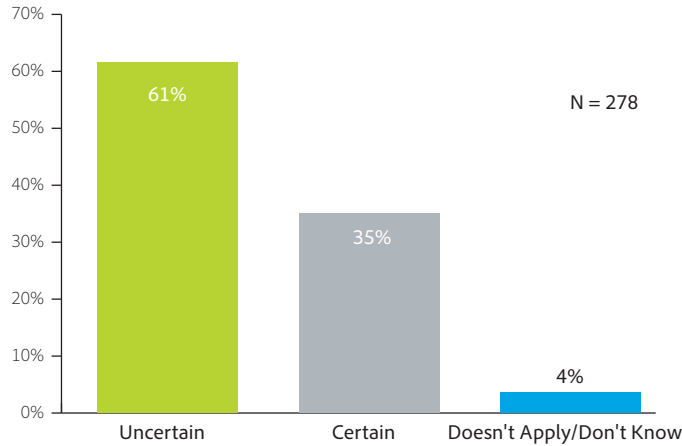for campaign management in our organization.**

Figure 7. Many organizations do not have someone with campaign management ownership and responsibility in place.

In addition, 66% of the respondents indicated that they don't view their marketing engagement strategy as customer-centric. They simply are not able to tune into what customers show they want through their actions and stated preferences. To avoid this, an organization can develop a customer engagement strategy that captures insight and learns from each customer touchpoint. While some of this requires asking customers directly for that information, such as channel preference, much of it can also be gleaned from information that the organization already has.

Industry perspectives

The previous highlights combined responses from all industries. When the results are examined by the industries surveyed—financial services, retail and commerce, travel and hospitality, and media and entertainment—several interesting findings emerge. Some industries exhibit notable strengths in specific areas, where others reveal weaknesses.

Adobe Campaign benchmark data		
North America Total		**Overall**
TOTAL SAMPLE	Laggards (bottom 30%)	2.2
	Average (middle 50%)	3.7
	Top Performers (top 20%)	4.6
Retail & Commerce	Laggards (bottom 30%)	2.3
	Average (middle 50%)	3.8
	Top Performers (top 20%)	4.5
Media & Entertainment	Laggards (bottom 30%)	2.3
	Average (middle 50%)	3.8
	Top Performers (top 20%)	4.6
Financial Services	Laggards (bottom 30%)	2.1
	Average (middle 50%)	3.5
	Top Performers (top 20%)	4.5
Travel & Hospitality	Laggards (bottom 30%)	2.4
	Average (middle 50%)	3.8
	Top Performers (top 20%)	4.5
Other Industries	Laggards (bottom 30%)	2.0
	Average (middle 50%)	3.4
	Top Performers (top 20%)	4.6

Figure 8. Average scores for each industry

Financial services

In the Customer Knowledge and Data dimension, financial services respondents show high uncertainty in their ability to continuously profile customers based on data (69%). This lack of certainty indicates possible difficulties in longer term customer engagement strategies because the captured data is not being meaningfully leveraged.

This industry is also the most uncertain (71%) about having a marketing owner for campaign management P&L and programs—for instance, they're 20% more uncertain than travel and hospitality. Ownership is one of the most important Organizational Strategy best practices. The high uncertainty possibly indicates that campaign management is not seen as having strategic importance.

Retail and commerce

Triggered and transactional messages have proven to have the highest open and response rates of all campaign messaging. Not surprisingly, retail and commerce leads with 35%, indicating that this industry strongly agrees that they can embed personalized, relevant offers inside these types of messages. The media and entertainment and travel and hospitality industries tie at 29% in this area.

Travel and hospitality

Although a major finding of the study is that, in general, all industries struggle with coordinating and orchestrating messages across inbound and outbound channels, travel and hospitality is making inroads, leading the other industries with 39% expressing high certainty in their abilities in this Channels and Execution best practice. Compared to the other industries, they have a greater ability to deliver on cross-channel marketing campaigns.

Media and entertainment

In comparison to financial services and the other industries category, media and entertainment shows relatively high certainty—over 50%—in its ability to continuously profile customers. With 45% certainty, media and entertainment also comes out strongest in its ability to forecast results of campaigns and offers, trailed closely by travel and hospitality.

Other industries

A number of other industries, such as technology, business services, and manufacturing, participated in the study and were combined into an Other Industries category. The study revealed some interesting trends for this combined category. For example, compared to the previous industries mentioned, they lag furthest behind in A/B and multivariate testing, with 86% expressing some level of uncertainty in their ability to conduct this key personalization activity.

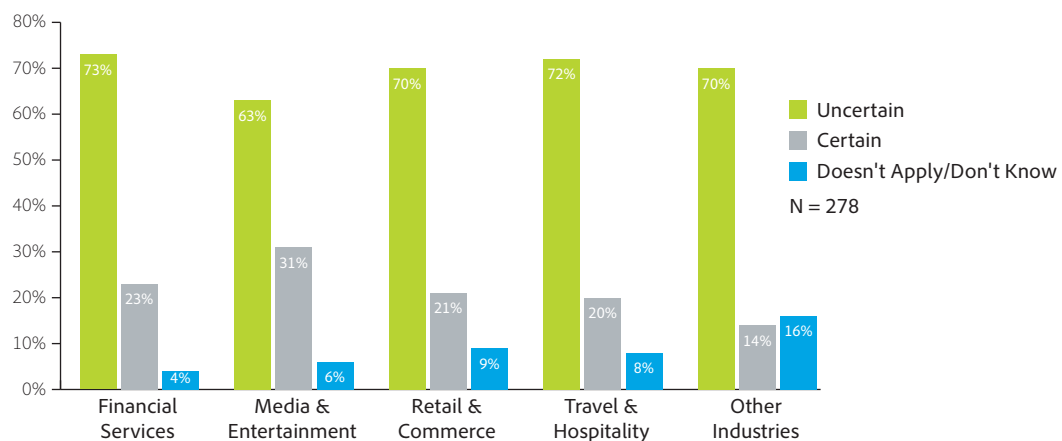**We currently run A/B and multivariate tests on our campaigns, offers, and content.**

Figure 9. The Other Industries category lags behind in using A/B and multivariate testing.

Differences by company size and company revenue

When viewed by organization size, 78% of the organizations with more than 5,000 employees consider continuously profiling customers to be particularly difficult in the area of data management, and 81% also struggle to automatically forecast campaign results, compared to 62% of organizations with fewer than 5,000 employees.

We currently use reporting to automatically forecast results of campaigns and offers, including revenue forecasting.
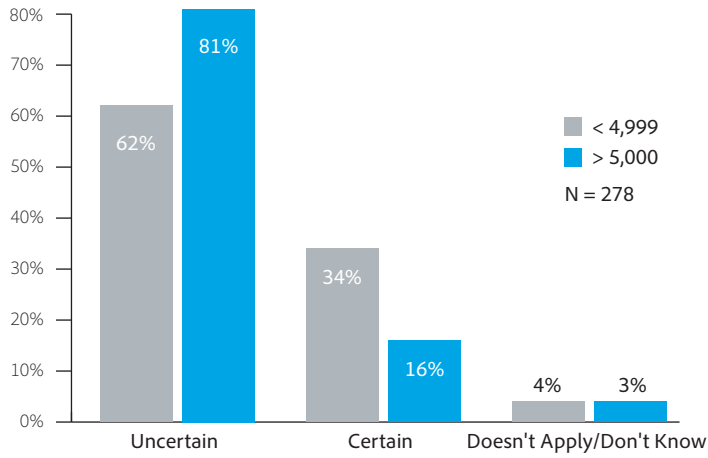

Figure 10. Companies with over 5,000 employees struggle with campaign forecasting.

Another interesting finding is that 14% of the more profitable organizations—those with over $500 million in annual revenue—believe that using A/B and multivariate testing did not apply to them.

Assessing your organization's campaign management maturity

Becoming a world-class campaign management organization does not have to be an all or nothing proposition. Taking small but deliberate steps can lead your marketing organization to your goals. A first step is to use the self-assessment tool (*http://adobecampaignpro.com*) to rate your current level of campaign management effectiveness against the 7 dimensions and 35 best practice statements. Without first establishing a baseline of where you are, it's difficult to determine where to focus your efforts.

Based on your responses, the self-assessment tool evaluates your strengths and weaknesses and shows you how your marketing organization measures up against industry benchmarks.
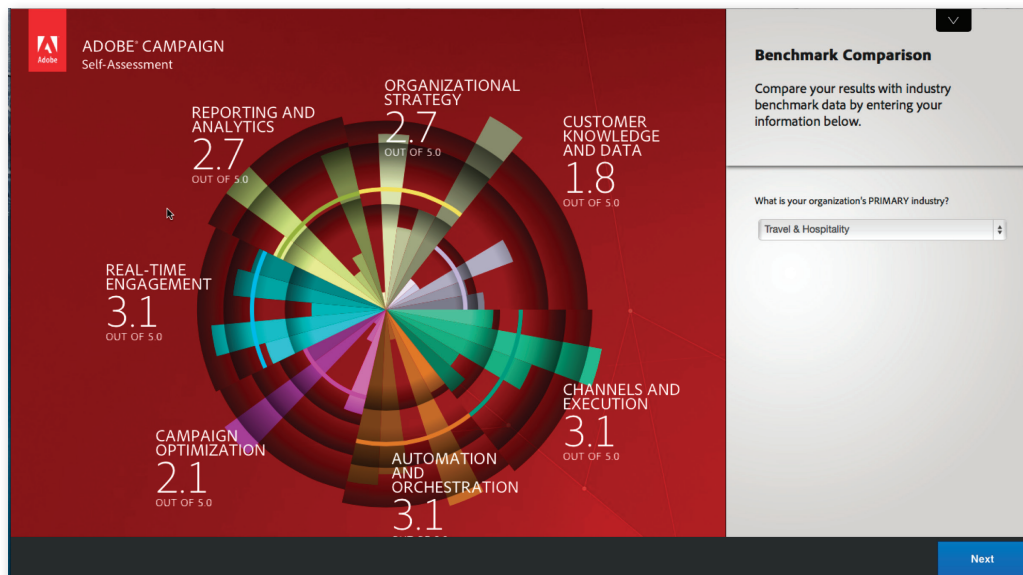

Figure 11. The self-assessment tool lets you compare your scores in each dimension of the maturity model to industry benchmarks.

After reviewing the results, you can set goals to prioritize areas for improvement. You can view your current level of effectiveness in each dimension and position a slider to set your goal.
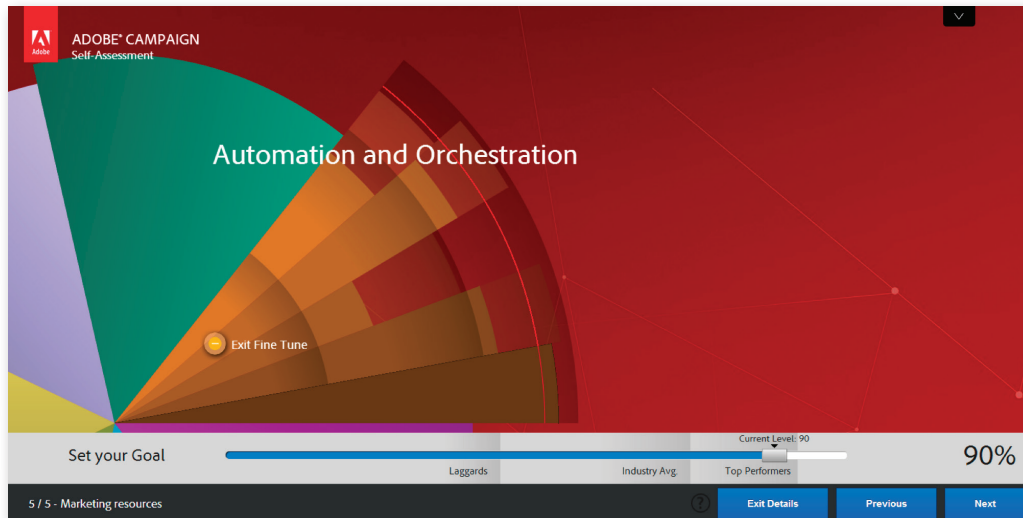

Figure 12. After taking the assessment survey, you can set goals for each dimension.

You can also receive a personalized report that summarizes your results, goals, and specific recommendations for each of the 35 best practices.
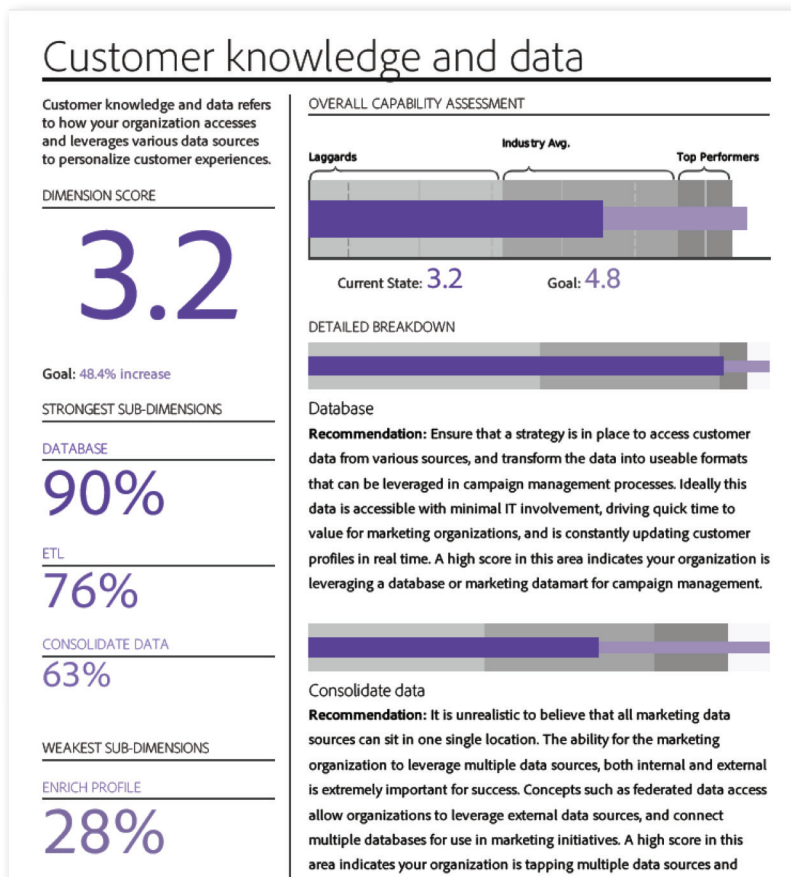

Figure 13. The report shows your strengths and weaknesses in each dimension, along with recommended actions to reach the improvement goals you set.

You can use the results of this self-assessment to evangelize the need for improving your organization's campaign management practices and how these improvements could potentially generate a substantial return on investment.

If you need additional guidance, Adobe Campaign consultants have broad and extensive experience in building world class campaign management practices. To learn more about Adobe Campaign, visit *www.adobe.com/campaign*.

About the authors

Patrick Tripp focuses on product strategy for cross-channel campaign management at Adobe and has over 15 years of experience in the technology, consulting, and marketing industries.

Alessandro Dal Canto, a product marketing and strategy intern with the Adobe Campaign management team, contributed to the survey design and data analysis of the campaign maturity model project.

Ben Tepfer is a product specialist on the Adobe Campaign product marketing team, working closely with both R&D and Adobe sales. He worked on the survey and maturity model design.