CONNECTING SOCIAL MEDIA WITH MDM

Abstract

Businesses have long depended on master data management (MDM) to optimise customer-related operations. However, today, crucial information is exponentially being recorded in unstructured, transactional, and social formats, including tweets, reels, comments, and Facebook postings. This data spans across departments and organisational divisions and is prone to be duplicated, fragmented, and out of date. Here's where social MDM helps build connections, improve target marketing, and engage deeply with customers. In this POV, we will look at how social MDM enhances core MDM principles and procedures, creating more captivating customer experiences and hastening your shift to highly targeted, contextual marketing.

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## The limitations of a traditional MDM [3][4]

Facebook clocked 2.93 billion monthly active users in the first quarter of 2022. At the same time, Twitter logged 179 million monetizable daily active users (mDAU) in the fourth quarter of 2021. In addition, there is LinkedIn, a leading social media platform for forming professional connections, and a range of other social media platforms in the digital world. [1][2] With such a large number of people actively using social media platforms, one cannot overlook the wealth of data that could potentially provide valuable insights into their behaviour, preferences, purchases, and more. Imagine the benefits that organisations can derive if they tap into this wealth and connect it to their master data.

Master data management (MDM), at its core, is the collection of data from different systems and departments across the organisation to create a defined, accurate, single master record. But connecting your MDM platform with social media opens up a new dimension to this valuable customer data for marketing campaigns and sales strategies.* Social MDM turns targeted marketing to hyper-personalised marketing. Here, a customer's daily activities are monitored, which helps organisations in understanding buying decisions based on customers' preferences. By integrating social media with MDM, organisations can get a 360-degree view of their customers' journey. An MDM system that leverages social media information delivers broad and sustainable business impact for the organisation.

Traditional MDM is already leveraging customer data in the organisation's internal systems to make a golden record or a customer master data. But is an MDM system based purely on information from internal systems enough? The answer is 'no.' Traditional MDM systems extract data from the organisation's systems to form selling strategies. But this data is essentially what the customers provide. Modern customers have diverse portfolios with multiple touchpoints, including mobile, voice, and social media. They have a savings account, a current account, an insurance policy, a pension plan, a loan, a mortgage, etc., in addition to information on buying history, financial and non-financial transactions, and data from various channels, devices, and applications. This wealth of data opens opportunities way beyond what you can get from within the organisation's boundaries alone.
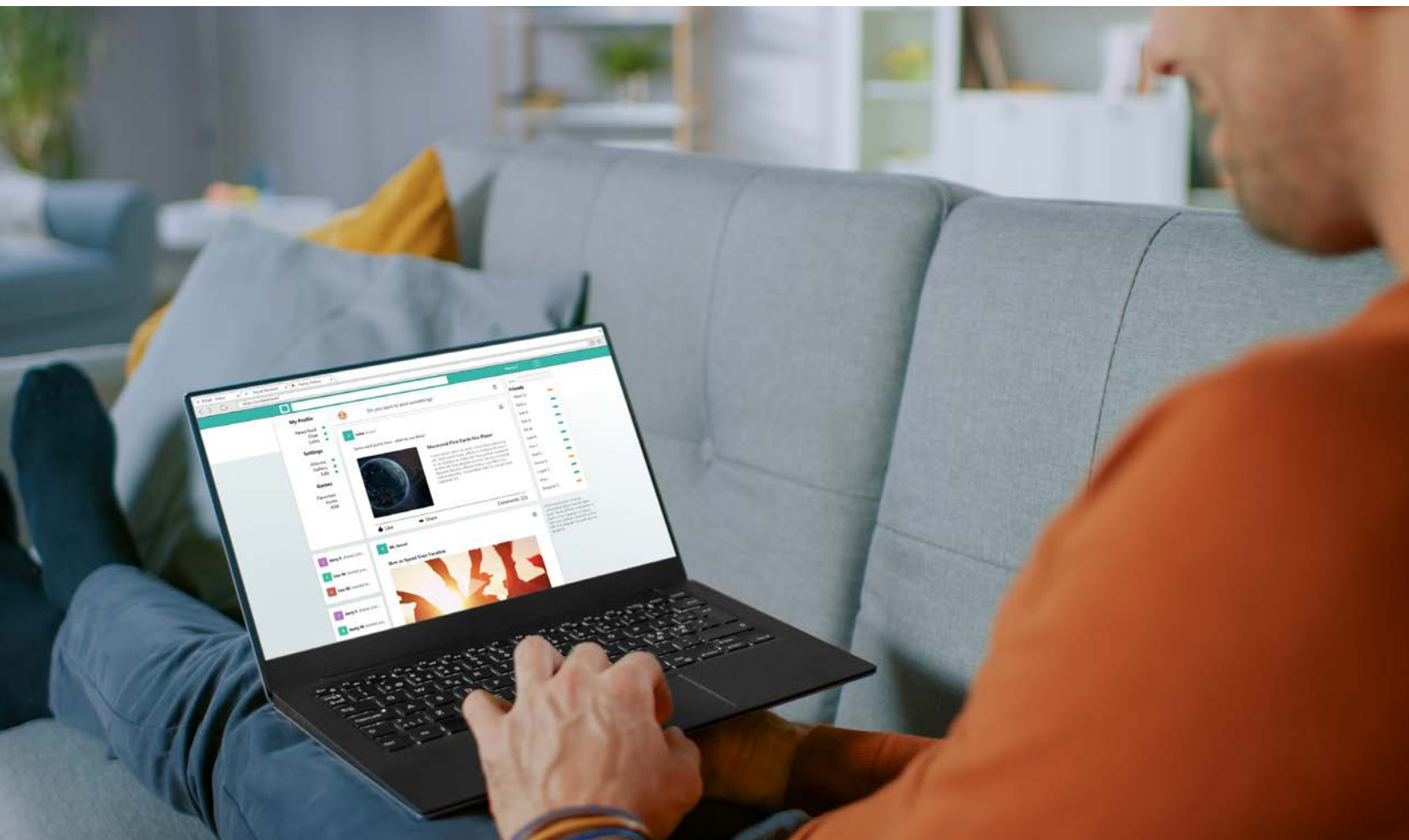
Implementing MDM [3]

An organisation can choose to source information from multiple internal and external systems to generate a master data but keep the records in source systems unchanged. Alternatively, the organisation can backfill the source systems after ingesting, de-duplicating, and analysing the data in the MDM system. This approach depends on the business needs and the maturity of the MDM system in place. The various steps to create a golden record for every customer include the following:

Phase 1
- Data assessment
- Customer profile identification
- Data matching and merging
- Defining data quality rules

Phase 2
- Extracting transform load
- Allocating a unique customer ID
- Data cleansing and standardisation
- Metadata management
- Data quality control
- Securing the data

The next step to enrich this data is to integrate it with the customers' social media profiles. By integrating MDM with social media, data intelligence goes beyond the point of sales (POS).

Integrating social media and MDM [4]

Social media activity of your customers can provide valuable information about things that matter to them. Integrating this data with your existing MDM system allows you to create personalised campaigns, as well as cross-sell and upsell services to the customers. Social MDM takes customer information from asserted facts to derived data.

Top social media platforms offer a gamut of information. Facebook (now Meta) is great for business-to-customer (B2C) activities; LinkedIn works well for business-to-business (B2B) prospects, and Twitter lies somewhere in between. But organisations may also need to consider regional social media platforms. For example, German-speaking countries use XING instead of LinkedIn to connect professionally. [8] Here are some action points for an organisation to approach their social MDM strategy:

- **Determine attributes:** Find the right social media channel and relevant attributes to associate with the customer's master data copy. For example, you can use keywords on Twitter to assess product sentiment. Similarly, attributes such as a family tree, influencing groups, activities, and content can provide in-depth information about that user.

- **Integrate attributes:** Link MDM in the enterprise and social media identity and enrich a golden copy of customer data. This can be done by requesting customers to provide their social media profile information or prompting them to use the social media app. For example, the Facebook app of eBay collects user attributes such as activities, birthday, education history, hometown location, relationship status, political views, likes, and interests of a user and their friends' list. Once you have this information, you can input it into the social MDM system to enrich the customer MDM within the organisation.

- **Build social intelligence:** Use the insights to take the business to the customer on social media and offer highly personalised services. You can use the data to open up new marketing and sales opportunities such as:

  - Offer product discounts based on upcoming family events and birthdays.

  - Identify the advocates and critiques of products and services, which helps in penetrating the market and fixing the damage early.

  - Promote products and services effectively compared with emails, SMSes, and cold-calling methods.

  - Offer products and services such as 'team offers' after project completion or work anniversary on LinkedIn.

  - Use specific keywords to understand customer sentiments and buying experience on Twitter.

  - Set up a social customer relationship management (CRM) that merges a customer's CRM records with their information on social media.

Using social MDM to improve customer experience [9]

By enhancing the value of your business to the customers, you can increase the lifetime value. Here are some use cases on how social MDM can help create personalised experiences for your customers.

- Lack of communication between departments as IT systems are department specific
- Difficulty in bridging data silos

There isn't a standard recipe for all organisations. The solution is always tailored to the challenges faced by each organisation. But they can implement the solution in the following ways:

Delivering cultural insights

Social MDM that provides cultural insights can help you gather relevant information such as:

- Names, religious titles, and work names
- Honorific data that imply the person's role
- Culturally relevant dates such as birthdays and local holidays
- Gender inference from names and other data

Important events in a customer's life

Social MDM harnesses important events from a customer's and their family's life: for example, anniversary, spouse's birthday, and children's birthday. Other events could be job changes (LinkedIn), travel, retirement, and a new baby.

Location-specific information

The places where the customers live, eat, shop, and hang out provide valuable insights for personalised services. This also prevents customers from undertaking any fraudulent transactions, thus saving their time and money. Using location-specific information, you can derive several

location-specific accelerators, such as:

- Duration and shipping costs of online orders
- List of potential addresses to ship the product
- Directions between the customer's address and your nearest business location

Attracting customers who are influencers

Influencers are those customers who encourage their followers to take buying action on your products. By using a social MDM, businesses can attract influencers at every interaction across all channels and understand the members in the influencer's network.

Knowing purchase history

To succeed, businesses need to know how customers feel about their products and services and customer support. Social MDM can deliver sentiment analysis that helps organisations make better decisions. It also helps the support team understand the customers' actual needs and pain points.

Providing the next best offer and action

Organisations can use advanced analytical models to deliver the most suitable offer at the correct price for customers at an appropriate time by providing the next best offer (NBO). A well-executed NBO can enhance customer loyalty and boost purchasing experience. You can broaden this into the next best action (NBA) to include activities that do not require immediate action but are equally important. For example, this could include servicing the vehicles or house items before the due date or expiry date to minimise any downtime.
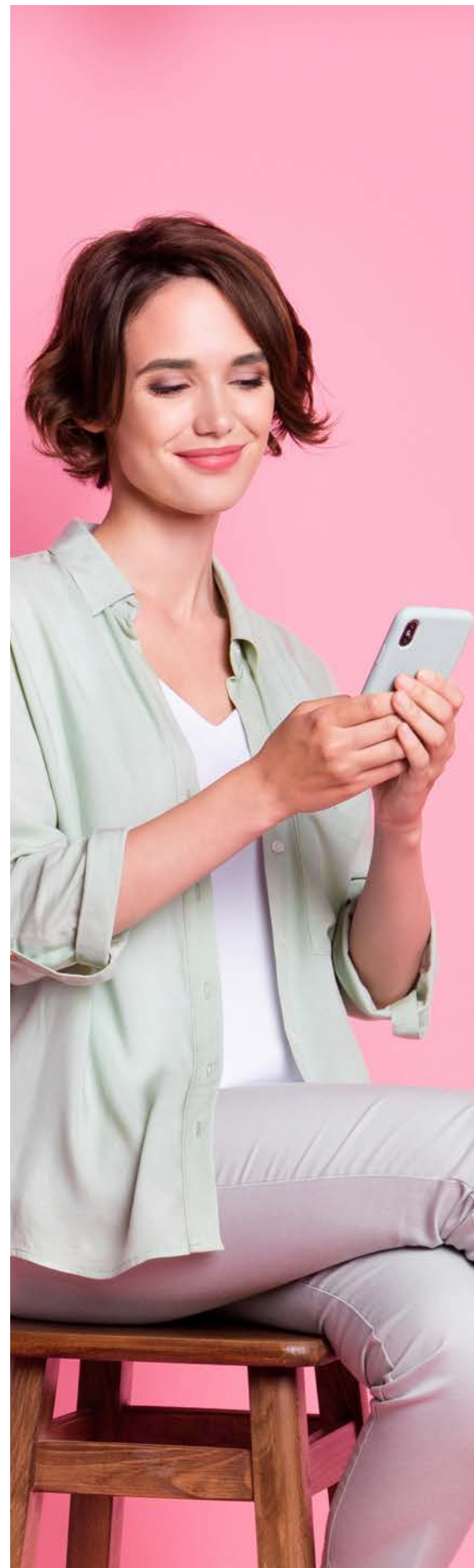
Challenges in social MDM [4]

As mentioned above, you can either gather customer data by asking for their social media profile information or by encouraging them to use the app. By gathering customers' social information, ingesting it in the MDM system, and cross-linking it with the CRM records, you can build social intelligence in the B2C and B2B domains. This helps an organisation facilitate a wide range of service and product offerings to the customers. However, social media MDM must recognise and deal with several challenges: [5]

- **Sifting genuine customers from the fraudulent ones:** Each customer may have a different profile image or an avatar on different platforms. It's not unusual to find fake or misleading profiles with the same names. Hence, it's crucial to link the customers' internal MDM data with the right social media profile. The social MDM system must also address customers' data privacy issues.

- **Linking customers' social media profiles to their MDM profiles efficiently:** One of the ways to do this is to create an extension to the core customer record in MDM and store key social information such as customer IDs and access tokens. This information can be used to link with the social media platform's generic APIs and feed the information to the social MDM.

- **Extracting real-time data from social media and turning it into valuable information:** With a vast array of social media platforms, there could be multiple versions of truth about the same product or service. The social MDM has to extract, manage, and analyse this vast amount of data. This is a huge challenge in itself and requires innovative technologies to deliver business value for the organisation.

Translating social media MDM to actual sales [7]

Social selling is a method or strategy of connecting with and nurturing sales prospects to build brand trust. A successful engagement with them will ensure recall value for your brand when they are ready to buy a product or avail a service.

- **Be present and engaging:** Analyse the social MDM information from a customer's viewpoint to derive insights.

Leverage the insights you receive by analysing the social MDM information and engaging with the customers with the right products at the right time.

- **Identify leads:** Use social MDM to understand what your customers are saying about your brand, the products, and the services within your industry. This information will provide you with

opportunities to resolve complaints and queries.

- **Deliver value:** Use social MDM insights to design personalised marketing and sales strategies. This means you deliver maximum value by offering only the information that the customers want.

Social MDM versus CRM [8]

Organisations often confuse social MDM with a CRM because both contain customer information. However, a CRM focuses on the process of managing prospects to customers. On the other hand, an MDM system focuses on developing a complete and accurate view of the information it manages. [9]

To be successful, social CRM heavily depends on the data in the social MDM system. The challenge is to seamlessly integrate data sources of the traditional MDM and CRM with data sources generated from social media channels. A customer's golden record expands to embrace information from the following sources:

- Traditional data entry by a sales representative during fieldwork

- Data feed and integration with external references such as a business directory over the cloud

- Self-registration by potential customers over websites, mobile apps, or other platforms

- Social media data captured by social CRM

Harnessing the business value of social MDM [9]

Your existing customers are your most important assets. If they are happy, they could be your mouthpieces for free promotion and brand building. They will also provide you with an ongoing revenue stream. By identifying and pursuing these customers, organisations can significantly improve their bottom line. According to a study, organisations that can increase their retention rates by 5% can grow their profits by 25–100%. Social MDM extends the value of a traditional MDM and leads to two fundamental benefits for the customers – improved customer experience and personalised marketing. By harnessing the direct and implied information from a social MDM, businesses can tailor their marketing and sales efforts to deliver these benefits to their customer base.

*For organisations on the digital transformation journey, agility is key in responding to a rapidly changing technology and business landscape. Now more than ever, it is crucial to deliver and exceed on organisational expectations with a robust digital mindset backed by innovation. Enabling businesses to sense, learn, respond, and evolve like a living organism, will be imperative for business excellence going forward. A comprehensive, yet modular suite of services is doing exactly that. Equipping organisations with intuitive decision-making automatically at scale, actionable insights based on real-time solutions, anytime/anywhere experience, and in-depth data visibility across functions leading to hyper-productivity, Live Enterprise is building connected organisations that are innovating collaboratively for the future.

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