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Powering
Consumer
Engagement
with Predictive
Analytics

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Powering Consumer Engagement with Predictive Analytics

It is safe to say that most marketers have reached a consensus on a critical aspect of marketing today—if there is anything that can effectively crank up the persuasive power of marketing campaigns, it is predictive analytics—a branch of advanced analytics that involves the utilization of data, machine learning, and statistical algorithms to make predictions about future outcomes/events.

Irrespective of industry, the power of predictive analytics is making a resonating impact everywhere. Organizations are realizing predictive analytics can help them tailor a customer's experience in a way that significantly impacts engagement effectiveness and call to action adherence. A recent benchmark report published by Blue shift states marketing campaigns using predictive recommendations

are 116% more effective than those that do not. So, if predictive analytics when coupled with consumer engagement activities are generating such significant value, why do organizations often fail to leverage predictive scores to create better target populations for their marketing communications? Why is it that even with superior analytics tools, many marketers fail to optimize contacts efficiently and drive relevant, targeted communication with consumers?

Fact is, while most predictive analytical models and business intelligence solutions promise to unlock a wave of insights for driving consumer engagement, making them actionable is a whole different ballgame. What can fill this gap is a consumer engagement platform that can bring insights to life and deliver real business value.

This is where companies like Embel Assist are making a difference - by redefining the rules of modern-day consumer engagement.





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For Embel Assist, success lies in tying the individual components of the consumer engagement puzzle together to ultimately determine the next best action for their consumers. Having strong roots in CRM, Embel Assist's service model has expanded over the years to include marketing automation and predictive analytics to support the key functions of consumer engagement infrastructure. "We are a strategic, niche consultancy focused on deploying and operationalizing consumer engagement solutions for our clients," says Ryan Vaske, founder and CEO of Embel Assist.

According to Vaske, understanding where to start is difficult for organizations to discern. Oftentimes, the best approach is to identify the use cases that promote the business value the organization is looking to achieve. This then drives the consumer engagement platform that is needed. To answer the question of where to start, Embel Assist endorses a Crawl, Walk, Run (CWR) delivery methodology designed to help organizations establish a clear and definitive starting point that drives to a comprehensive consumer engagement vision.

Begin by Crawling, Lead by Walking, End with Running

A typical engagement for Embel Assist begins with understanding how the organization currently engages with its consumers and the systems and processes it uses to conduct those engagements. This helps them work with the organization to define use cases that can be executed by maximizing existing capabilities where possible to create quick value and minimize initial investment.. The crawl phase is inevitably the most important as it paves the way, sets the tone, and creates the needed excitement and funding to keep it all going. Vaske says, "Establishing a roadmap with our clients ensures our tactical delivery efforts are always aligned with an agreed upon vision and measured against KPIs."

The consecutive phases(walk and run) are usually driven by more complicated use cases and scope. Typically, this can include the use of analytical insights to help drive message relevance, next best action offers, and/or contact optimization use cases. This requires the right data at the right frequency and an engagement platform capable of processing and delivering an insightful, real-time, omni-channel consumer engagement experience. The Walk and Run phases are designed to expand on the momentum of the Crawl phase and further advance the engagement platform to ensure data, analytics, marketing automation technology and performance reporting are integrated and tuned to support a connected consumer experience.

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Consumer Engagement to the Next Level

To effectively drive the next level of consumer engagement and achieve desired actions and outcomes, organizations need to make relevancy a top priority. Messages, offers, and next best actions must be prioritized in a manner that provides the consumer with logical, intuitive, consistent, and connected dialogue. It is crucial to consider past interactions and current observations to deliver that most appropriate message at the time of engagement. But how can companies influence customers' decisions by delivering experiences that are personalized, real-time, relevant, and connected—all within a short span of an engagement window?

Embel Assist recommends going beyond the traditional batch "score and store" approach and incorporating use cases that capture interaction data in real-time to arbitrate next best actions for a specific consumer at the time of engagement. The most appropriate message to provide a consumer at the beginning of a dialogue may not be the most appropriate message at the end of the dialogue. Shaping the conversation with a consumer during dialogue with a customer service representative or while interacting with an organization on the website or mobile application are good examples where both historical and in-session data can be used to tailor the relevant offers and messages at the most opportunistic time. This can be done by running response data through a real-time analytical scoring capability to re-score the consumer's profile and adjust the next best actions at the point of interaction. It is the holy grail of consumer engagement.

To highlight the importance of predictive analytics in consumer engagement, Vaske cites the success story of a health services company that was actively looking to engage and enroll members into health programs. As the cost to enroll members into a health program is expensive using traditional outbound communications, the health services company decided it would be more effective to engage members that came inbound rather than relying solely on outbound tactics. With the guidance of the expert team at Embel Assist, the health services company used predictive analytics to prioritize next best

expertise to pull all the necessary pieces together, build the appropriate data architecture, set up marketing systems and consumer engagement platforms, and wrap reporting around the solution," Vaske notes.

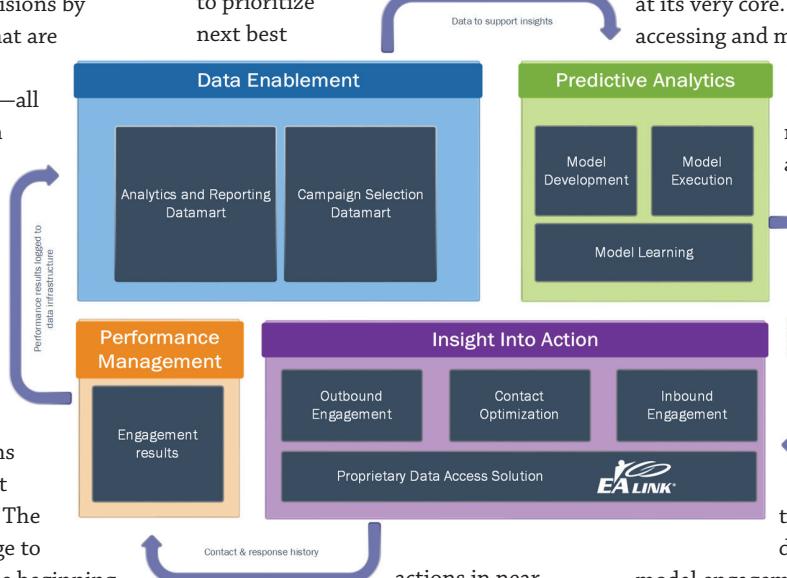
EALink: Access to Externally Sourced Data Made Easier

While engaging consumers using an inbound marketing strategy, just like the health services company previously mentioned, or creating a simple targeted distribution list using a predictive score as a filter requires accessibility to data at its very core. For many marketers, accessing and manipulating contact data from multiple sources of truth is time-consuming, not scalable, and brings along inherent data quality risk.

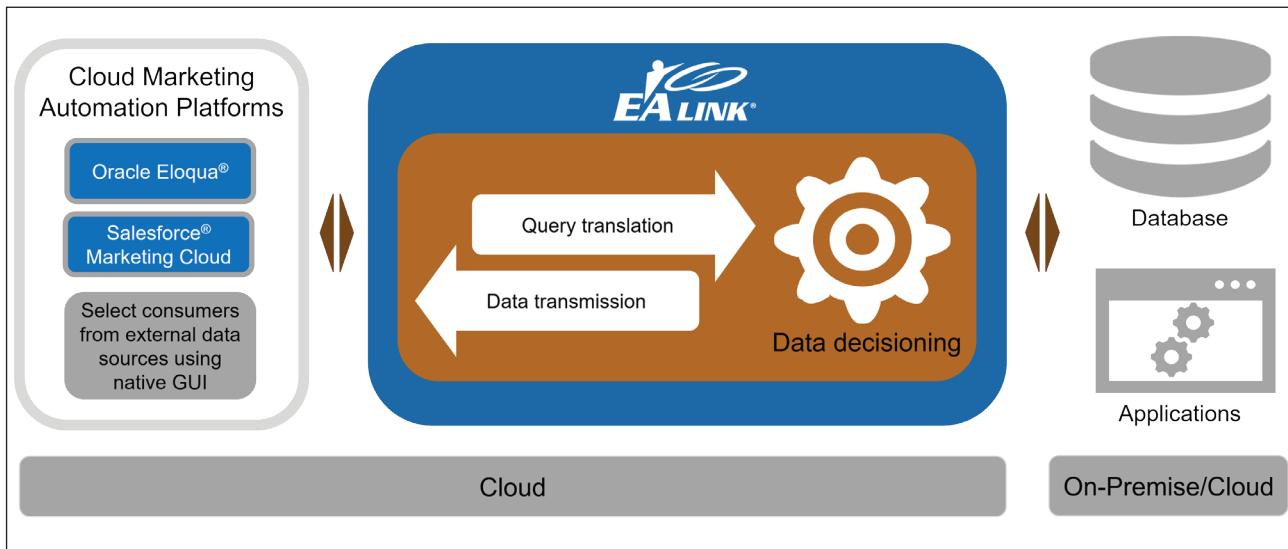
Embel Assist has witnessed this challenge multiple times and, as a result, has helped organizations architect a hybrid consumer engagement platform to move and replicate data to support a multi-

modal engagement strategy. Historically, cloud marketing automation platforms (CMAP), which have become an integral component of most consumer engagement platforms, requires consumer data to be replicated into the proprietary contact model to support segmentation. This can create unneeded risk and data governance pitfalls.

To solve this persistent problem, Embel Assist has created a proprietary application called EALink. EALink is a fully integrated functional enhancement to CMAPs, such as Oracle Eloqua and Salesforce Marketing Cloud. By allowing for direct, on-demand access to external data source(s), whether that be a database or application residing either



actions in near real-time and deliver member-specific offers while the member was talking with the health agent. The results were astonishing. The agent offer presentation rate doubled, acceptance of those offers increased over 50 percent resulting in incremental program enrollments, and the organization realized several millions of dollars of value per year when combining member and organizational healthcare cost savings through better health management. "Making the insights actionable is the name of the game. Insight without action provides very little value to the organization or the consumer. It requires experience and



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on-premise or in the cloud, marketers can build their query logic, process the logic directly against the data source, transfer data on a secure and encrypted connection and leverage the external data results to create the desired target population. Vaske reveals, “Users can utilize EALink’s

wizard within their CMAPs and leverage predictive scores or pertinent data, at their discretion, from the external data sources or applications regardless of location.”

With the ability to synchronize contacts and leverage decision logic against one or multiple external databases and/or applications (such as web analytics, financial systems, ERPs, etc.), EALink empowers campaign analysts to create precise segments to support all of their marketing demands.

Not only does EALink put the power of campaign segmentation in the hands of analysts, but it also ensures that the data remains where it belongs. With EALink, users do not have to replicate data unnecessarily into their CMAP, especially if it is sensitive or protected data. This reduces data exposure risk, aligns to data governance standards and keeps data where it belongs – at the source.

Impact of Predictive Analytics on the Pandemic

Numerous success stories stand testament to the value that Embel Assist has been delivering to its clients even during the current outbreak

of COVID-19. Due to its extensive experience in the healthcare industry, Embel Assist is enabling its healthcare clients with additional support to respond to the pandemic and help their customers. By using predictive analytics on claims and clinician data, Embel Assist is empowering clients to identify the population subsets that are at a higher risk of contracting the disease. These insights are then utilized to engage this specific population sooner as a preemptive measure to provide educational information to help mitigate additional medical expenses. Similarly, insurance companies are also relieved from the burden of bearing the cost—a win-win on both ends.

As customer engagement continues to grow as a “necessity” for every industry, Embel Assist plans to hone its core competencies and expand on new endeavors. “We are looking to penetrate deeper into the market with our newly launched product, EALink, and enhance its integration capabilities with multiple systems. Our main focus is to stay consistent with our endeavors and try out new products that can support our ability to be even more effective in, predictive marketing and the customer engagement space,” says Vaske. **CA**

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The annual listing of 10 companies that are at the forefront of providing Predictive Analytics consulting/services and transforming businesses