



## Continuous Improvement with Laura Patterson

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Recently I had the opportunity to sit down with Laura Patterson, President of [Vision Edge Marketing](#), a consultancy focused on driving metrics and measurement into marketing organizations, and recount some of her fundamental beliefs on the need for the marketing organization to become a performance driven organization.

One of the keys to implementing a customer relationship marketing - CRM(k) - strategy is enabling the process with both tactical and strategic metrics. Where the tactical ones tie to specific behaviors or events like clicks, downloads, ratings, etc. while the strategic ones will correlate the activity to performance. For emphasis, again, correlate the activity to performance. To be relevant. To be meaningful to the organization, the marketing metrics need to be tied to the success of the business.

So, how do you internalize this to the organization - how do you structure your marketing organization to be performance driven? Start by establishing:

1. Clear Standards
2. Aligned to resources, policies, and practices
3. Results tracked and reported
4. Data is used to drive continuous improvement
5. Fact based decision making

In combination these give a quantifiable base for making decisions. If you choose drivers that are not quantifiable, they in turn are not really measurable, and do not give the foundation needed to make improvements. This strips the marketing organization of referencable metrics or proof of performance.

**Metric** - a numerical measure the represents a piece of data; can be activity based, operational, outcome based, leading indicators, or predictive

**KPI** - a metric that is tied to targets

**Benchmark** - something to compare against

While there are many, hundreds of various metrics that can be used, management should be tied to a handful of key numbers. Again, with the key understanding, they should be tied back to performance.

\*\*\*\* The largest hurdle for most organizations to drive these type of initiatives is the people. On average, a lot of marketing organizations are not ready to implement continuous improvement because they do not have the internal skill sets. Specifically, a lot of marketing organizations can be skewed toward communications - creative, writing, etc. with little emphasis to data and measurement. Marketing, on the whole, needs to seriously ramp up quant skills.

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