



CTO Interview with Anthony Martin, VP Technology and Marketing Services, Diversified Communications

By Danica Tormohlen, SISO Content Director, Publisher and Editor in Chief

Read highlights from our conversation on Dec. 17, 2021 or [watch or listen to the full 30-minute interview](#).

Backstory: Anthony serves as VP Technology and Marketing Services for Diversified Communications. Based in Portland, Maine, he joined the global company in 2007. With offices in U.S., Canada, UK and Australia, Diversified offers a product portfolio that includes exhibitions, conferences, publications and digital products for 15 industry sectors.

Webinars working. Diversified produces 300-400 webinars annually and registration numbers have tripled in the last two years. “We struck a chord with our audiences. Webinars have been a strong asset for Diversified. We’re connecting with people — both watching them live and recorded webinars that are downloaded and watched later. We’re trying to be on the edge of the news that’s happening in our industries and understand what the customer problem is and how can we help solve that.”

Data ownership. “We need to understand what these tech partners are trying to do with our data and how they handle it. Our best approach to this has been to ask the common business questions upfront. People get nervous or feel like there’s a high bar when trying to evaluate a new company and looking at the legal documents, like a master services agreement. You can get bogged down in that, but at the end of the day, there are really only three or four things you need to focus on.”

What’s new in tech stack? “We started working with Grip. We’ve used that to sit alongside some live events and also used it as a standalone for some virtual needs. They have a great AI engine in the background, and it’s been an easy tool to work with. It’s been a good experience for our customers, and I think it’s something that we’ll use more in the future.”

Using customer data for better marketing. “We went to Marketo three years ago as a marketing automation platform. We have that paired up with Salesforce as our CRM and have those tightly integrated. We built our own marketing data mart that aggregates this massive data we get on our customers and prospects and use that to understand what products they’re interested in at what time and what media they want presented to them.”

Social referral tools work. “A few years ago, we started using Gleanin, which is a social referral tool that sits alongside registration and allows people to connect with their

peers and invite them and let them know they're going. We've seen a pretty good lift on some of our products with that. For products that have a stronger community, it seems to work well.”

Where Diversified is investing in tech: Customer feedback. “We've been asking ourselves what are we missing in digital, what are we missing in virtual? Our focus right now is trying to answer that from the customer perspective.”

Tech and business strategies for 2022. “There are three buckets: Information, integration and insight. The information for me is trying to get that customer feedback to help evolve our website presence, the webinars and developing digital products. That's not really a tech strategy per se, maybe more of a business strategy that tech is going to ride along. It seems to be one of the more critical things that could happen in terms of how we use our technology to help serve our customers. That's definitely front of mind for me.”

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