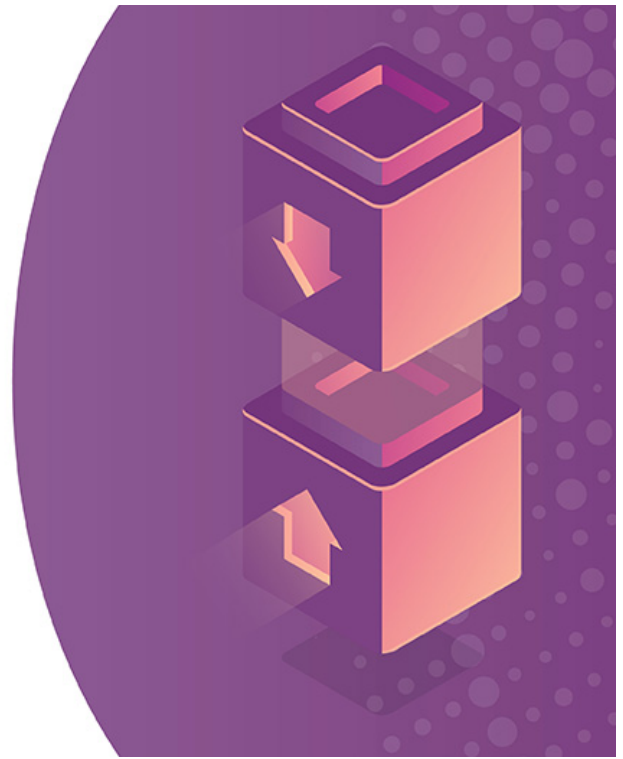




# Navigating TCMA Marketing Service Integrations: Should You BYOV? (Bring Your Own Vendors)



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When companies are looking to upgrade to a [Through Channel Marketing Automation \(TCMA\) platform](#) to resolve their local marketing challenges, they often have ideas about what those solutions should look like. At the outset, bringing your own marketing vendors along with you may seem like a good idea, but it's a big decision that merits careful consideration.

## Considering Vendor Management

If your new TCMA solution handles vendor management from start to finish — including vetting, monitoring and routinely re-evaluating marketing service providers — then bringing all your current vendors with you, or even just a few, may defeat the purpose and dilute the advantages of your new platform. It's helpful to assess the reasons for bringing in existing vendors while you're defining your business requirements case for a TCMA solution, and here's why: The cons typically far outweigh the pros.

The more [marketing campaign tactics](#) you want to offer end-users of your TCMA platform, the more consideration needs to go into whether or not you should bring your own vendors. If a company plans to continue using all or most of its own vendors, then purchasing a TCMA platform may not be the best solution. To maintain and manage those vendor relationships, a company could build an online portal for its retailers and integrate each marketing vendor. That involves day-to-day vendor management and increasing operating costs, without the advantages of automation. Isn't that the old way of doing business? TCMA solutions are designed to help companies reduce overhead, eliminate vendor management and focus on local marketing strategy instead of local marketing fulfillment. The biggest advantage of using a leading TCMA solution is having all the local marketing engagement and

performance data reside on one platform, for timely access to robust analytics and reporting.

## Are Marketing Vendors Irreplaceable?

Different types of TCMA providers cater to different industries and diverse partner networks. For example, TCMA providers that mainly serve high-tech companies are designed for **B2B2B industries**, while TCMA providers that serve insurance, manufacturing, healthcare and telecommunications companies are designed for **B2B2C industries**. Local marketing automation for high-tech companies tends to revolve around email marketing, lead provisioning, deal registration and lead distribution. For companies that target end consumers, TCMA providers offer expertise in both digital marketing tactics and more [traditional marketing tactics](#) like customization for print ads, radio, TV and out-of-home. And some even offer hyper local media buying including planning, ad procurement, insertion, [claims management and funds management](#) for [Co-Op Advertising](#) reimbursement for partners.

Understanding the TCMA provider's capabilities and offerings will help you ask the right questions to determine whether or not it makes sense to keep your existing vendors:

- Is the vendor under an existing contract?
- Is the marketing service the vendor provides irreplaceably unique or specific to your business?
- Is the TCMA provider incapable of managing the vendor?
- Can your internal marketing staff manage quality control for hundreds or thousands of orders per month?

Whether a company decides to bring or keep an existing vendor or two depends largely on the importance of the marketing vendor and the capabilities of the TCMA platform provider. Vendors that rise to that level of importance tend to either make something unique, such as store fixtures and samples, or have long-term contracts. It is a bit more practical to bring a print or premium item vendor than it is to bring a digital vendor. Some TCMA providers won't even consider bringing in any digital vendors due to the amount of work it takes to integrate and incorporate the data. While not impossible, it raises set-up costs, and it adds time and complexity during the launch phase, especially if custom development is required. TCMA buyers should have a clear understanding of the costs and budget requirements involved in bringing or keeping your vendors before signing with a TCMA provider.

## Knowing When to Say Goodbye

It isn't always in a company's best interest to integrate existing vendors into a new, upgraded TCMA platform. Here are a few red flags that indicate it's time to move on:

- Is the marketing service vendor unwilling to collaborate or coordinate with a new TCMA platform provider? When vendors are notified about changes in their clients' marketing technology, some may not be willing or capable of adapting to those changes.

- Does the marketing service vendor lack the necessary technology or resources required to develop internal APIs and take on jobs for fulfillment through automated processes?
- Would integrating with a marketing technology provider be too disruptive for the marketing service vendor's own workflows and processes?
- Does the vendor lack the experience needed to support integrations?

Will retaining a particular marketing service vendor increase the costs of the TCMA solution?

- Will your company have additional overhead costs of managing vendors that aren't integrated within the TCMA platform?
- Does keeping an existing marketing vendor mean your company loses volume pricing discounts on certain marketing tactics? This may be the case if the TCMA provider usually offers hyper-local budgets because of their buying power.
- Will your company lose specific analytics and reporting that would otherwise be inherently available through the TCMA provider?

### **Can You Have the Best of Both?**

Leading TCMA providers offer companies a hybrid model that allows them to take advantage of using their own vendors through the TCMA platform – without the headaches, time and expense of day-to-day vendor management. When a top vendor meets the requirements for integration, a leading TCMA provider can fully integrate that vendor into its own network of Marketing Service Integrations, then the TCMA provider would handle the vetting, monitoring and managing. This allows the company to take advantage of the TCMA provider's more efficient processes, robust analytics and competitive pricing while keeping one or a few of their own preferred marketing service vendors.

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