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Q&A with Gil Allouche, Founder and CEO of Metadata Inc. applying Artificial Intelligence to B2B Marketing helping Small Businesses to Large Enterprises better manage and come up with UTM Tags, A/B Testing, Buying and Segmenting

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Gil Allouche Bio

Gil Allouche is the co-founder and CEO of Metadata.io, where he is disrupting the \$30B+ MarTech market by employing artificial intelligence and machine learning to automate marketing campaign testing and execution, thereby making demand generation more predictable and scalable.

The Metadata.io platform evolved from Gil's experiences hacking various marketing and CRM systems to get the solutions he needed. Prior to founding Metadata, Gil was VP of Marketing at Qubole, a Big Data SaaS startup in Mountain View, CA. Gil has also held senior marketing and product management positions at TIBCO Software, Karmasphere, and 1Yell. Gil earned his Master of Business Administration degree at Babson's F.W. Olin Graduate School of Business.

Gil's past speaking engagements include:

- SXSW 2017 – Accelerator Pitch: <https://youtu.be/7oAVHCpP9ic>
- SaaStr 2017 – AI Startup Panel
- DigitalNOW 2018 – “How AI is Changing Marketing”:

<https://metadata.wistia.com/medias/oye28pyg9x>

CEOCFO: Mr. Allouche, what is the focus today at Metadata, Inc?

Mr. Allouche: The focus for Metadata is help B2B marketing professionals with their technical mundane tasks, and to essentially replace the human factor in technical marketing operations. To give you a little bit of background, today in the B2B marketing world for every company between a small size and a large size, there is anything between thirteen to eighty different marketing technologies they operate day in and day out, with the sole purpose of generating pipeline to their sales counterparts.

The technical tasks have become very technical and very time consuming. There are many different functions that people do better than computers. That includes creative's, strategy, messaging and positioning etc. However, the technical aspect of marketing, like coming up with UTM Tags, A/B testing, buying and segmenting data are much better run by computer and that is what Metadata is focused on.

CEOCFO: Has this been tried before or it is a fairly new concept?

Mr. Allouche: This is a new concept. Until now there were two different paradigms. The first paradigm that was a marketing operation was providing software for people, and people have to operate the software. Therefore, instead of

sending an email and doing that one hundred times, someone came up with a software like HubSpot and Marketo that can send an email one hundred times with one click. However, you still decide what subject line you are going to put there, what is the body and who are you going to send it too. You still have to log in and fill up the entire email to be sent to one hundred people. You need to manually import the list of contacts getting the email, run the A/B test to decide which subject line will be effective etc

The next generation that used AI (artificial intelligence) told you, based on historical data, what you should do next.

Today, the biggest use case for artificial intelligence is insight and importing.

We are doing something that is groundbreaking - using AI to execute campaigns, **instead of humans**.

We have a couple of patents awarded by the US patent office. Just like you have Tesla's self-driving car, we are also applying artificial intelligence for marketing execution. It is not only telling you what to do, but actually doing it on its own and just reporting back what it did. That is the innovation.

“Big enterprises have a very tough and very complex marketing operation to go through, so a platform like ours resonates well with them... Our goal is to keep building the product and take over more and more channels to make it easy for every midmarket business or enterprise to leverage our AI.” - Gil Allouche

CEOCFO: How do you work with a client? What happens when somebody comes to you or they start with your system? What are they getting? What do they need to implement? How does the whole process work?

Mr. Allouche: That is a good question. When we start working with a new customer we spend the first few weeks connecting Metadata to the rest of their existing technologies to learn what worked and didn't work in the past.

For example - Metadata will dive into Salesforce - pull in all the data, enrich it and analyze it to understand what types of customers they were able to closed the largest deals, the quickest deals, who is the buying committee, and what types of channels they sold to successfully in the past. That is the first piece the customer gets.

The next stage is importing all of the marketing mix into the platform. Metadata, the artificial intelligence operator does not know how to come up with new creative new messages or strategies. As I mentioned before, that is what humans do better still. The second piece that you want to do is to import all their collateral, such as white papers, eBooks, webinars, data sheets and case studies to the platform and all the creatives and all the messages and so on and so forth, so the AI has something to play around with, something to experiment with (“Let us try this message with this persona on this channel,” etc).

In the third stage, which usually happens after two to four weeks, is the campaign execution and that's where the fun begins. AI starts coming up with hypotheses. “I think that these fifty campaigns are going to work well,” and it goes ahead and it executes fifty campaigns and it lets them run for a day or two or three days and based on the results it will either eliminate the campaigns and replace them with new campaigns or if the campaign is good, and usually the 20/80 rule applies; if the campaign is good it leads to more projects and extends it. That is what you get in terms of the technology from Metadata. The value is first of all automation, secondly optimization of your marketing mix, as you know what works and does not work and it ultimately executes those campaigns, and three, you get predictability. That is because the results are fairly consistent, because the computer runs thousands of different campaign to reach them so it had a significant percent of the workload.

CEOCFO: Are people that are looking at your services skeptical that it is possible or welcoming the fact that it is available? What do you find?

Mr. Allouche: Mostly, when new customers try the system they are skeptical because the buzz word of artificial intelligence has been used and is being used many times with no merit behind it. We have a few patents and a few artificial intelligence models that we can show for and other companies do not but they still use it in the marketing language.

When I used to be a VP of marketing in a B2B company, I was a customer of a company in this space and I used the predictive model only to find that it did not work at all. It was also a black box, they did not show me exactly what the model did, what are the coefficients, the results of the model; they just made a hocus pocus and then they showed us some results that were irrelevant.

Therefore, because I did not trust any of the vendors myself, I started the company in such a way that we are not a black box. When a customer does not really believe me and says, "Is this really possible, I question it," then I go through a demo. First of all I will show them exactly how the product works. I show them the model. I show them the coefficients. I show them the results and I mostly demonstrate to them that every piece in the platform is transparent. You can preview every step of the way, all the way to executing a campaign.

Secondly - proof from existing customers. The easiest way to close a new customer is to show them the results of a former customer and to tell them to go and talk to them. By doing that you increase the credibility and the trust of the customer.

CEOCFO: *Are your customers giving anything up or are they adding to what they have available?*

Mr. Allouche: The big piece that Metadata is replacing is not technology, but rather the human factor in a marketing operation. We would replace the technical operations part of the agency, for example, that would be focused on computer work, like technical tasks like UTM Tags, A/B testing, uploading the audience and setting up campaigns. We would replace those people and able to scale the results 20x.

Similarly in internal teams, if your people in your team that are working on repetitive technical tasks, we would replace those people. However, there are some functions, like for example, data providers, using facebook directly, facebook ads, LinkedIn ads, Google ads directly; those tools can be replaced. Therefore to answer your question, it is a mix of replacing manual human labor plus some commodity provisions that Metadata already accomplishes in the solution.

CEOCFO: *How long has Metadata been available?*

Mr. Allouche: We have existed as a company for two and a half years. The product has been available since Q1^t 2017.

CEOCFO: *What, if anything, has changed over the past year and a half or so in the product and in your approach? What have you learned as more and more people have been using Metadata?*

Mr. Allouche: Many things! First of all, in terms of the product, over time we are making it more and more independent. The number of campaigns that are being run on the platform have increased exponentially. In 2017 we ran a total of five hundred and fifty campaigns. In Q2 of 2018 we ran fifteen thousand campaigns. Therefore, the model is becoming more and more intelligent and as time goes by the AI can run more and more things on its own. For example, we have some customers who started running on the fifty campaign running platform, and today we run every campaign they have, from brand awareness to lead generation; any possible campaign they had on the platform. In terms of the product changes, we have increased the data, so now we not only have demographic data targeting, but we can also target based on buyer intent from multiple vendors like G2 Crowd and Bombora. We can target based on a technology install base like an HGDATA. Then the reporting has increased and became more sophisticated.

Today we can do very accurate reporting towards who is looking at your campaigns and how is responding to them, who is now making a conversion and making a lead and so on, so we have that additional capability. That is in terms of the product. In terms of the company we learned many things as well. For example, we now know who we are targeting ourselves as a company and who we are not. For example, we are not targeting any B2C customers at the moment, no computer business.

We are only targeting the B2B, because that is our expertise and that is where our data fits. It is a complex sales cycle; it is a more expensive product, not a transactional campaign and so on. Then think about the types of companies we are serving in terms of their size. We are not targeting the small Mom and Pop shops anymore that we worked with two years ago. Today we work with at least a technology startup with an A round investment and all the way to an enterprise like some of our customers, like Nutanix, SugarCRM and Intel. Finally, we have learned that the customer success function that helps the customer be successful on the platform by making sure they are using it properly and pointing them toward the right direction, giving them a little advice and help, goes a very, very long way. Those customers renew and increase their footprint with Metadata.

CEOCFO: *How are you reaching out to potential customers? When you are at an event how does Metadata stand out from the crowd?*

Mr. Allouche: We use our own platform to do targeting. We generate a very high velocity of marketing qualified leads through our own platform. We also attend events and partner. However, because we execute campaigns using third applications, such as connecting to your application to learn what worked in the past, but we also connect to applications to our marketing technology in order to execute.

Of course referrals have been very successful for us as well, where a customer that has been successful are just referring us to new customers. Now in terms of events, the events that we go to are large trade shows like Marketo, Summit, Market or the Inbound Conference. The nature of trying out a thousand different experiments and running them very quickly and seeing which one of them has an impact on your business and which does not guarantees improvements.

Therefore, when we go to events we usually have some sort of example that shows experimentation - like DropMix Gaming System, where you can quickly run music like a DJ without having DJ capabilities and skills. You can shuffle between four different songs and play them at the same time in a nice format. We bring those kinds of games or drop mixes into our booth to give them an idea of what is possible when you use computers verses when you try to do things manually. That usually works pretty well when we are at events.

CEOCFO: *How is business?*

Mr. Allouche: Business is good! Business is growing! We have almost doubled since last year. We are seeing more and more enterprise customers coming to us. Naturally, big enterprises have a very tough and very complex marketing operation to go through, so a platform like ours resonates well with them. Therefore, business has been good. Our goal is to keep building the product and take over more and more channels to make it easy for every midmarket business or enterprise to leverage our AI. We are looking forward to raising more money and running fast in the first half of next year.