



Marketing's Role in Promoting the Adoption of Agtech

Marketing and technology are two topics that I'm asked about frequently. Recently, there has been increased interest in the role of these topics specifically within the context of the agriculture sector. The fact that the agriculture sector has been relatively slow to adopt technology is an interesting subject given timely issues such as sustainability, increasing regulation, feeding the planet, changing populations, etc. Technology continues to advance, yet it's a small percentage of producers/farmers who are interested in being on the cutting edge of technology.

As a marketing leader in Agtech, I thought I'd share some of the questions I'm often asked about this and what my thoughts are.

BY
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Why is the agriculture sector slower in adopting technology?

I attribute it to the fact that adopting technology requires displacing the “known” with the “unknown”. Most producers/farmers need a very good reason to do this. While there will always be those who are quick to adopt innovation, the majority need to see a clear ROI while minimizing financial risk.

What is marketing's role in the promoting the adoption of Agtech?

This is a classic marketing challenge. Marketing needs to know where on the technology adoption curve their customers are. The adoption curve based on the work of Geoffrey Moore and Everett Rogers explains that along a curve there are innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. Many Agtech companies are still marketing innovator or early adopter benefits, for example, marketing the technology to manage a farm completely remotely. Yet, it's an extremely small percentage of buyers who, for example, are looking to manage their farm in the Midwest while spending time in Arizona. Rather, Agtech companies need to market to early and late majority, which make up the bulk of the adoption curve. These adopters are more interested in how technology will improve their day-to-day lives and drive their bottom lines. Benefits such as increased safety or decreased dependency on hard-to-find labour through automation are more meaningful. A recent McKinsey study cited agriculture producers needing to see a 3:1 ROI before considering adopting new technology.



How do I take this into account when developing marketing strategy.

At AGI, we prioritize demonstrating how technology can make producers' jobs easier, safer and more profitable. We do this by offering leading customer experience so that our customer base can as tangibly as possible experience how Agtech will improve their lives. This can be seen in the way that AGI has been restructuring the bin manager and digital portfolio, which will position us to be at the cutting edge of technology change in our grain bin and storage sectors yet offer mainstream benefits. By focusing on the mainstream and not just innovators, marketing has the capability to be a true catalyst of change within the agriculture sector.

