

# HANDBOOK

## 2011 B2B Marketing Advanced Practices

FUEL that powers marketing from  
lead generation to sales conversion

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# B2B Marketing

## Advanced Practices Handbook

FUEL that powers marketing from lead generation to sales conversion

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## B2B Marketing Advanced Practices Handbook

US \$397 / USBN: 978-1-936390-10-6

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# INTRODUCTION

**Welcome to MarketingSherpa's 2011 B2B Marketing Advanced Practices Handbook:** FUEL that powers Marketing from lead generation to sales conversion.

As a B2B marketer, you are likely facing tremendous challenges. Between improving lead quality, managing the complex sale and meeting the needs of your sales team, it can be difficult to determine where your valuable time and resources should be spent, let alone develop a marketing strategy that will contribute to the overall success of your organization.

In order to succeed, it is essential for Marketing to make a measurable contribution to sales pipelines and revenue. The path to achieve this goal is not always clear, which is why we have developed a comprehensive B2B marketing methodology to guide you through a step-by-step process that will elevate marketing effectiveness from lead generation all the way through sales conversion. In this handbook, we will walk you through establishing a detailed B2B marketing strategy to propel your contribution to sales pipelines and revenues.

But first, we must understand what has changed in B2B marketing, what has caused these changes, and why they affect the way we must execute B2B marketing going forward.

## UNDERSTANDING THE EVOLVED B2B MARKETING ENVIRONMENT

Between the recent economic recession and the growth of social media, the B2B marketing environment has experienced dramatic changes.

Marketers have been forced to deliver greater results with limited resources as a result of the economic recession. The recession has also created a level of uncertainty in consumers, which contributes to B2B buying processes becoming more complex.

The introduction and rapid adoption of social media has empowered consumers by making information about organizations' products and services more readily available, allowing consumers to hear from their peers before they hear from you. This may also influence others' purchasing decisions on social media sites. Our brands are no longer being defined only by what we say they are in positioning statements and value propositions, but also by the conversations that are happening about our brands on social media sites.

These colossal changes have increased the challenges that B2B marketers are facing. As demonstrated in the upcoming chart, these challenges are increasing in pertinence to organizations over time.

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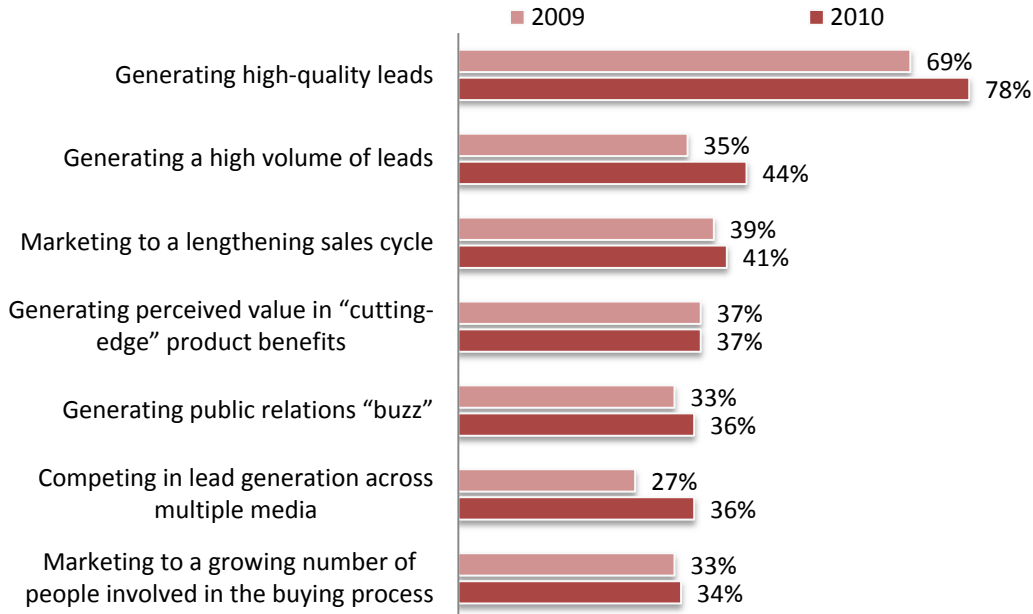
### **Handbooks**

*MarketingSherpa handbooks provide research-supported best practices for improving the performance of marketing programs, and to provide a curriculum for self-instructed and professional career advancement training programs. Handbooks include case studies, methodologies, best practices, worksheets and data to support recommended practices.*

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CHART: B2B MARKETING CHALLENGES BECOMING MORE PERTINENT TO ORGANIZATIONS

Q. Which of the following marketing challenges are currently most pertinent to your organization?



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

The economic climate combined with consumer empowerment through social media has contributed to intensified challenges, expectations and demands of the B2B marketer. The above chart represents the growing marketing challenges B2B organizations have faced from 2009 to 2010, and nearly every challenge elevated in pertinence to organizations in 2010.

Year after year, the greatest challenge to the B2B marketer is generating high-quality leads. Generating a high volume of leads became a greater challenge for B2B organizations in 2010, which is likely a result of the need to produce more leads with limited resources of budgeting and / or staffing.

Every challenge that presents itself is an opportunity, and in this increasingly more demanding role of the B2B marketer, you have the potential to become a true hero to your organization. By revolutionizing your B2B marketing approach, you will play an integral role in the overall success of your business. The perceptions of Marketing by the C-Suite and other internal departments will be elevated because you will be making a measurable contribution to sales pipelines and revenues. Your sales team will finally be happy with the leads they are getting because you will improve overall lead quality with qualification, scoring and nurturing programs. Ultimately, your organization will experience greater revenues.

To achieve success, it is necessary to become more sophisticated than ever before with your marketing practices. You must elevate Marketing's efficiency in all stages of the buying process, from lead generation to sales conversion.

To guide you along the path to success, we have developed the FUEL methodology for B2B marketing, a comprehensive, step-by-step process that will help you address the challenges that are most pertinent to your organization, combat the complex sale, and propel results for years to come.



## FUEL UP... AND DRIVE EFFECTIVENESS

MarketingSherpa's FUEL methodology for elevating B2B marketing effectiveness is broken out into four key steps. In the first step, you will find and attract the right leads for your organization using a mix of lead generation tactics developed for your unique business and audience. Next, you will uncover qualified leads and establish lead scoring calculations and lead nurturing schedules. In the third step, you will establish automated programs to execute lead scoring, nurturing and management programs. Finally, you will lift results with sound marketing analytics.

### MarketingSherpa's FUEL Methodology

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#### Find and attract leads

In this step, you'll learn how to develop an effective lead generation plan based on your company and your audience. First, gather information on your target audience and identify buyer personas. Create a killer value proposition and deliver the message with high-quality content. Then master essential lead generation by selecting the ideal mix of inbound and outbound marketing tactics. Learn the latest tactics for website design, management and optimization.

#### Uncover qualified leads

We all know that not all leads are created equal. In this step, you'll identify qualified leads that are generated from your marketing campaigns, and nurture those leads until they are ready for Sales involvement. First, you must bridge the gap between marketing and Sales with proven alignment strategies. Without their support, it will be nearly impossible for you to accomplish what's next. Identify your Marketing-Sales funnel and what constitutes a qualified lead for your organization. Establish lead scoring processes and calculations. Map out lead nurturing campaigns and manage lead hand-off from Marketing to Sales.

#### Establish automated marketing processes

Now that you have identified what constitutes a qualified lead for your organization and mapped out lead scoring and nurturing programs, it's time to tie it all together with a set of automated marketing functions. By automatically screening leads that are not qualified from your sales team and nurturing them until they are ready to speak with a salesperson, you will effectively increase the volume of highly qualified leads delivered to Sales. This will contribute to sales pipelines and increase overall revenues.

#### Lift results

Once you've implemented a revolutionized B2B marketing plan, it's essential to monitor its progress and identify opportunities to increase efficiency and results. We'll teach you how to conduct sound lead generation analysis and automated marketing process analysis. We have also included special attention to key issues facing the B2B marketer in their daily roles; delivering marketing value to the C-Suite and marketing leadership. In these sections, we'll teach you how to navigate office politics that are common to the B2B marketing role, improving the perceptions of your department by the C-Suite and other internal departments, as well as honing leadership skills that will help you throughout your entire career.

**B2B MARKETING MATURITY ASSESSMENT**

As mentioned earlier, executing this plan and increasing marketing efficiency from lead generation to sales conversion requires a high level of sophistication in execution. Before we begin refining your marketing processes, let's take a quick assessment to determine your current processes. This will enable you to identify the current strengths and weaknesses in your execution.

To complete the worksheet, circle one number in each row that corresponds with the column heading that *best describes* the process you use for each tactic. For example, if your organization has a formal, documented process with thorough guidelines that is routinely performed for overall execution of lead generation campaigns, circle 5 in the first row. If your organization has not begun to formulate a process for this tactic, circle 1. After circling one number in each row, sub-total each column and then combine columns for your total score. Matching this score to the phase shown in the bottom row will determine where your organization is now in the social marketing maturity lifecycle.

<b>B2B Marketing Maturity Process Benchmark</b>	<b>No process or guidelines for performing B2B marketing</b>	<b>Informal process, a few guidelines, sporadically performed</b>	<b>Formal process, thorough guidelines, routinely performed</b>
Overall execution of lead generation campaigns	1	3	5
Qualifying leads before they are passed to the sales team	1	3	5
Nurturing leads that are not qualified until they are ready for sales involvement	1	3	5
Analyzing the performance of lead generation and automated marketing programs	1	3	5
<b>Sub-Totals</b>			
<b>Total</b>			
<b>B2B Marketing Maturity</b>	Trial Phase: 4 - 8	Transition Phase:10-14	Strategic Phase: 16- 20

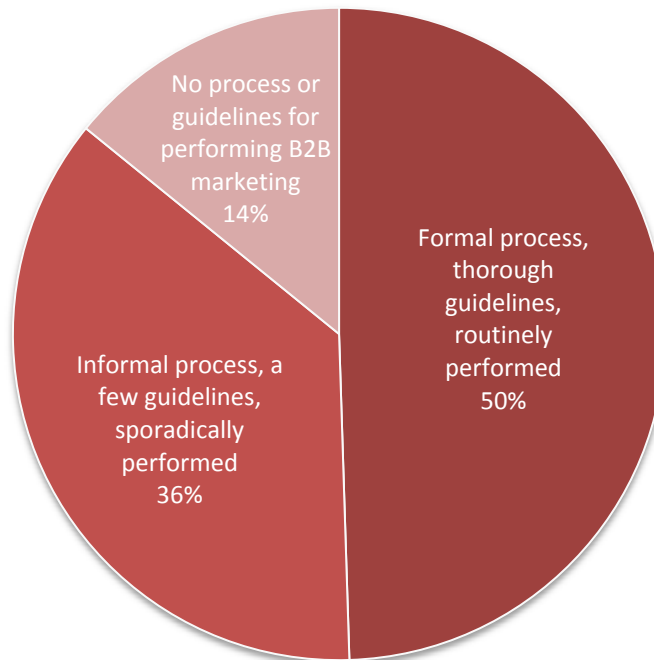
*Note: If necessary, refer to MarketingSherpa's FUEL methodology on the previous page for a more detailed description of the factors critical to B2B marketing success.*

Now that you have an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses and overall sophistication of your marketing execution, let’s take a look at the processes used by the B2B marketers surveyed for our 2011 B2B Marketing Benchmark Study.

Three phases of B2B marketing maturity		
Trial Phase	Transition Phase	Strategic Phase
Organization does not have a process or guidelines for performing B2B marketing	Organization has an informal process and a few guidelines that are sporadically performed	Organization has a formal process and thorough guidelines that are routinely performed

**CHART: B2B MARKETERS SHOWING HIGH LEVELS OF MATURITY IN MARKETING PROCESSES**

*Q. Please select the statement that best describes the processes your organization uses to execute your B2B marketing practices in general.*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

It’s very impressive to see how mature B2B organizations are with their marketing practices. Half of our respondents indicated that they had a formal process for executing B2B marketing practices that they routinely perform, while only 14% of respondents indicated that they had no repeatable process for performing B2B practices.

For an accurate assessment of where your organization stands in comparison to those surveyed for the above chart, imagine all of the processes you are currently using to execute your marketing plans in general.



## CHAPTER 1: FUEL - FIND AND ATTRACT LEADS

The first step in the FUEL methodology is to find and attract leads. In this chapter, you will be guided through a process that will leave you with a clear understanding of the buyer personas that exist in your target audience, your value to them and how to find and attract them as leads for your organization.

The first step is to identify buyer personas, where you will identify the various profiles that exist within your target audience. Next, we'll walk you through developing the killer value proposition for your organization that will differentiate you from your competition.

No matter what tactics you choose to include in your marketing mix, there will be a great need for content. In this chapter, we have dedicated a section to providing you guidance in developing high-quality content to appeal to your unique buyer personas.

There is no shortage of tools for B2B marketers to attract leads for their organizations today. From inbound tactics like search and social media, to outbound tactics like direct mail and print advertising, today's marketer has a lot of options. What combination of tactics is going to generate the ideal lead flow? In this chapter, we'll analyze a number of inbound and outbound marketing tactics as well as the importance of website design, management and optimization to provide a clear description of all the lead generation tools available to you today. We'll also provide key strategies for selecting your mix.

## WHO ARE YOU TARGETING? IDENTIFYING BUYER PERSONAS

In today's market, it is essential for all marketing communications to be focused on the buyer, not the organization. Buyers do not want to be addressed as a mass audience, but as individuals with unique needs, concerns, interests and values. A traditional, one-size-fits-all approach will not be effective. In this section, you will learn how to identify buyer personas, and to identify the key traits of your best, most valuable customers to attract more organizations like them for your own.

A buyer persona is a detailed profile that represents an actual, real-life group of your target audience. It includes common interests, motivations and expectations, as well as demographic and other behavioral characteristics. By establishing buyer personas, organizations are enabled to deliver unique content to various personas that will attract and nurture new and existing leads. Although buyer personas are profiles developed for marketing purposes, they should be based on real-life cases and insights you have received via thorough research.

Buyer personas are sometimes confused with a target market. The key difference is that a target market is a profile typically based on demographics, such as location, company size, annual revenue, etc. Buyer personas are more in-depth profiles that include behavioral characteristics. For instance, your target market will enable you to build a list for an outbound marketing campaign, and the buyer personas will dictate what content is delivered to that list. There are commonly multiple buyer personas that exist within any one target market.

### KEY BUYER PERSONA TRAITS

There are an unlimited number of traits that can be considered in developing buyer personas for your brand. The key is to get inside your audience's mindset to gain a better understanding of their buying processes. By identifying their traits and behaviors, you will be well equipped to deliver them meaningful content and messaging.

To help you get started, we have provided a list of key traits that should be considered below:

- Job title and responsibilities
- Organization size / department size
- Primary market (B2B, B2C, B2B2C)
- Industry
- Location
- Budget
- Key concerns for purchase
- Interests
- Motivators
- Expectations
- Decision-making authority
- Approvals needed for purchase
- Urgency
- Goals
- Familiarity with your product / service
- Key pain points and challenges prospect is facing
- Common validation needed for purchase

Now that you know what to look for, you may be wondering how to get this information. Your organization may have an idea of the key traits of your various buyer personas, but those ideas must be validated by true insights and data.

**HOW TO GET STARTED WITH IDENTIFYING YOUR BUYER PERSONAS**

To get started, use the worksheet below to record any perceptions or ideas that your organization has of its buyer traits and behaviors. Record anything that you have heard internally about your buyers' key motivations, concerns, goals, expectations, etc.

**WORKSHEET: INITIAL PERCEPTIONS OF BUYER PERSONAS**

<b>Initial thoughts and perceptions of buyer personas</b>	
<b>Ideal customer</b>	<b>Worst customer</b>
<b>Additional persona</b>	<b>Additional persona</b>

Now that you have identified your organization's perceptions of its buyers' key traits and behaviors, it's time to get started with your research. This research will either validate the perceptions of your organization, or identify new, valuable truths about your audience.

Members of your sales or customer service teams can serve as excellent resources in this endeavor, as they are in contact with prospects and customers as part of their everyday jobs. Take time to sit with key members of customer-facing departments to get their take on key traits of various buyer personas for your business.

In order to have your organization's buyer personas adopted internally and become part of your company culture, you will need these individuals to buy-in early on. If these individuals feel that their input has contributed to the buyer personas you develop, they will be more likely to support you when rolling out your internal campaigning.

Be sure to get any necessary approvals to request meeting times. Explain that you're developing buyer personas for your target audience to improve the efficiency of your marketing content and messaging, and you know that they will have valuable insights. During these meetings, be sure to ask who your best and worst customers are, as you will need to identify traits for these two personas.

So, once you're ready to begin an interview with a customer-facing employee, what questions should you ask them to help carve out your buyer personas? We have developed the following worksheets to guide you during your internal interviews. There is additional space for you to add your own questions that may be appropriate for your unique business.

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***If you have alignment issues with your Sales department, conducting preliminary interviews with key salespeople to help identify your organization's buyer personas can be an effective first step in bridging the gap.***

*They will likely be pleased and impressed with the initiative you are showing.*

*In addition to interviews with key salespeople, ask if you can listen in on a few sales calls to learn more about your audience and the buying process.*

---



**WORKSHEET: QUESTIONS TO ASK INTERNAL DEPARTMENTS IN DEVELOPING BUYER PERSONAS**

Use the following worksheets to guide your conversations with internal departments to develop buyer personas.

<b>Interview with an in-house salesperson</b>
What have you found to be the top reasons why prospects are seeking our product / service? What problems are they trying to solve?
What barriers exist in their decision-making process?
What objections do you commonly have to overcome?
What are their most important job responsibilities and challenges?
How do they measure success?
Who are our best customers, and why? (Be sure to get names and contact information)
Have you noticed any common traits that exist amongst this group of best customers?
Who are our worst customers, and why? (Be sure to get names and contact information)
Have you noticed any common traits that exist amongst this group of worst customers?

<b>Interview with an in-house customer service representative</b>
Can you please describe the most common expectations of new and existing customers?
What problems do our customers commonly encounter?
What are their primary concerns?
What are their most important job responsibilities and challenges?
How do they measure success?
Who are our best customers, and why? (Be sure to get names and contact information)
Have you noticed any common traits that exist amongst this group of best customers?
Who are our worst, or least desirable customers, and why? (Be sure to get names and contact information)
Have you noticed any common traits that exist amongst this group of worst, or least desirable customers?

Once you have taken inventory on the experiences of your key customer-facing employees, it is also essential to gather information directly from your customers and prospects. Your research should be both qualitative and quantitative. You can start by conducting a series of interviews with customers and prospects. Be sure to include those customers you identified as best and worst customers during your internal interviews in this process.

The following worksheets will guide you during your customer and prospect interviews. We have left additional space for you to add your own questions that may be appropriate for your unique business.

**WORKSHEET: QUESTIONS TO ASK CUSTOMERS AND PROSPECTS IN DEVELOPING BUYER PERSONAS**  
 Use the following worksheets to guide your conversations with customers and prospects to develop buyer personas.

<b>Interview with a customer</b>
What are your most important job responsibilities and challenges?
How do you measure success?
What originally motivated you to look for our service or solution?
What barriers did you encounter in your decision-making process?
What caused delays in your purchasing decision, if any?
What were your key concerns during the decision making process?
Why did you choose us over our competition?

<b>Interview with a prospect</b>
What are your most important job responsibilities and challenges?
How do you measure success?
What has motivated you to consider our product or service?
What (if anything) has prevented you from purchasing our product in the past?
What barriers are you currently encountering or expect to encounter in your decision-making process?
What are your key concerns in your purchase decision?
What are your expectations for our product or service?

Now that you have conducted both internal and external interviews, how do your results compare? Did you find any commonalities or discrepancies? How do the results compare to your initial ideas of your buyer personas?

Whether or not you were surprised with the results of your interviews, you now have solid qualitative data that can be put to good use. But, remember how we said that your research must be qualitative *and* quantitative? Now that you have the qualitative aspect, you must combine that analysis with quantitative data. Start by mining your in-house database to identify any common traits you have for the masses. Customer or prospect surveys can be effective as well, if you have limited data.

Look for common traits for your ideal customers, such as large deal sizes, short timeframes to purchase, most repeat purchases, etc. and compare those traits to what you have learned during your interview process for your ideal customer. The best customers you identified during your internal interview process should be included in this analysis. Then identify common traits for organizations with undesirable traits, such as returns or refunds, smallest deal sizes or longest timeframes to purchase and compare those traits to what you have learned about your worst customers from your interview process. Certainly, the worst customers you identified during your internal interview process will be included in this analysis.

#### SAMPLE BUYER PERSONAS

Now that you are armed with detailed data on the key traits of your buyers, you are ready to begin plotting out your buyer personas. Review the data you have collected from your interviews and your database analysis and / or customer and prospect surveys.

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*Hint: Be sure to keep a detailed record of your research, and keep in mind that you may need to back up your buyer personas off-the-cuff during proposal meetings. Be sure to back each persona up with precise anecdotal evidence mentioning customer and company names, as well as key statistics from your quantitative research.*

---

To get you started, we have developed the following four sample buyer personas for an email marketing solution provider. These are not actual personas for an existing company and have been developed only for the purpose of this example.

Brand, product or service marketed	Sample buyer personas
<p><b>Email marketing software solution</b></p>	<p><b>Ideal customer</b> - The B2C retailer with ample in-house resources, seeking a comprehensive platform to deploy promotional emails to a large list of over 100,000 contacts. They tend to have a solution in place but are seeking a more in-depth product. Their organization has over 500 employees. This buyer “gets it” and has a clear understanding and value for the benefits of the product. This buyer has ample resources both financial and departmental.</p>
	<p><b>Worst customer</b> - The small business owner with limited marketing resources and experience. This buyer thinks email marketing should be inexpensive and they want to deploy messages to a list with fewer than 10,000 subscribers. This buyer is relatively unfamiliar with the benefits of the product over their current free email system.</p>
	<p><b>Additional persona</b> - The B2B marketer with limited resources in house, seeking a cost effective, user-friendly system to deploy monthly newsletters and promotions. This buyer has a clear understanding of the benefits and hopes to make a quick purchasing decision. They may say they “needed a solution yesterday.” Their organization has fewer than 100 employees.</p>
	<p><b>Additional persona</b> - The B2B2C marketer who is fairly educated with the benefits of the product. They often have a solution in-house that they are unhappy with. This buyer has a medium- to large-sized house list of 30,000-100,000 subscribers.</p>

**EXERCISE: DRAFT BUYER PERSONAS**

Now it's your turn. Use the worksheet below to draft four buyer personas based on your findings from your qualitative and quantitative research. One of these personas should be your ideal customer, and one should be your worst customer. Many organizations will be able to determine two additional personas out of their target market. If your research supports fewer than four personas, feel free to leave sections blank.

<b>Brand, product or service marketed</b>	<b>Buyer personas</b>
	<b>Ideal customer -</b>
	<b>Worst customer -</b>
	<b>Additional persona -</b>
	<b>Additional persona -</b>

**PLOTTING THE BUYER PERSONA QUADRANT**

You will need to prioritize the buyer personas you have developed and communicate this prioritization internally. In order to do this, a visual representation of the results of your research can be highly effective.

The buyer persona quadrant will provide a visual representation of your ideal customer profile, your worst customer profile, and any profiles that fall somewhere in-between.

You will identify two values to represent the X and Y axis of your quadrant. These should be the two key traits that separate your ideal customers from your worst customers. They may include knowledge of your product or service (do they *get it?*), available budget, urgency to purchase, motivators, expectations, etc. The ideal customer is positioned in the top right to convey that they have the greatest balance of both values. Plot your additional personas accordingly depending on what values they possess.

**SAMPLE BUYER PERSONA QUADRANT**

The following sample is based on the sample buyer personas we reviewed earlier in this section for an email marketing software solutions provider. These are not actual personas for an existing company and have been developed only for the purpose of this example.

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <b>Potential deal size</b> </div>	<p><b>Additional persona</b></p> <p>The B2B2C marketer who is fairly educated with the benefits of the product. They often have a solution in-house that they are unhappy with. This buyer has a medium to large sized house list of 30,000 to 100,000 subscribers.</p>	<p><b>Ideal customer</b></p> <p>The B2C retailer with ample resources in house, seeking a comprehensive platform to deploy promotional emails to a large list of over 100,000 contacts. They tend to have a solution in place but are seeking a more in-depth product. Their organization has over 500 employees. This buyer “gets it” and has a clear understanding and value for the benefits of the product. This buyer has ample resources both financial and departmental.</p>
	<p><b>Worst customer</b></p> <p>The small business owner with limited Marketing resources and experience. This buyer thinks email marketing should be inexpensive and they want to deploy messages to a list with fewer than 10,000 subscribers. This buyer is relatively unfamiliar with the benefits of the product over their current free email system.</p>	<p><b>Additional persona</b></p> <p>The B2B marketer with limited resources in house, seeking a cost effective, user-friendly system to deploy monthly newsletters and promotions. This buyer has a clear understanding of the benefits and hopes to make a quick purchasing decision. They may say they “needed a solution yesterday.” Their organization has less than 100 employees.</p>

**Education / understanding of key benefits**



**EXERCISE: DRAFT YOUR BUYER PERSONA QUADRANT**

Please use the following template to plot the buyer personas you have identified into your quadrant. Some organizations choose develop names for these personas, and you should feel free to identify these groups by names as well. For example, instead of using “additional persona” as a name, feel free to develop a title that describes that persona well. Just be sure to clearly identify which persona meets your ideal customer profile.



You now have a clear understanding of the buyer personas that exist within your target market. You have also identified the key traits of your ideal customer, and mapped out your buyer persona quadrant.

These personas will serve as the foundation of your revolutionized marketing plan. They will guide you in all of the key decisions you will be making in its development, starting with the value proposition.

## CREATING A KILLER VALUE PROPOSITION

Your value proposition should define the key reason why you become the best choice for your ideal customer. It should clearly communicate what your company does and the unique benefits you have over the competition.

You may have an existing value proposition for your company, or you may be starting from scratch. Either way, the exercises in this section can serve as a guide for improving an existing value proposition or developing a new one.

When developing a value proposition, you want to keep it simple. Getting lost in hundreds of possible details to include in your value proposition is an easy practice to slip into; however this will have little gain at the maximum cost of time. You may find that your company requires a unique value proposition if you have differentiating products. For example, a software developer may have one value proposition for their client server application and one value proposition for their Web-based solution.

In the interest of keeping it simple, there are only two questions you need to consider when developing your value proposition:

1. What does our company do?

Your value proposition should offer a clear and concise explanation of the product and / or service your company provides.

2. Why should buyers that meet our ideal customer profile buy from us and not one of our competitors?

You need to include at least one key differentiator in your value proposition that identifies what makes your solution unique and better than your competition for your ideal customer. This should be an area in which your company really excels. Key differentiators may include your product being the best value, best quality, greatest luxury, a must-have, etc.

### SAMPLE VALUE PROPOSITIONS

We have provided the following samples to familiarize you with clear, concise value propositions. These are not actual value propositions and were developed for the purpose of these examples only.

*“(Company A) executes proven tactics that guarantee an increase in qualified traffic from organic search”*

- *SEO agency*

*“(Product B) is a premium accounting software solution that enables organizations to streamline all of their accounting processes from payroll to receivables.”*

- *Accounting software solution provider*

*“(Company C) is the office supply solution standard and a true must-have for today’s busy organization.”*

- *Office supply provider*

*“(Company D) offers the fastest printing available for large printing projects.”*

- *Printing services provider*

### CHALLENGE: THE CONCISE VALUE PROPOSITION

You may be tempted to elaborate on all of the things your company does well. We’re glad that you have such great enthusiasm for your company, but your value proposition must be clear and concise. To keep you focused on creating an effective value proposition, we challenge you to write your value proposition in no more than one sentence.

*Note: We have included multiple entry spaces to allow you to create concise value propositions for a variety of products or services you may offer.*


Now that we know your value proposition is both clear and concise, keep in mind that it should be tested over time. A great way to test your value proposition for effectiveness is through an A/B split test. Value propositions can be tested on landing pages, in email campaigns, pay-per-click ads, etc. Measure your results based on conversion rates, and their ability to convert new leads that meet your ideal customer profile.

At this point, you are armed with the building blocks for developing high-quality content. You have identified your buyer personas including your ideal customer. You have also developed a clear and concise value proposition that explains what your company does and why buyers that meet your ideal customer profile should buy from you, and not your competition. Let's move on into content development.

**SECTION SUMMARY: BUYER PERSONAS AND VALUE PROPOSITION**

Please take a few minutes to complete the assessment for these sections.

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1. Name at least four key traits that should be considered in developing buyer personas.

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2. Name the different parties you should interview when developing buyer personas.

*Hint: There are at least four.*

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3. What are the two questions that your value proposition should answer?

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4. What are the two key traits that your value proposition should have?

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*If you were unable to answer any of the above questions, please review the previous sections again before moving on.*

As part of our 2011 B2B Marketing Benchmark Study, we asked nearly 1,000 B2B marketers what they have found to be the best practices in developing marketing content. The top response is an excellent tactic to reduce the amount of time and resources required to develop content -- repurposing and reformatting existing content.

Many organizations have a library of marketing content at their disposal including press releases, blog posts, whitepapers, etc. This content typically only reaches a small percentage of an organization's target audience, so it makes perfect sense to reformat and repurpose this content to reach new members of your target audience.

Recruiting authors internally from other departments can be a tactic that is not always well received by individuals outside of the marketing department. Despite the sometimes challenging task of recruiting new authors, 48% of B2B organizations still find this to be an effective tactic (MarketingSherpa's *2011 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report*).

Outsourcing to a consultant or agency has not been rated as a highly effective tactic, as less than a third of study participants found this to be effective. Developing marketing content requires an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the brand and its target audience and, at times, can be difficult for a consultant or agency to acquire. Only when an organization finds a consultant or agency that is a good fit for their organization can this be an effective means of producing marketing content and messaging.

#### THE NEW RULES OF CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

To guide you in your content development process, you must research, innovate and personalize when possible and test.

#### **Research**

We know you have already conducted ample research to develop your buyer personas and value proposition, but now you need to identify what types of content and subject matter are going to resonate with that audience and attract more prospects that meet your ideal customer profile.

During your research, you will need to uncover answers for the following questions:

- What subject matter is going to be both interesting and valuable to our audience?
- What topics does our audience want to learn about?
- Of the topics our audience wants to learn about, are there any topics that do not have information readily available? Are there any opportunities for us to fill a void?
- What language do they use in their discussions related to our product or service?
- What formats do they prefer? (Articles, videos, podcasts, images, etc.)

Search engines and social media sites can serve as excellent tools in conducting this research. By analyzing keyword search volumes and trends, as well as monitoring behaviors of your audience on social media sites, you will be able to identify answers to all of the above questions.

This research should begin by developing a list of targeted key terms. This list should include key terms related to your:

- **Products**
- **Services**
- **Industry sectors**
- **Technologies**
- **Competitors**
- **Brands**
- **Key issues**
- **Industry experts**
- **Key employees**
- **Recent press releases**
- **Key needs and concerns of your audience**

Once you have a list of keywords that are relevant to your company and audience, you can start conducting keyword research and monitoring social media conversations about those topics.

There are a vast number of online tools available to assist with the monitoring process, both free and paid. Some popular free monitoring tools include socialmention.com, blogpulse.com, and free keyword research tools provided by major search engines. Take some time to find and familiarize yourself with your favorite online monitoring tools. Other research methods that can be used in this step include surveys, phone interviews, focus groups, etc.

### **Innovate**

You will use the research you have conducted to determine subject matter, format, etc., but you also need to leave some room for innovation. After all, not all buyers always know exactly what they want, right?

There is a famous quote from Henry Ford that states:

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*"If I had asked what my customers wanted, I would have made a faster horse."*

- Henry Ford

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We don't want you to be afraid to get creative with your content development, and the best practice is to balance this creativity with key insights you have learned from your research. For example, if Henry Ford's customers asked him for a faster horse, the fact that they desired to get to where they wanted to go faster may have helped him with his innovation.

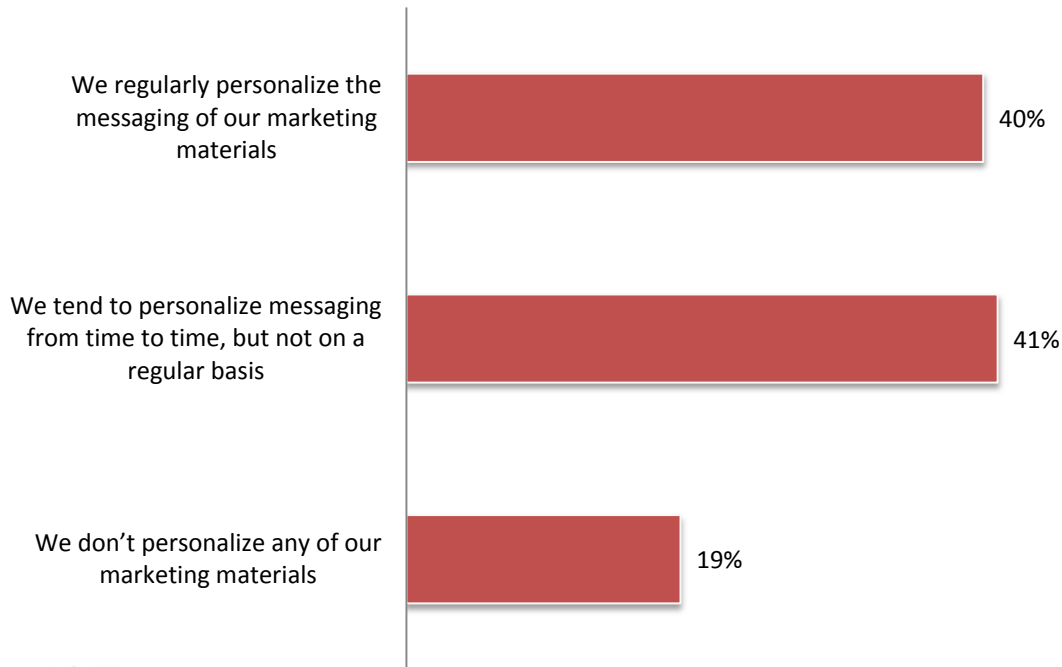
Your content needs to be centered on your audience, but only you understand your company's goals and value proposition. You're going to need to balance what your audience wants with your innovations and what you need to communicate.

## Personalize

Personalization is becoming a popular tactic to improve the results of various marketing collateral by B2B marketers. In our 2011 B2B Marketing Benchmark Study, we asked study participants about the level of personalization they applied to their marketing materials. The results are below.

### CHART: THE PERSONALIZATION OF MARKETING MATERIALS

Q. *What level of personalization do you apply to your marketing materials?*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

The vast majority of B2B organizations are using some level of personalization in their marketing materials, whether it is on a high level of regularly personalizing marketing materials, or a low level of personalizing messaging, but not on a regular basis. The personalization of content and collateral aims to improve response rates for various marketing campaigns, and B2B organizations are capitalizing on this effective marketing tactic.

Personalization can be applied to many types of marketing content. You can personalize subject and address lines in email messages and newsletters. Direct mail letters or postcards can be personalized. You can create personalized Web pages, or even conduct a webinar specifically for the employees of one company.

You should personalize your content whenever possible, but personalization is only one part of the solution to making your content more centric to your audience. If you are developing a piece of marketing content that cannot be personalized, it can still be centric to your audience with the subject matter alone.

**Test**

By balancing research with innovation, and using personalization when possible, you will be able to develop effective content for your audience. You will find that some content formats and subjects will be more effective than others. In marketing, you’re constantly testing the effectiveness of your lead generation campaigns, and your content should be no different.

To get you started, we have provided the following list of various content types that can be used for marketing purposes:

- Articles
- Case studies
- Whitepapers or reports
- Webinars
- PowerPoint presentations
- Blog posts
- Press releases
- Customer testimonials
- Videos
- Podcasts
- Buyers manuals or kits
- Cost estimating tools / calculators
- Email newsletters
- Interviews
- Product brochures or catalogs

**EXERCISE: TAKING INVENTORY: YOUR LIBRARY OF MARKETING CONTENT**

We’d like you to take a few minutes to take inventory of what marketing content you have in-house that can be reformatted and repurposed to attract new ideal customers for your business.

Make sure all of the content you choose to repurpose meets your prospects key interests, and balances the goals of your organization.

<b>Existing content for reformatting and repurposing</b>	
1.	9.
2.	10.
3.	11.
4.	12.
5.	13.
6.	14.
7.	15.



## CASE STUDY: COMBINING EMAIL, SEARCH, SOCIAL AND PR FOR A CONTENT MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Case Study ID: 31662

Location: MarketingSherpa Member Library

Summary: Suitcase.com, an online luggage retailer, wanted to draw more blog traffic. Learn how they created a premium report based on a survey of e-newsletter subscribers and captured 5x more blog traffic. Receive six key tactics to combine the strengths of email, search, social media and PR.

### CHALLENGE

John Ebb, CEO, Suitcase.com, and his team wanted to attract more visitors to the company's blog. They believed that doing so would further establish authority in the luggage retailing business and educate shoppers on the types of luggage they needed.

But the team didn't want to spend money on advertising -- but rather wanted to use existing marketing channels and assets to attract a relevant audience.

### CAMPAIGN

To achieve this goal, the team developed a multichannel campaign that combined the targeted audience of its existing email database, insights from search marketing and the reach of public relations and social media:

Here are six tactics the team used to align key marketing channels for the promotional campaign:

#### **Tactic #1. Use search metrics to research potential report topics**

The team primarily used search engine keyword analysis to determine the report's topic.

Using resources such as Google's free AdWords Keyword Tool the team looked at search volumes for "luggage," "suitcase" and other related phrases and keywords.

One trend became clear: The airline industry's new travel restrictions and baggage fees had generated a lot of search engine traffic. High search volume for phrases such as "baggage restrictions" and "travel bags" helped the team uncover a demand for relevant information.

- Check your competitors

Ebb wanted the report to differentiate Suitcase.com as an expert resource. The team checked competitors' websites and press mentions for similar content. Having found none, team members saw an opportunity to establish themselves as experts.

## **Tactic #2. Build an online survey**

The team used a third-party tool to build and host the survey, consisting of multiple choice questions, like:

- "Has the increase in airline baggage fees caused you to do any of the following?"

- Pack lighter
- Check fewer bags
- Consider related features when buying luggage
- None of the above

- "Which of the following factors have the greatest influence on your luggage purchase?"

- Weight
- Size and dimensions
- Warranties
- Features/functionality
- Price
- Style
- Other

The team also asked which suitcase features – such as wheels or exterior pockets – were most important in respondents' purchasing decisions.

By compiling the answers to these questions, the team created a report to establish its authority on luggage and attract press articles about the change in travelers' behavior. This report would be the asset to ultimately drive traffic to Suitcase.com's blog.

## **Tactic #3. Send survey request to email database**

The topic you select will, of course, be instrumental in determining the report's relevance to your audience, but so will the pool of people you survey. Make sure the people you ask are the most relevant to your needs.

"We wanted to make sure the people we sent it to were interested in luggage...and not someone who just liked to fill out surveys," Ebb says.

In this case, the team's email subscribers were a readily-available, highly-relevant audience to query. The report was based entirely on responses captured from an emailed survey request. Your email subscribers are likely a highly-relevant resource to meet your reports' needs.

- More is not always better

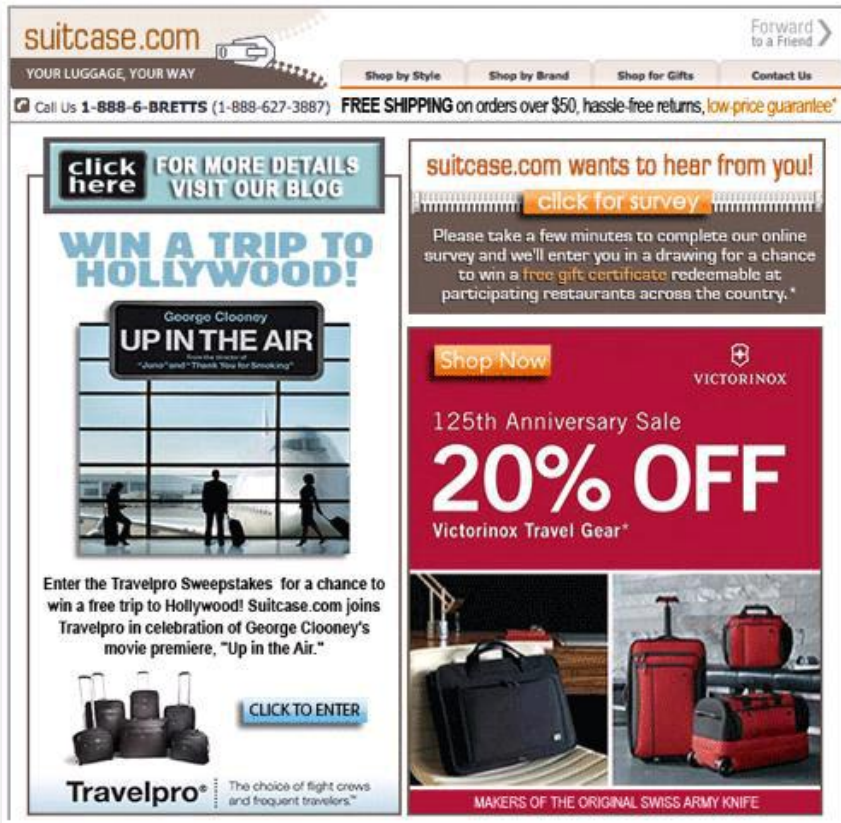
You want to avoid sending the survey request to an exceedingly broad audience. Doing so will skew results and make your data less valid and compelling. In this case, Ebb's team only sent the survey link to its email

database.

- Include an incentive

To help spur responses, the team announced it would enter all respondents into a drawing to win a free dinner for two. Four prizes were awarded.

EXAMPLE: SUITCASE.COM EMAIL WITH SURVEY INVITATION



**Tactic #4. Host report download on a dedicated landing page**

The team compiled the survey's results into a nine-page PDF download, which included:

- Cover page
- Table of contents
- Executive summary with methodology and key findings
- Stats and charts
- Analysis and quotes from the team
- Description of each company involved

The report proved to be the type of content journalists love. It was rich with data points, quotes and analysis, and was light on self-promotion. Furthermore, the report’s nine pages were succinct and easy to understand.

- Host landing page on blog

The team featured key stats and two colorful charts on a landing page for the report's download. The team designed the page so visitors could download the report, browse Suitcase.com or follow the team through its blog, Twitter account or Facebook page.

EXAMPLE: SUITCASE.COM LANDING PAGE



Tactic #5. Pitch report to media outlets

The team did not promote the report through advertising or even to its email newsletter subscribers. Instead, it strove to improve the report's availability through natural search by attracting links and press mentions.

Here are two tactics they used:

- Press release

The team created a well-optimized press release and disseminated it through a popular online newswire service. The release included:

- Relevant keywords, such as "baggage fees" and "luggage"
- Links to Suitcase.com and the report's landing page
- Key stats

- Blogger and media outreach

The team also targeted approximately seven travel bloggers and 43 national publications to pitch. The team pitched each publication individually, tailored its messages to each publication's focus and avoided sending mass emails. Be sure to personalize your pitches to specific writers whenever possible.

#### **Tactic #6. Use social channels, even if you don't have them**

Ebb's team had experimented with Twitter and Facebook but had yet to develop a solid following. Realizing that social media was a great way to syndicate content and attract links and traffic, the team used the social media channels of its partners, all of which had strong followings.

The team brought relevant partners on board by asking them to highlight content marketing strategy, rather than the results of the report itself. This angle resonated with both the team's PR and marketing agencies, which wrote about the effort for their blogs and social media outlets.

The key here is to pitch the idea to your partners in a context that's relevant to their audiences. The team could not have asked its PR agency to blog about the travel report's findings alone – the subject would have been irrelevant. However, the team asked the agencies to focus on its PR and content strategy, which applied to their audiences.

#### **RESULTS**

Blog traffic from January through April increased 518%, compared to the same period in 2009, as the report generated third-party blog posts and press mentions. Traffic from search engines increased at an even higher rate.

"It was a huge success," Ebb says.

Additionally:

- The report's landing page had a 16% lower bounce rate than the site's average
- 29% of report downloads came from referring websites
- 22% of downloads were referred by search engines

SECTION SUMMARY: DELIVERING THE MESSAGE WITH HIGH-QUALITY CONTENT

Please take a few minutes to complete the assessment for this section.



1. What was the top rated tactic by B2B marketing professionals for content development?

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2. Can you identify the new rules of content development?

*Hint: There are at least four.*

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3. Name at least three questions that you need to answer during your content research.

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4. List at least five different types of content that you can develop for your business.

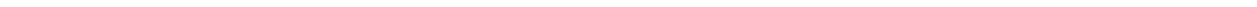
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*If you were unable to answer any of the above questions, please review the previous sections again before moving on.*



By now you have all of the building blocks for a highly effective lead generation campaign: Your buyer personas and your ideal customer profile, your concise value proposition, and high-quality content that is interesting and valuable to your audience. Let’s continue on to mastering essential lead generation.

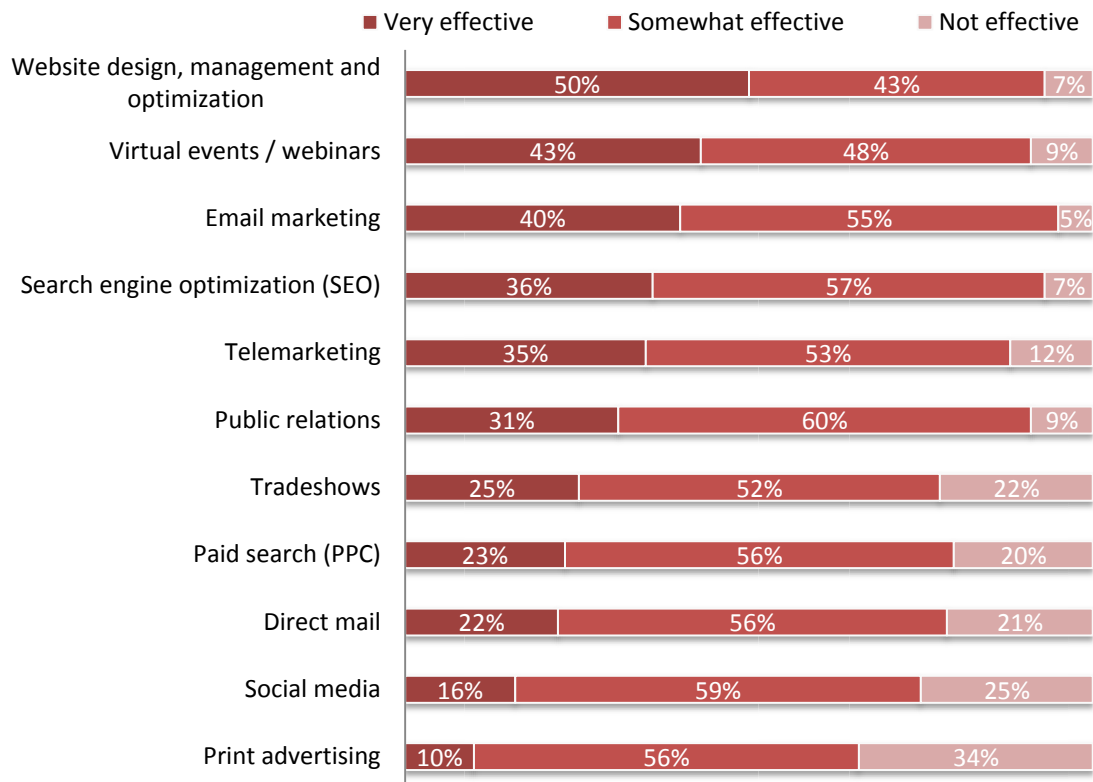
## MASTERING ESSENTIAL LEAD GENERATION

Today’s B2B marketer has many options to generate leads for their business. Between email marketing, direct mail, search engine marketing, social media and more, it can be challenging to determine what mix of tactics is going to be the most effective for your business.

In this section on mastering essential lead generation, we’ll review the effectiveness of B2B marketing tactics, identify average budget allocation, take a look at each tactic in detail, and guide you in selecting your ideal marketing mix.

### CHART: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF B2B MARKETING TACTICS

Q. Please indicate the effectiveness of the following marketing tactics for your organization.



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

There is a growing trend of utilizing inbound marketing tactics that is demonstrated in the above chart. The top two tactics are inbound and two of the three least effective tactics are outbound.

The top-rated tactic is website design, management and optimization, partly due to the growing popularity of inbound marketing tactics. Inbound tactics like search and social media drive traffic back to the hub, or an organization’s website, for conversion. With an increased level of inbound traffic, even marginal gains in

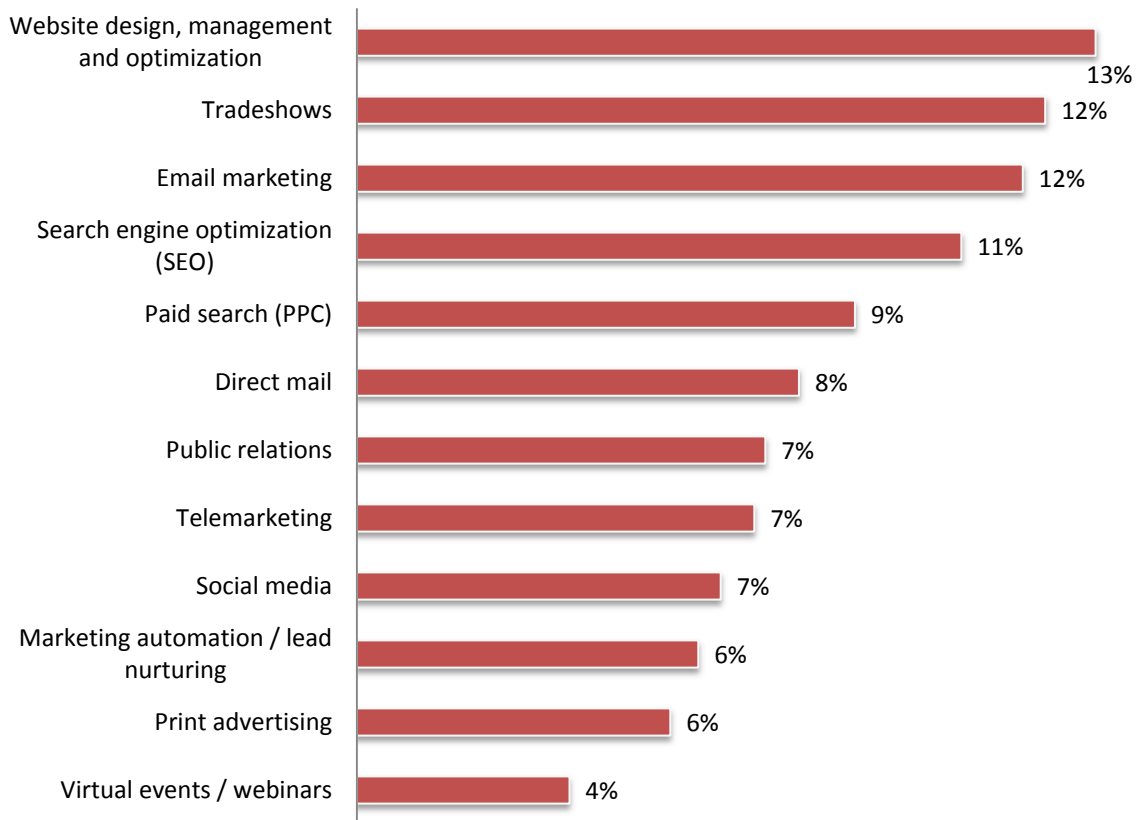
website conversion rate can have a great impact on the number of leads generated and an organization’s and bottom line.

Social media is undervalued in terms of effectiveness — a result of the infancy of this marketing tactic. As B2B marketers become more mature with their social marketing practices, perceptions on the effectiveness of this tactic will improve.

Now that you are familiar with what tactics have been rated as the most effective, let’s see how that translates into the overall allocation of the B2B marketing budget.

**CHART: THE ALLOCATION OF B2B MARKETING BUDGETS**

*Q. Approximately what percentage of your marketing budget is allocated to each of the following tactics – not including personnel?*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
 Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

Website design requires the specialized skill set of an experienced Web designer and optimization expert. Such services can be costly to an organization. This is reflected by the above chart where website design, management and optimization represent a greater percentage of marketing budgets on average than any other tactic. Since this was also rated as the most effective tactic overall, it is apparent that organizations and prepared to invest in it.



A number of significant expenses are required when participating in trade shows, including travel, booth rental, marketing to drive booth traffic, etc., making this tactic a likely candidate to utilize a good portion of the marketing budgets of participating organizations.

Email marketing is commonly viewed as a cost effective marketing channel, however that should not imply that significant investments in this tactic are uncommon. Expenses in email marketing include list rental, email deployment programs, email deliverability services and list building initiatives, to name a few.

Now that you have an understanding of industry averages for the most effective B2B marketing tactics and the average allocation of B2B marketing budgets, take a few minutes to evaluate your current situation. How does your mix and budget allocation compare to industry averages? Are you happy with the revenue performance of all of your marketing channels? Which channels do you think you can improve? Which are you thinking about dropping and which can you not live without? The next exercise will help you map out these details of your current marketing mix.

**EXERCISE: PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF CURRENT MARKETING MIX**

Be sure to complete this exercise in detail, as it will serve as the initial building block for marketing performance evaluation.

Marketing channel (email, direct mail, search, social media, etc.)	Annual spend	Percent of annual budget	Overall performance in annual revenue generation (Excellent? Average? Needs improvement?)
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	
	\$	%	

## INBOUND TACTICS

The term inbound marketing refers to marketing strategies and tactics that increase the visibility of a company’s website to prospects that are researching and shopping for a solution. Inbound marketing tactics include search engine optimization, pay-per-click, and social media.

The use of inbound marketing for lead generation is growing in popularity amongst the B2B marketing community because of its reputation for generating qualified leads at a low cost. On any given day, consumers are inundated with outbound, interruption-based advertisements such as TV and radio commercials, billboards, sales calls, direct mail and print ads. Because of this overabundance of daily advertising, consumers are becoming less reactive. They are also using solutions to avoid advertisements all together such as DVR or TiVo, caller ID and satellite radio.

Because the performance of outbound tactics may be declining for organizations, strategies are shifting to include a focus on inbound marketing tactics. While this will often generate improved results, it’s important to consider the benefits and challenges of inbound marketing before shifting strategies.

### THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF INBOUND MARKETING

Benefit	Challenge
When executed efficiently, inbound marketing can generate highly qualified leads.	Without a plan or strategy, efforts in inbound marketing can be lost.
Inbound marketing tactics tend to be cost effective.	Although inbound tactics tend to be cost effective, they are not free. Without an adequate budget, results may be weak. As with the testing of any new tactic, initial test budgets are a risk.
Inbound marketing increases the visibility of your website for prospects that are already looking for a solution.	Prospects who have a need for your solution but are unaware that your solution exists may not find you proactively.
Some inbound tactics require little time to implement.	Without consistent, strategic execution after implementation, results may be weak.
Inbound marketing tactics can improve reputation and PR.	Depending on the organization, it can be challenging to sell an inbound marketing plan internally.

Because of the benefits and challenges of inbound marketing, we recommend a balanced approach that combines a mix of both inbound and outbound marketing tactics that are effective for your business and your audience.

In this section on inbound marketing, you’ll receive information on the best tactics in search and social media. You will also be provided with case studies so you can see these tactics put to action.

## VIRTUAL EVENTS / WEBINARS

Virtual events and webinars present tremendous opportunity to the B2B marketer. Rated as the second most effective B2B marketing tactic overall, and the least expensive, marketers have the opportunity to generate maximum returns from this channel.

A webinar is a meeting, presentation or training that is conducted online through a Web conferencing tool. A virtual event is like a webinar but intended to include a large number of participants, and is often marketed as an online conference, trade show or summit. Both events offer convenience by eliminating the cost and hassle of traveling, while enabling organizations to engage in professional, real-time conversations with their prospects and customers.

At MarketingSherpa, we regularly execute webinars based on our benchmark studies and best practice handbooks. We asked our own Justin Bridegan, Marketing Manager, about his process for developing an effective strategy for a webinar we conducted on email relevance and deliverability. His response is included in the following article.

### SIX STEPS FOR CREATING AN EFFECTIVE WEBINAR STRATEGY

Fellow marketing managers, commiserate with me for a moment. I'm sure you've been in a similar situation. You're given a new marketing initiative that you know little to nothing about. For some it might be Twitter. For others, maybe landing page optimization. My intimidating hill to climb was the webinar.

While preparing for today's MarketingSherpa webinar about email relevance and deliverability, and researching for the past couple of months on webinar creative practices, it became more evident to me that a clear marketing strategy was needed in order to produce better webinars in the future.

Highlighted below are the six tactics that I found successful for creating a clear webinar strategy and currently impact the way I plan, create, and promote MarketingSherpa webinars.

#### **Step #1. Know your deadlines and deliverables**

Early communication with the sponsors, clients, and presenters is key. Email them and introduce yourself laying out a timetable for future meetings and deadlines. Once you know the key dates and information (webinar date, presenters, and topic), work backwards from the date of the webinar and set up target dates for completion. Important dates to remember include:

- Landing page setup and review
- Launch calls
- Presentation deadlines
- Dry run-through

I highly recommend you set up a launch call to review these deadlines and discuss any concerns as well as present an overall webinar outline for a suggested topic.

#### **Step #2. Map out an effective marketing plan**

Once you have confirmed the target dates and deliverables, you can begin to create a marketing plan. This plan should include your plans on promoting the event (email, banner ads, social media) along with key dates and deadlines. The difference between a good plan and much better plan is in the details. The more

specific you can be with target audience, goals, and call to action, the more effective your plan will be. When this is completed, send it to all the parties involved (including your sponsors and presenters if applicable) so they can see the plan details and discuss plan specifics.

### **Step #3. Create relevant webinar copy for target audience**

Relevancy is the key. If your audience feels that the webinar subject and email copy is relevant to their needs then you will be more successful in engaging prospects. As Flint McGlaughlin, Managing Director (CEO), MECLABS always says:

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*“Clarity always trumps persuasion.”*

*-Dr. Flint McGlaughlin  
Managing Director (CEO) MECLABS*

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Shy away from vague statements like “leading,” “best” and “most.” Be specific. For example, “Homepage Design: The five most common pitfalls and how to overcome them” Subject titles and copy that are specific may be enticing to a smaller audience, but most of the time this audience is highly interested and therefore a better lead. Always include a good call-to-action and use this line of thinking when creating copy, “If I am the ideal prospect, why should I attend your webinar?”

### **Step #4. Apply marketing promotions across all channels**

Using a number of highly targeted email blasts from in-house and sponsor lists, along with banner ads, you can bring in a significant amount of attendees. However, when marketing for our webinar, "2011 Top B2B marketing Practices: From Lead Generation to Marketing Automation," it was the social media activity (Twitter, LinkedIn and blogs) that drove an additional 200-250 attendees within a week of the webinar. When Tweeting, make sure to begin to establish the Twitter hashtag you plan to use to live Tweet during the webinar.

Many companies do a number of webinars a month and using every avenue possible to create buzz is crucial to a webinar's success. I've found that the "sweet spot" for marketing is two weeks to the day before the event.

### **Step #5. Preparation precedes power – practice and execution of the webinar**

No matter what webinar platform you use (GoToWebinar, WebEX, ON24) it is imperative to learn the basics of these programs before you begin using them. Spend some time watching the “best practices” training presentations, and reading the FAQ and how-to sections many of these platforms offer.

Knowing the tips and tricks of how each of these platforms function will be critical to avoiding “uh-oh” moments. Familiarize yourself with the important functions, like polls, registration questions, follow-up emails, and reminders.

Also, familiarize yourself with Twitter. Establishing a Twitter hashtag, and having at least one person from your company live Tweeting during the webinar, is a great way to drive conversation and interaction and also gauge the sentiment of your audience in real-time.

*Bottom Line: Your preparation will give you the power you need to execute the webinar and the practice will give you the peace of mind.*

#### **Tactic #6. Follow up and review – continuing the conversation**

Once the webinar has concluded, it’s important to keep the conversation going. Sending a follow-up email containing the slide presentation and any special offer material you promised is only one part of the conversation. The second important part is keeping them engaged with other webinars, articles, books, classes and events that apply to the topic of the webinar. Think of Amazon, “Those who attended a webinar like you also found this interesting...”

It’s also important to review how the webinar went. Spend an additional five to ten minutes getting feedback from the speakers and monitoring the Twitter hashtag after the webinar concludes. This feedback will help you in making improvements in future webinars.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media applications and websites allow for the publishing and sharing of user generated content and discussions. Examples of social media include social networks, blogs, microblogs, multimedia sharing sites and games.

B2B marketers are using social media to market their business by finding and engaging directly with prospects and customers, and sharing content through social media. These interactions portray human traits of a corporate entity, or humanize the brand. By humanizing brands, organizations are able to build trust, manage their reputations and generate leads that meet ideal customer profiles for their organization.

The key to success with social marketing is to take a strategic approach. Without a comprehensive strategy, it will be very difficult for any organization to produce great results.

Because developing such a strategy can be extremely challenging, MarketingSherpa has developed a method for mapping an effective social strategy, called the Social Marketing ROAD Map. By using this practical methodology to develop a strategy, it gives marketers the ability to make winning decisions. "ROAD" is an acronym for:

## Social Marketing ROAD Map

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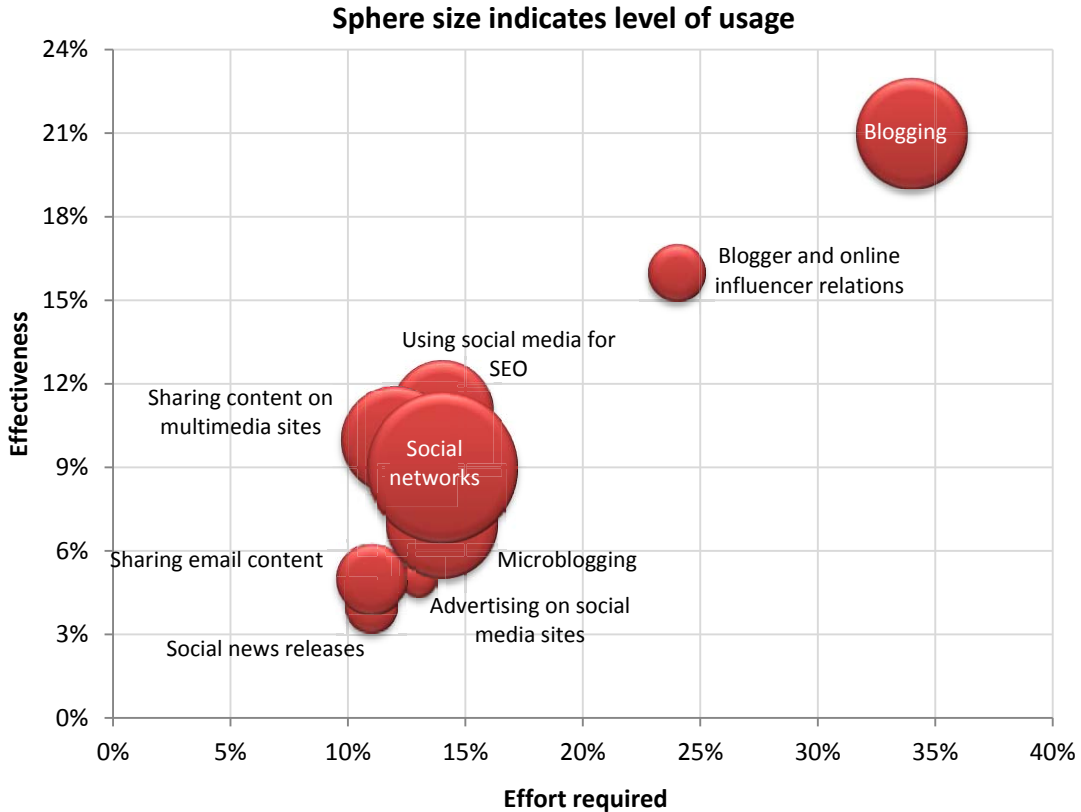
- Research** **Gather intelligence on target audiences, social use and competition.**  
Profile your target audiences and social characteristics. Monitor dialog. Benchmark brand popularity, share of voice and other qualitative and quantitative social metrics. Assess your organization's existing resources, communities and digital assets.
- Objectives** **Define objectives aligned with target audiences and social metrics.**  
Achieving hard, measurable and targeted objectives is the only way to win over social marketing skeptics who control the budgets at your organization. Segment, select and prioritize target audiences by social status. Align objectives with metrics traceable to financials like ROI, cost-per-lead and sales conversions rather than qualitative metrics such as sentiment.
- Actions** **Create a social marketing strategy with a tactical plan of action.**  
Plot a course of action toward achieving the desired outcomes. Identify social marketing tactics, implementation timetables, campaigns and best practices, roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures, and budgets your strategy will require. Define your social marketing architecture – the pathways for connecting target audiences and conversations to content hubs, landing pages and conversion points.
- Devices** **Select platforms by their tactical effectiveness and architectural fit.**  
An effective strategy is expected to outlive the brief lifespan of today's popular social platforms. Therefore, your ROAD Map to this point has been technology brand-agnostic. But now is the time to identify, assess and select the appropriate social platforms (Devices) that effectively fit into your current social marketing architecture.

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*For a detailed guide in developing your own ROAD Map, learn more in the MarketingSherpa Social Marketing ROAD Map Handbook, available at [www.MarketingSherpa.com](http://www.MarketingSherpa.com).*

We wanted to learn about the use, effectiveness and level of effort required for various social marketing tactics, so we asked the organizations that participated in our 2011 B2B Marketing Benchmark Study about their experiences. The results are below.

CHART: B2B ORGANIZATIONS COMMONLY USING SOCIAL MARKETING TACTICS WITH LOW EFFORT



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
 Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

What’s great about blogging is that it is rated as the most effective social marketing tactic, but it’s also the most effort-consuming. Since blogging requires so much effort, it may be expected that it has a low level of use. But, we are impressed with the 64% of B2B organizations who have taken on the challenge of this effort-consuming tactic in order to receive maximum payoff.

A great opportunity for B2B organizations is blogger and online influencer relations, which has been rated as highly effective, yet is only used by 33% of B2B organizations.

Social networks are the most commonly used social media platform, and this may be a result of the relatively low level of effort required, in addition to the popularity of social networking sites like Facebook and LinkedIn.

If you decide to add social marketing to your mix, there are four key guiding principles you will have to keep in mind:

- **It's transparent.** Be who you are and please don't establish a false profile or a pseudonym. Write in your own words and show personality. Being genuine in your deliverability increases your credibility.
- **It's personal.** Focus on the individual because social media is not a channel for mass communications. It's okay to have branded sites but not to author posts in the name of "The Company."
- **It's a conversation – join it.** Social media is changing the way we do business and your brand is no longer only about what you say it is, but also about what "they" say it is. By "they," we are referring to your prospects, customers and other influencers who are talking about your brand on social media sites. Only by joining in these conversations can you hope to influence the outcome.
- **It's viral.** For better or for worse, one of the key benefits social marketing offers to marketers is the viral effect. By "going viral" a message can reach a wide audience beyond a company's immediate network at no additional cost. But this can also work against marketers, as a negative message can spread just as fast as a positive one.

#### MEASURING YOUR SOCIAL MARKETING RESULTS

Once you develop your ROAD Map strategy and begin implementation, you will need to carefully measure the results of your social marketing activities.

Interactions on social media sites are only useful if they help you achieve your organization's marketing goals and impact the bottom line. You will need to determine if these interactions are developing new leads and revenue for your organization, improve reputation, enhance customer retention, etc.

There are a number of social monitoring tools and solutions that can be used to gather data on your social marketing performance. While these tools are extremely useful, social marketing analysis requires human insight and data crunching. You will need to dedicate an individual who is skilled in research, data analysis, and marketing systems such as Web analytics to accomplish this task.

Your measurement should focus on your progress in achieving the objectives you identified in the second step of the ROAD Map process, and include the metrics you aligned with them. Otherwise, you will be measuring for the sake of measuring, and flooding your department with data that may not be relevant to your objectives. Monitoring two to three metrics towards each objective is sufficient.

For example, if you're looking to increase lead generation, you can use Web analytics to determine if traffic from social media sites is generating conversions on your website. If you're looking to increase revenues, monitor the closing percentages and average deal sizes of those leads that converted. If your objective is to increase awareness or improve reputation, monitor your follower history and the acceleration of new followers attained and your sentiment.

Now that you have an understanding of the use, effectiveness and level of effort required for various social marketing tactics, as well as the measurement of your results, let's see it all put together. The upcoming case study details how one company effectively achieved their objective of increasing website traffic through social marketing and tracked growth and engagement metrics to monitor their progress.



## CASE STUDY: GENERATE LEADS WITH SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

Case Study ID: 31499

Location: MarketingSherpa Member Library

Summary: BreakingPoint, a startup networking-equipment testing system provider wanted to increase lead generation on a limited budget with a social media strategy. Learn the six steps they took to fill up their sales funnel.

### CHALLENGE

Pam O'Neal, VP Marketing, BreakingPoint, didn't want to adopt a typical demand generation strategy after she joined the networking-equipment testing system provider in April 2008. The startup company had a limited budget, and their target audience of security and quality assurance professionals in R&D laboratories wasn't merely skeptical of marketing – they hated it.

O'Neal and her team wanted to supplement traditional PR, events and demand-generation campaigns with a social media strategy that created strong relationships with hard-to-find prospects. But they wanted to make sure those efforts were reaching the right audience and turning them into leads.

"It was either going to work big or be a huge failure," says O'Neal. "We didn't know, but we wanted more than anything to have a good solid case study and have metrics that prove social media could work in this climate and with this audience."

### CAMPAIGN

O'Neal and her team tested several social media channels while revamping their public relations tactics to drive visitors to the company's website. They tracked growth and engagement metrics from those initiatives. They then correlated those results to traditional metrics, such as unique visitors, leads, and pipeline activity.

They took six steps to develop their social media strategy and measure its impact.

#### Step #1. Create blog to start and join online conversations

O'Neal's team began its foray into social media by launching a company blog. They didn't wait to finalize a blog strategy before launch, however. Their blogging approach evolved over time, based on observation of online conversations related to their network equipment testing niche.

- First, the team set up an online monitoring system that scanned the Web, the blogosphere, online forums and communities to find conversations relevant to their industry and their technical audience. The results were consolidated into an RSS feed that a team member could review each morning.

Scanning tools included:

- TweetScan, for Twitter posts
- Google Alerts for industry terms, such as "security threats" and "equipment testing"

- Boardtracker.com, which monitors technology forums and message boards

When the scanning tools found a relevant conversation, such as a blog post about cost of network equipment-testing tools, a team member would join that conversation. They would comment on the blog post and point readers to content on the same topic at the BreakingPoint blog.

The team also used their blog to break stories with the potential to go viral. For example, the company's security research team published tests and research related to clickjacking -- a recently discovered security flaw within websites that takes clickers from a legitimate-appearing button to an illegitimate site.

Those stories generated links from other industry blogs and articles in major trade publications.

## **Step #2. Establish a Twitter account**

The team supplemented their blog with a company Twitter account. It allowed them to post shorter, more frequent updates to their niche audience.

Company "tweets" included:

- Notices of new blog posts, webinars
- Fun entries (e.g., trivia questions, quizzes)
- Informal focus group questions (a poll of Twitter followers about potential names for the company newsletter)

As they did with the blog, the team used their scanning tools to find and participate in Twitter conversations relevant to their industry. They were particularly interested in community members asking for advice about equipment testing, so they set up alerts to find key terms, such as:

- "Bake off," an industry term for a head-to-head equipment test
- "Test methodology"
- Competitors' names (along with the word "sucks")

"People are complaining a lot more on Twitter than in the blogosphere," says O'Neal. "It's a place people go to vent, as well as search for solutions."

They also re-Tweeted relevant information found through their scans, such as reports about equipment testing results or interesting industry news. "It gives us a reason to stay in front of our followers and stimulate conversations."

EXAMPLE: BREAKINGPOINT TWITTER HOMEPAGE



**Step #3. Create LinkedIn group**

To explore an array of social media channels, the team created BreakingPoint groups on LinkedIn and Facebook. They quickly realized that their target audience wasn't well represented on Facebook. But the LinkedIn group began attracting members with the right professional backgrounds. The team established the group as an open forum to discuss issues related to network test equipment and security – not to the company or its products.

Group members took the lead in starting conversations among themselves. Typical topics included:

- Advice on vendors
- Reviews/suggestions for industry events
- Feedback on new testing approaches or programs

O'Neal's team acted as hosts, joining discussions when they had a pertinent point to contribute, or sharing relevant industry news, blog posts or other content to keep members engaged.

#### Step #4. Modify press release strategy for blogger coverage

The team revamped its press release strategy to encourage more online coverage for the company. Actions they took:

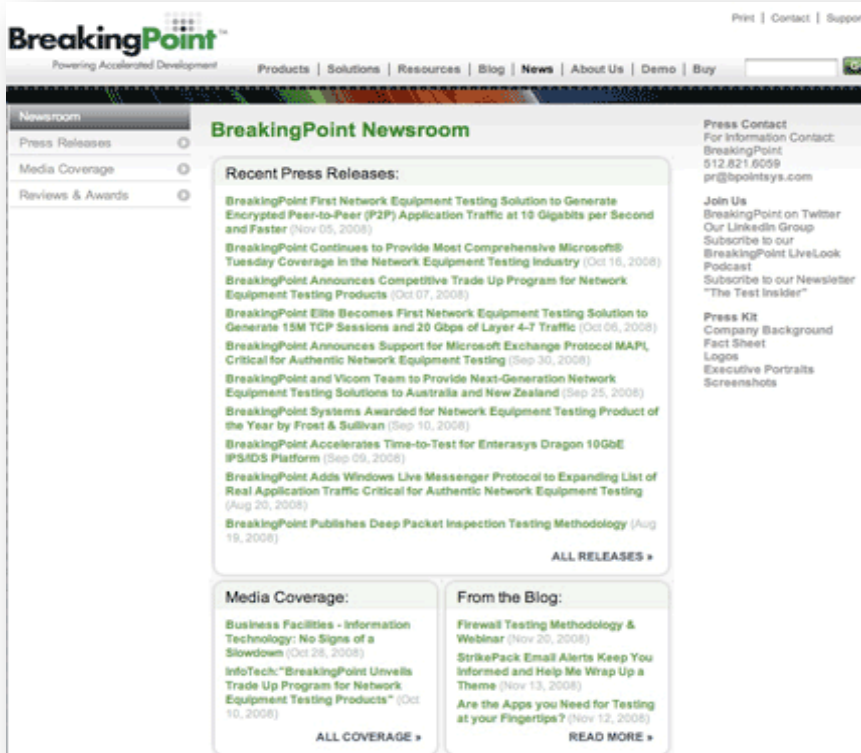
- Released at least one new press release each week
- Created shorter press releases to encourage inbound links, which contained more links to sections of the company website
- Shifted their release time from 8 a.m. Eastern time to late morning/early afternoon, when West Coast bloggers were most likely to begin scanning for news
- Published press releases using a service called PitchEngine, and posted releases to social media channels, such as their Twitter feed and LinkedIn group

#### Step #5. Promote social media channels on company website and in email signatures

To encourage customers and prospects to participate in their social media channels, the team included links to different accounts from the company's website and in their email signatures.

The news section of the website, for instance, included links to the company's Twitter feed and LinkedIn group under a "join us" headline. They also included updates from the company Twitter account in the right-hand column of the company blog.

EXAMPLE: BREAKINGPOINT NEWS PAGE, WITH LINKS TO JOIN ONLINE COMMUNITIES



Employees' email signatures could include links to the blog, Twitter account or LinkedIn group, along with name, email address and phone number.

#### **Step #6. Measure growth of social media accounts and Web traffic**

O'Neal was determined to measure the contribution social media efforts made to the company's marketing and sales activity. So, they tracked metrics to determine the growth of their various social media channels, such as:

- Unique blog page views
- Twitter followers
- LinkedIn group members

At the same time, they tracked a series of marketing metrics, such as:

- Unique website visitors
- Traffic generated by SEO
- Leads
- Leads by source (inbound Web, email, trade shows, seminars)
- Marketing-influenced pipeline activity, by source

When comparing the metrics side-by-side, they looked for correlations between activity in social media outlets and an increase in leads and sales pipeline activity.

#### **RESULTS**

The team's analysis showed a dramatic correlation between the use of social media channels and the growth of the company's Web traffic and leads.

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*"After six months, we saw some amazing results."*

By the end of Q3 2008, their social media campaign resulted in:

-Pam O'Neal  
VP Marketing  
BreakingPoint

- 10,230 unique blog page views in Q3
  - 280 Twitter followers
  - 141 members of their LinkedIn Group
  - 155% increase in unique Web visitors
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Most important, that Web traffic is now contributing the majority of the team's leads and pipeline activity.

Leads by source:

- 55% inbound Web
- 23% trade shows
- 20.5% email
- 1.5% seminars

Marketing-influenced pipeline by source:

- 75% inbound Web
- 17% email
- 4% seminars
- 4% trade shows

The amount of leads and pipeline activity generated from Web traffic demonstrates to O'Neal that their social media strategy is reaching their marketing-averse audience.

"In my prior position, I felt like I was on a treadmill when every quarter I had to come up with more and more clever campaigns to drive demand generation," says O'Neal. "I'm not saying that there isn't a lot of work that goes into social media, but I do not constantly have to do these elaborate demand gen campaigns anymore."

The team's social media efforts also support their ongoing search-engine optimization strategy. By engaging in conversations about industry issues, they're generating more links on non-brand search terms that help boost their search engine results positions. Non-brand search terms are typically those used by prospects when searching for testing equipment.

When O'Neal joined the company, the ratio of Web traffic from brand terms to non-brand terms was 2.5:1.

"That's really bad. It means more than twice as many people were searching for our company name versus their own pain point."

Now, the ratio of brand to non-brand search traffic is 0.6:1.

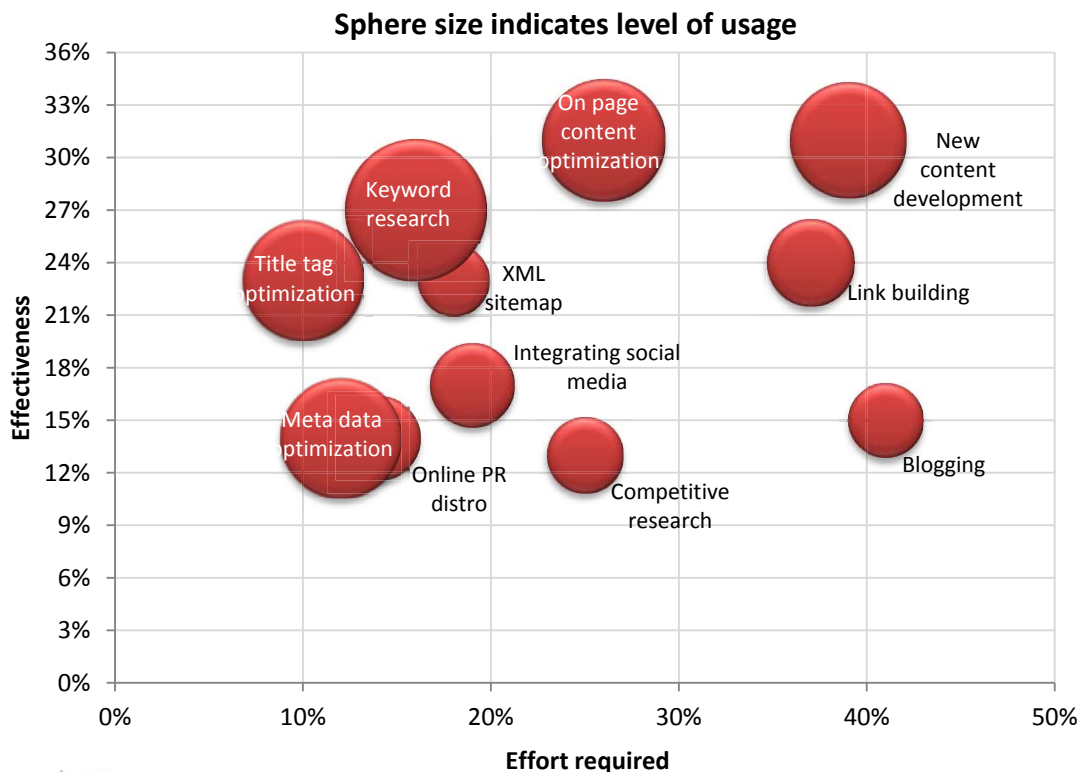
## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

Search engine optimization (SEO) includes a set of processes that increases the visibility of an organization’s website, Web page, or multimedia content to be indexed by search engines in the natural, organic results. While there is no cost-per-click for organic listings, the cost of these programs typically includes the use of in-house resources or agency time.

SEO has been an essential component of many successful marketing plans for over a decade now. Organizations, however still often struggle to find the perfect mix of SEO tactics because of the constantly evolving features and principles for various search sites.

As part of our 2011 B2B Marketing Benchmark Study, we asked B2B marketers about the use, effectiveness and effort required for various SEO tactics and the results are included in the following chart:

CHART: B2B ORGANIZATIONS FOCUSING ON HIGHLY EFFECTIVE SEO TACTICS



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

The size of the spheres in this chart indicates level of usage for each SEO tactic and as the spheres move to the right hand side of the chart, indicating level of effort required, most of the spheres tend to become smaller. Exceptions to this case include new content development and on page content optimization. These two exceptions however are higher along the Y axis of this chart, indicating a high level of effectiveness. This indicates that organizations are only willing to contribute a high level of effort towards SEO tactics that are highly effective.

An effective SEO campaign should involve four key components:

- **Keyword research.** Your keyword research strategy should be an ongoing practice, not just something you do before starting a new campaign. The performance of various targeted keywords can change quickly, and there will always be new trending topics and opportunities for you to capitalize on. By continually conducting keyword research, you could get ahead of the competition by optimizing for new trending terms to get ranked before they do.
- **On-site optimization.** The most labor intensive tactic for on-site optimization is new content development, but so many organizations are still executing this tactic because of its importance. Search engines need to see an adequate amount of content of your pages in order to determine that page's relevance to various search terms. Other tactics include optimizing code components of your Web pages including metatags, title tags, meta descriptions, image tags, etc.
- **Off-site optimization.** You establish relevance primarily with on-site optimization tactics, but there's another factor considered in ranking algorithms - importance. By building inbound links to your site, you will collect votes for your site that count for importance with the search engines. Link building starts with developing great, valuable content, or "link bait." Developing and hosting this content in itself may gain you a number of links, and without it, link building will be very difficult. Once you have this great content, you'll want to get it in front of as many eyes as possible. The more Web administrators who see you're content, the more likely you will be to receive inbound links. Be careful of black hat link building practices like buying links or excessive reciprocal linking, as they can have an adverse affect on your SEO strategy. There are a number of white hat techniques to encourage link building including directories, distributing press releases containing links back to your site, and building real relationships with other organizations, or even your customers to generate inbound links.
- **Social media.** As the aforementioned tactics included, developing content and building links are two of the most difficult and important tactics in SEO. By integrating social media into your plan, both of these tactics are facilitated.



## CASE STUDY: LEADS TRIPLED, CONVERSIONS DOUBLED WITH REVAMPED WEB CONTENT

Case Study ID: 31765

Location: MarketingSherpa Member Library

Summary: Subscription-based software company, Makana Solutions revamped itself as a premier Web destination by developing content, using SEO tactics and online registration forms to increase inbound traffic and lead generation.

### CHALLENGE

Arthur Gehring, Director, Marketing, Makana Solutions, faced two hurdles in marketing his company's subscription-based software that helps organizations perform sales compensation planning. First, their online service was a new category for most prospects, who set sales compensation goals and plan for those expenses using manual processes. Second, their target market was organizations with 50 or fewer sales reps.

Reaching these smaller businesses with traditional outbound marketing, such as email and advertising was difficult and expensive. Instead, Gehring wanted a strategy that helped frustrated sales executives find Makana on the Internet. But since few prospects knew the software-as-a-service solution was available, they weren't actively looking for it.

"What they're out looking for is best practice information and advice about what to do with sales compensation planning," says Gehring.

Gehring and his team needed a strategy that would attract those Web users looking for sales compensation planning information and enter them into a marketing funnel that pushed them this way: Capture their contact information for qualification; move them into a free software trial for eventual conversion to a paying subscription.

### CAMPAIGN

Gehring's team revamped their website as an online destination for sales compensation planning best practices and practical advice. They created content, such as sample plans and webinars, and used SEO tactics to make sure those resources would be found by prospects searching for advice online.

By capturing leads through online registration forms and using targeted email follow-ups, they moved those prospects into free trials that could be monitored by the sales team for possible subscription conversion.

Here are the seven steps they used to create and manage the strategy:

#### **Step #1. Create content for planning best practices**

To attract traffic, the team created content that helped prospects answer questions about their sales compensation planning challenges. They created several resources that offered valuable information that wasn't directly promoting the company's software.

"When we offer best practice content, it's not a veil to give them a product demonstration," says Gehring. "We offer real content."

Resources included:

- Sample sales compensation plan

This document provided an example of a well-organized plan that clearly laid out goals for a sales team and demonstrated how they would be compensated.

- Educational webinars

These online presentations offered general tips and best practices for sales compensation planning, such as "Common Pitfalls in Sales Compensation Planning." Other programs focused on particular industry verticals with unique sales compensation planning challenges, such as software companies moving from a packaged sale to a software-as-a-service model.

The team recruited expert speakers for its webinars, such as consultants whose services might be too expensive for their typical small-business prospect.

- Survey results from a third-party research firm outlining common industry practices in sales compensation plan design and implementation.

- A sales compensation planning glossary.

## **Step #2. Optimize website around high-value search terms**

With the content in place, Gehring and his team optimized their website pages around key terms that prospects would be using to search for sales compensation planning advice.

Using keyword research, they identified broad, general terms, such as:

- Sales compensation planning
- Sales comp planning
- Commission sales agreement

They identified longer-tail key terms that reflected more targeted searches or specific industry verticals, such as:

- Sample sales compensation plan
- Sales compensation planning SAAS
- Auto dealer sales compensation planning

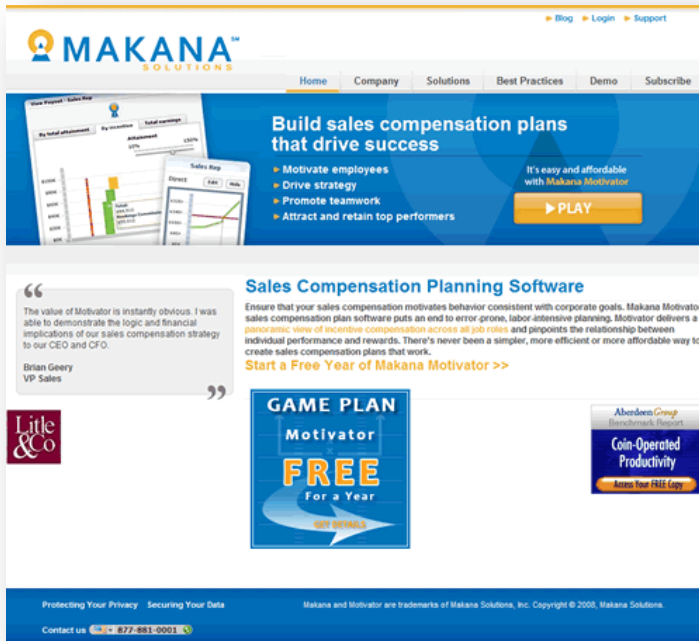
With a list of 600 keywords identified, they began optimizing specific pages of their site around two or three relevant terms per page.

The homepage was optimized for broad terms, such as "sales compensation planning." Internal pages, such as the "Best Practices" resource page, were optimized around more specific terms, such as "Sample sales compensation plan," or terms related to the particular industry targeted in a webinar.

Working through their content management tool, which also provided keyword analysis features, Gehring optimized those pages by using key terms in:

- File names
- Page descriptions
- Keyword metatags
- Page text

EXAMPLE: MAKANA’S BEST PRACTICES RESOURCE PAGE



Any time the team created a new page, they first analyzed their existing keyword list to find terms for which the site wasn’t already highly ranked. They could then optimize that page around gaps in their search rankings.

**Step #3. Boost inbound links to improve search rankings**

While optimizing their own site pages, the team looked for opportunities to add inbound links from highly ranked external sites. These additional links would, in turn, boost their own site’s relevance for search engines.

First, they used their marketing optimization and content management platform to analyze inbound links to major competitors’ websites.

After identifying links to competitors' sites with a high page rank in Google, they sought out sites from which they could also get a link for their own website. Sites they targeted included:

- Online directories
- Information sites about sales compensation planning or sales business best practices
- News sites to target for their press release distribution list

#### **Step #4. Paid search advertising to supplement SEO efforts**

SEO tactics often take time to make an impact on search rankings. So, the team employed pay-per-click advertising to drive traffic around specific events or campaigns.

For example, they used paid search advertising to promote their monthly webinars. Ads pointed visitors to the appropriate registration page for the event.

#### **Step #5. Follow up on Web leads**

Visitors who landed on the company's website had to fill out a registration form to receive a piece of educational material, such as a sample sales compensation plan. The online registration form included the following fields:

- First and last name
- Job title
- Company name
- Corporate email
- Phone number
- Number of salespeople on a compensation plan
- Top compensation plan issue, such as "Alignment of plans with corporate strategy," or "Lack of modeling functionality"
- Blank field to provide additional information
- A "how did you find us" list of options, such as "Internet search"

Visitors who filled out a registration form were considered a lead, which the team could then target for additional marketing to move them into a free software trial.

EXAMPLE: MAKANA REGISTRATION FORM FOR EDUCATIONAL CONTENT



All visitors who filled out a registration form received an automatic email that thanked them for their interest in the company’s best practices materials and outlined the ways Makana’s software can help them with their planning process.

Those emails included a link to start a free trial of the software.

Registrants could also be included in outbound promotions for future marketing collateral, such as invitations to webinars.

**Step #6. Add lead information to CRM system for sales calls**

Prospects that filled out registration forms or signed up for free trials were automatically added to the company’s CRM system. From there, sales people examined leads to find the best prospects for follow-up calls.

For example, prospects that started a free trial would be monitored by a member of the sales team. Follow-up included phone calls to free-trial members to encourage them to make use of the system.

If a prospect wasn’t using their free trial very often, a sales rep could call to ask how they liked the software, and if they had taken advantage of any of the free, online training tools to help members get acquainted with the system.

- Phone calls at the end of the trial period to attempt to convert trial members to subscribers.

The sales team monitored free trials and began calling prospects at the end of the 14-day trial period to ask if they were ready to upgrade to a paid subscription or needed any questions answered.

Because it was sometimes difficult to get trial members on the phone immediately, the team did not shut off free trials immediately. Instead, they kept the trial account live until a sales representative had made contact with the prospect to discuss an upgrade to a paid subscription.

#### **Step #7. Continually monitor keyword and outbound campaign results**

Gehring monitored campaign results weekly so the team could determine which keywords, inbound links or outbound marketing efforts were delivering the most traffic, leads, or free-trial starts. Their goal was to highlight the best performing tactics so they could repeat them.

"Repeatability is the key," says Gehring. "As a young company, we have to keep growing our traffic and leads."

#### **RESULTS**

Gehring's team has succeeded in becoming a top destination for advice about sales compensation planning, and leads and conversions have jumped along with the traffic. Three months after adopting the strategy:

- Website traffic increased 200%
- Lead generation rate tripled
- Lead conversion rate doubled

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*"I'm really pleased, and the thing to keep in mind is, we're a small team. I don't spend every day on this stuff."*

- Arthur Gehring  
Marketing Director  
Makana Solutions

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SEO efforts have been a major reason for the boost, and have helped the team dial back on expensive paid search efforts:

Paid search has dropped to 30% of traffic from 75%.

The company's website ranks on the first page of Google search results for key industry search terms, such as:

- Sales compensation plan
- Sales comp plan
- Sample commission plan

What's more, the team's outbound marketing is now more efficient because they're working off a qualified list of prospects.

For example, a webinar invitation sent in June to a list of visitors who had registered for company information achieved:

- 14% open rate
- 4% clickthrough rate

"We're very happy with our success, but I'll be honest and say we haven't even touched the potential." Gehring says. "The potential is tremendous to be even more successful with the realm of content we can develop for various verticals. The possibilities just go on and on."

## SOCIAL MEDIA'S IMPACT ON SEO

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*On average, organizations that integrate social media with their search campaigns experience a **59% lift in organic search conversion rates** over those organizations that do not integrate.*

*Source: MarketingSherpa 2011 Search Marketing Benchmark Survey*

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Many organizations are now also using social media to support their search marketing plan, a tactic that is referred to as social media integration. Two of the most challenging SEO tactics are developing new content, and building inbound links. By integrating social media into SEO campaigns, these two tasks are facilitated.

Organizations that integrate social media with their organic search campaigns also tend to have higher conversion rates than those who do not. During our recent search marketing study, a 59% lift in organic conversion rates was recorded for organizations integrating social media with their search campaigns over those who did not integrate (MarketingSherpa Search Marketing Benchmark Survey).

When integrating social media with your organic search campaign, there are five key trends you must consider. They are:

### **Trend # 1. A solid integration strategy must come first.**

You must have separate and solid search and social media strategies in place before considering integration. If you begin integrating before separate strategies are established, you risk violating best practices, and results will suffer. For example, you could be optimizing social media content for key terms that don't generate converting traffic for your website, or you could optimize social content on a site where your audience doesn't interact.

### **Trend # 2. Search engines are increasingly indexing social content**

Major search engines are frequently indexing social media content in search results, even adding new features like real time search for this purpose. Dynamic content, such as comments and updates are commonly indexed, as well as social media profiles and multimedia content. This creates multiple listings for one company in the SERP's, which conveys authority by owning the page and pushing the competition lower on the page, or to page two of the search results.

### **Trend # 3. Social media builds inbound links**

Link building is a challenging task in SEO. Links build credibility with the search engines, as they represent a "vote" from one site to another essentially saying that "this is important, valuable content." Links can be added to social media profiles, comments, etc.

Now, not all links are created equal. To maintain the credibility of "votes," many sites use a "nofollow" tag that tells search engine spiders to not count some links as a vote. Even though a social media site may use "nofollow" tags, that doesn't mean that distributing your links on that site won't facilitate your link building. As your link gets shared across the social sphere, more website administrators will receive your content and if that content is truly interesting and valuable to your audience, the likelihood for generating new inbound links is increased.

**Trend # 4. Search and social data complement each other**

Social monitoring is highly keyword driven, as is SEO. By using complimentary data from social media and search, the results of both programs can be propelled.

For example, search dictates current levels of demand and competition with keyword search volumes and competition levels. Social media identifies consumer language and new, emerging topics or key words. This information can be used in SEO and social media to maximize results.

**Trend # 5. On-site social media is a powerful content generator**

Hosting and encouraging the development of user generated content through social media on your own website will have a far greater impact on your SEO performance than hosting this content on a third party site. Blogs, discussions, Q&A features, etc. can generate great volumes of SEO-friendly content, and you should use this content to optimize your own site. When this content is indexed by the search engines, the traffic will flow directly to your site where conversion can take place.



## PAY-PER-CLICK (PPC)

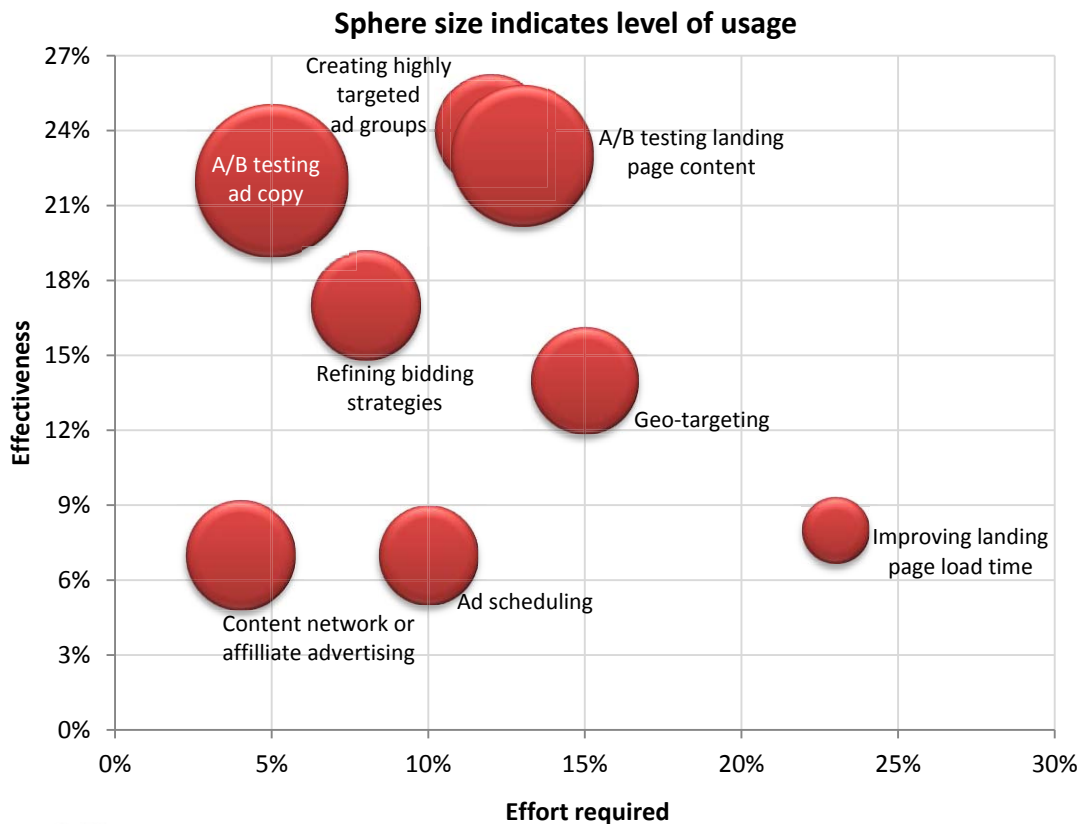
Pay-per-click marketing with search engines, also known as sponsored search refers to search engine advertisements based cost-per-click payment model. Advertisers place a bid on various keywords, and pay when their ads receive a click.

The ranking position and number of impressions an advertiser receives is calculated by their bid, any other bids on that keyword, their daily budget and their quality score. An advertiser's quality score is essentially a measurement of relevance to a search query that considers a number of factors including an advertiser's historic performance in clickthrough-rate. In general, high quality scores lead to a higher ranking position at a lower cost-per-click.

Much like organic search, the pay-per-click environment is continually changing. New features and an increasing level of competition challenge advertisers to stay abreast of the changes and take advantage of the latest best practices.

To learn more about the latest best practices in PPC, we asked B2B marketers about the use, effectiveness and level of effort required for top PPC tactics. The results are displayed in the following chart.

CHART: MOST COMMONLY USED PPC TACTICS ARE HIGHLY EFFECTIVE



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

In general, the more effective PPC tactics, as indicated by the positioning of the spheres along the Y axis, are also the tactics that are most commonly used, as indicated by the sphere size.

The one exception is the creation of highly targeted ad groups. This tactic optimizes the entire PPC account and can amplify campaign results. When an advertiser has a small number of key terms triggering the display of any one ad, that ad will ultimately be highly relevant to the search query. The end result is higher clickthrough rates, conversion rates, and quality scores. Since this tactic was rated as the most effective for PPC, it should also be the most commonly used but it's not because of the high level of effort required. Depending on the size of the account, or the number of keywords, this process can require ample man hours to create hundreds of ad groups.

A/B testing of ad copy has also been rated as a highly effective tactic, and is also the most commonly used in part because of the low level of effort required in its execution. By testing various headlines, value propositions and calls to action in PPC ads, organizations can dramatically improve clickthrough and conversion rates.

Landing page load time, or the amount of time it takes for a search engine user to view a landing page for an ad they have clicked, can have an effect on quality score. Overall, improving landing page load time is the most difficult PPC tactic to execute, and has not been rated as highly effective. As a result, it is also has the lowest level of use.

If you decide to add PPC to your marketing mix, you will need to apply these key concepts in your tactical plan of execution:

- **Relevance.** You want to keep the goals of the search engine in mind. The search engine wants to deliver the most relevant ads for a search engine user's query. By making relevance a priority in your campaign, this will have a positive impact in a number of areas including better ranking positions, improved clickthrough and conversion rates, and reduced costs-per-click and per-conversion. Structure your account with a very small number of keywords triggering any one ad to increase relevance.
- **Simplicity.** Don't confuse your audience on the landing page. By streamlining the content and conversion process of your landing page, you will be optimizing for the greatest conversion rate.
- **Measurement.** One of the great benefits PPC offers to marketers is the vast capabilities to measure performance of keywords, ads, landing pages, etc. Use the ample data available to you to optimize the performance of your campaigns.

## SOCIAL MEDIA'S IMPACT ON PPC

In general, social media integration is focused on organic search results, but what about PPC? When an organization is effectively optimizing their social media content for target keywords, they receive a number of benefits. Their rankings improve. They receive more listings in the SERP's. They push their competition lower on the page, possibly even to the second page of the search results. They improve brand awareness, reputation and PR. When the search engine user hits the results page, they are presented with a truly authoritative brand that has ownership of the page.. Additionally, that same search engine user may have heard positive things about that brand from their peers on social media sites. All of these results lead to an increased level of trust on behalf of the search engine user for the advertiser. It's that increased level of trust that will make them be more likely to both clickthrough and convert on their ads.

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*On average, organizations that integrate social media with their search campaigns experience a **100% lift in PPC clickthrough rate and a 25% lift in PPC conversion rate** over those organizations that do not integrate.*

*Source: MarketingSherpa 2011 Search Marketing Benchmark Survey*

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During our recent study on PPC, we learned that social media integration has a direct, measurable impact on key PPC performance metrics. Organizations that currently had an integration strategy saw a 100% lift in PPC clickthrough rates and a 25% lift in PPC conversion rates over those organizations that did not.

## SECTION SUMMARY: INBOUND MARKETING

In this section, we have covered the three primary inbound marketing practices separately to provide a detailed understanding of each tactic. During the development of your marketing mix, it's important to realize that these inbound marketing tactics are all interrelated. The best practice in inbound marketing is to develop a coherent strategy that integrates organic search, paid search and social media.

When inbound marketing tactics are executed as one interrelated strategy, the results achieved are far greater than if these tactics were to be used separately as silos.

Before we move on to outbound marketing, please take a few minutes to complete the assessment for this section.

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1. List three of the challenges covered in this section of inbound marketing.

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2. Name the four steps of MarketingSherpa's Social Marketing ROAD Map Methodology.

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3. What two SEO tactics are facilitated with social media integration?

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4. How can social media integration impact PPC performance?

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*If you were unable to answer any of the above questions, please review the previous sections again before moving on.*

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## OUTBOUND TACTICS

Outbound marketing refers to demand and lead generation marketing activities that involve the delivery of a message from the company to a targeted audience. Outbound marketing tactics have been around considerably longer than inbound marketing tactics, and are viewed as more traditional marketing practices. Outbound marketing tactics include direct mail, email marketing, outbound calls, print advertising, etc.

Because consumers are constantly receiving outbound marketing messages, they are beginning to become less reactive to these campaigns. Tack that on to the consumer empowerment from social media and a challenging economy, and the odds are stacked against the outbound marketer.

Some organizations have developed the impression that using these traditional, outbound tactics is a dying strategy and are reacting by focusing solely or primarily on inbound marketing tactics. Outbound marketing is not dead, but the traditional execution of sending out one mass message to a giant, varied audience is becoming less and less effective over time. Remember, consumers want to be addressed as individuals with unique interests and concerns, not as one of the many members of a massive database.

For many, it makes sense to keep these more traditional tactics as important components to their marketing plans, but to modernize their approach. In order to receive maximum results from your outbound marketing tactics, the buyer personas and value proposition(s) you developed earlier in this chapter must be put to good use.

Much like inbound marketing, outbound marketing tactics have a number of general benefits and challenges that need to be considered. Some include the following:

### THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF OUTBOUND MARKETING

Benefit	Challenge
When executed efficiently, outbound marketing can generate highly qualified leads.	Without a plan or strategy, efforts in outbound marketing can be lost.
Outbound marketing can be an effective demand generation tool.	Generating demand through outbound marketing can be expensive.
List segmentation is a key benefit of outbound marketing. Many outbound marketing tactics include the option of renting or buying a list with detailed demographics, which can be segmented so that only an organization's target market is included in the distribution. In-house databases have the same opportunity for segmentation.	Outbound marketing can be somewhat limited in behavioral segmentation, especially when compared to inbound tactics. It can be challenging to target buyer personas with outbound tactics.
Once a campaign is complete and distributed out to the audience, there is typically a low if not non-existent level of marketing maintenance work required to keep the leads flowing in.	Outbound marketing is typically a one-way conversation, and modern consumers are expecting more from organizations.

## DIRECT MAIL

Direct mail is one of the most mature tactics today's B2B marketer has at their disposal. Since it has been as long as the postal system, hundreds, if not thousands of direct mail tactics have been developed and tested over time.

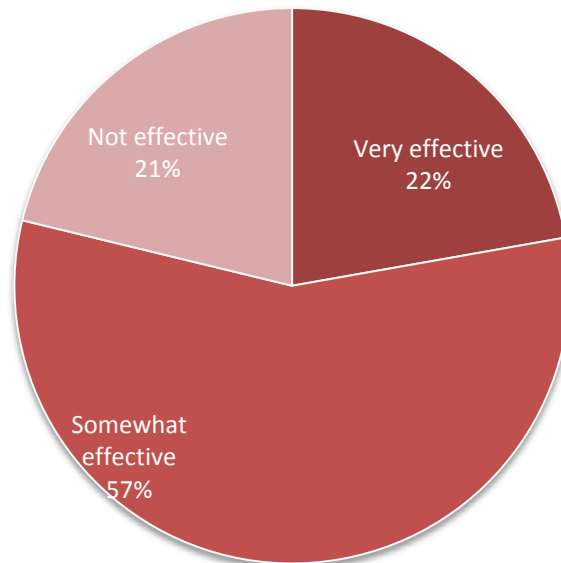
Despite the speculations of some marketers, direct mail is still a highly relevant marketing tactic for many organizations. As mentioned earlier, using direct mail as a channel to send one message out to a massive audience is becoming less effective over time. A modernized approach involving buyer personas can be applied to this channel to keep it alive in marketing plans for many years to come.

If you find direct mail to be an important part of your marketing plan or are considering adding it to your mix, ask your list and print partners about their advanced capabilities including segmentation and personalization. If you can access personal data such as name, company name and industry from your mailing list and incorporate this information into your direct mail pieces using dynamic print capabilities, you will increase the relevance of this collateral. Relevance is a powerful tool in inspiring action and response from today's consumer.

We wanted to learn more about the effectiveness of direct mail in the B2B marketing mix, so we asked our study participants about their experiences with this channel.

### CHART: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIRECT MAIL

*Q. Please indicate the effectiveness of direct mail for your organization.*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

The majority of B2B organizations - 79% - find direct mail to be either very effective or somewhat effective for their organization and this is likely a result of the various personalization and segmentation capabilities organizations executing this tactic now have, such as personalization for name, location and other data points and segmenting lists based on a number of criteria.

A successful direct mail campaign includes acute attention to the following key components:

- **List.** A great direct mail campaign always begins with a great list. The more information you have included in your list, like name, company name, industry, interests, etc., the better. This information will allow you to identify your buyer personas within that list.
- **Messaging.** The practice of sending a single message to a large audience is becoming less and less effective over time. Use the great list you have either developed or rented to segment your buyer personas, and then develop unique direct mail pieces to cater to the interests and concerns of those personas. You can also use dynamic print features to personalize your direct mail pieces which will increase relevance. The concise value proposition(s) you developed earlier in this chapter should be put to good use here as well. Think outside of the box when considering what materials to deliver to your list. Gifts, samples, even *snacks* can be delivered to leave a lasting impression on the recipient.
- **Call to action.** Tell your audience how they can respond, and offer them something of value, like a free webinar, whitepaper download or even a book. Test and track the performance of various calls to action with A/B tests.

The following case study is an example of a modernized, innovative approach to direct mail that involved the delivery of 3-D glasses to drive prospects to a company microsite.

## CASE STUDY: 3-D GLASSES DRIVE PROSPECTS TO CAMPAIGN MICROSITE

Case Study ID: 31505

Location: MarketingSherpa Member Library

Summary: See how the marketing team behind a Web-conferencing platform tested a direct mail strategy to wow the discriminating creative professional segment. The combination of a mysterious one-line letter, a pair of 3-D glasses, and an interactive PURL generated a 31.11% response rate and other impressive metrics.

### CHALLENGE

Rafael Alenda, Director, Marketing, Fuze Box, is trying to build his brand in a market dominated by larger, well-established competitors. So when he and his team were looking for ways to promote Fuze Meeting, their Web conferencing and online collaboration tool, they decided not to target the mass market and fight head-to-head with those major competitors.

Instead, they believed that the platform's ability to support high-resolution graphics and HD video made it an ideal tool for creative professionals, such as advertising agencies that wanted to pitch to clients and collaborate with customers online. They had been using online and email marketing, but wanted to test direct mail as a way to introduce the brand to their target audience and provide an in-depth explanation of the product's benefits.

But how could they create a direct mail package that was unique and compelling enough to appeal to creative professionals and prompt them to interact with the brand?

"They're highly discriminating people, which is great, but you need to really wow them to get their attention," says Alenda. "We wanted to do more than a postcard or a flyer."

### CAMPAIGN

The team designed a direct mail test to determine what types of messaging worked with the target audience, and establish whether the channel could play an important role in future marketing strategy.

The campaign featured a mailer that contained a pair of 3-D glasses and a link to a personalized, interactive website featuring 3-D images. While there, prospects could scroll through a series of pages explaining the company's Web-conferencing platform and its benefits for creative professionals.

Here are five steps they took to launch and measure the impact of the test.

#### Step #1. Create 3-D campaign theme

While brainstorming ideas for a unique direct mail campaign, the team hit on the idea of creating a 3-D website and mailing prospects a pair of glasses to view the online images.



The release of 3-D movies in the summer of 2009, such as "Up," gave the idea cultural currency. In addition, the team tied the 3-D concept into an overall campaign theme that reiterated the benefits of the Web-conferencing platform's high-resolution visual capabilities.

Campaign theme and tagline: "See how different."

### **Step #2. Create custom, targeted list**

Because it was a concept test, the team developed a new list of target prospects.

- First, they developed a regional focus by choosing major metropolitan areas that had a high concentration of creative professionals. Target locations included:

- San Francisco
- Los Angeles
- San Diego
- Seattle
- Portland, Ore.
- Las Vegas
- Chicago

- Next, they looked for personnel from ad agencies, marketing and branding firms, consultancies and other creative companies within those metropolitan areas.

- For smaller firms, they targeted C-level executives
- For larger firms with in-house creative departments, they targeted the creative director level

- They assembled a list by purchasing names from two list vendors with which they'd worked previously. Then, they supplemented those names by doing a manual search for professionals at firms within their target regions. They used Google searches and checked LinkedIn to find C-level executives or creative directors.

The result was a list of roughly 1,500 prospects.

### **Step #3. Send 3-D glasses in personalized mailer**

The team developed a mailer intended to create intrigue and direct recipients to the campaign website.

- They sent the 3-D glasses inside a tri-folded, 8.5" x 11" piece of paper that contained only one line of copy and a personalized URL:

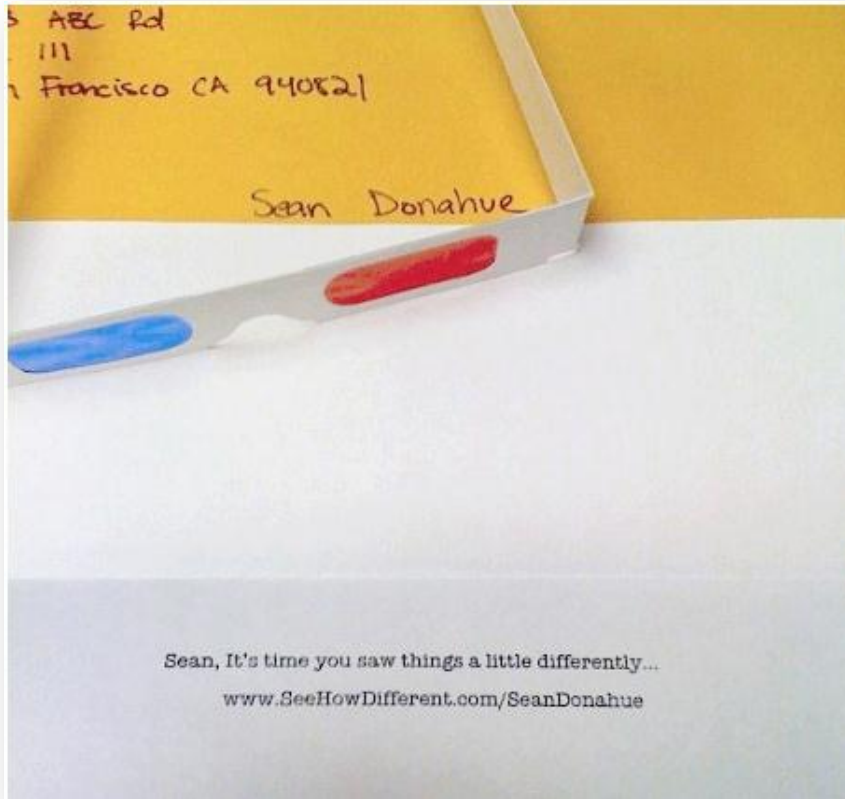
- "NAME, it's time you saw things a little differently...[www.seehowdifferent.com/prospectname](http://www.seehowdifferent.com/prospectname)"

- They further personalized the campaign by delivering the letter and glasses in a hand-addressed envelope.

The package contained no branding elements or any other indication of who had sent it. The team believed this "unbranding" was essential to piquing curiosity to encourage recipients to view the website.

"Would I do it for accountants? Probably not," says Alenda. "But with creative professionals, we thought it was part and parcel of what we needed to break through."

EXAMPLE: FUZE BOX DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGN



**Step #4. Drive traffic to campaign microsite**

Letter recipients used the PURL printed on the letter to access the campaign website. The site combined 3-D images, Flash-based navigation, industry-specific copy, and several calls-to-action that invited visitors to engage with the company further.

Key elements included:

- Location-based and industry-relevant images

The site was designed to mimic the look of photographs spread out on a table. The team selected images that would be familiar to the audience in the regional test, such as street scenes from the target cities, surfing and skateboarding action photos, and an image of the Seattle Space Needle.

They also selected images of creative professionals at work, such as scenes of photo and video shoots and advertising story boards.

- Selected 3-D images

The team used software to treat several images with the 3-D effect. To keep costs down for this test, they selected stock images that were relevant to the creative audience, and would look good in 3-D, such as:

- Lights and cameras staged for a photo shoot
- A skateboarder performing a trick
- A creative professional working on a large computer monitor

- Industry-specific content

Visitors were prompted to click an arrow on the right side of the page to navigate through the complete website. Each click focused the browser on a section of the site that highlighted product benefits for creative professionals.

Content highlights included:

- An overview that described the platform's high-resolution online visuals as uniquely suited for creative pros
- Details on key features, such as on-screen markup capabilities, easy interface, mobile capabilities and social media integration
- A video of an advertising agency executive describing how she uses Fuze Meeting

"We really wanted creative professionals to come there and know that we're talking to them," says Alenda.

- Calls-to-action

The final page of the website tour offered visitors four options to continue learning about Fuze Meeting or the company:

- Register for a free account immediately
- Request more information from the company
- Call for enterprise accounts of more than five users
- Continue exploring the site

**Step #5. Monitor visits and place follow-up calls**

The use of PURLs allowed the team to know exactly who had responded to the letter, how long they stayed on the site, and what content they viewed.

The team received an email notification whenever a visitor arrived at the site. They instructed their inside sales team to follow-up with those prospects within one or two hours of a website visit.

Rather than saying they had seen the prospect's activity on the site, inside sales reps introduced themselves, said that they were following up on the letter the team had sent, and asked if the prospects had any questions for them.

"We weren't sitting around watching people on the site," says Alenda. "We just wanted to make sure we were getting in front of them while the campaign was fresh in their mind."

## RESULTS

The intriguing package and personalized URLs clearly broke through the marketing clutter and connected with the team's target audience:

- 31.11% of letter recipients visited their PURL
- 75.59% of the visitors clicked through all pages of the site
- 7.06% of visitors engaged with Fuze Box further by filling out an online registration form or clicking to continue exploring the site
- 5.80% the letter recipients visited the site more than once
- 24.84% of site visitors watched the video testimonial

"I'll take those response rates anytime," says Alenda. "As a marketer, I was trying to make sure we understood what we were validating: Are we getting people to the site to get Fuze Meeting in front of them?"

Follow-up calls by the inside sales team have led to several ongoing conversations with prospects. And Alenda's team has a new list of warm or hot leads to target based on the amount of time spent on the site and the specific actions taken.

But the test also revealed one issue that actually prevented the campaign from delivering an even higher response rate: Despite the team's list-scrubbing efforts, they still ended up with a number of names that were no longer employed by their target companies due to the ongoing effects of the recession.

"We were sort of victim of the current economy, in which people have been mobile with their employment. We need to do better work on our end on list criteria."

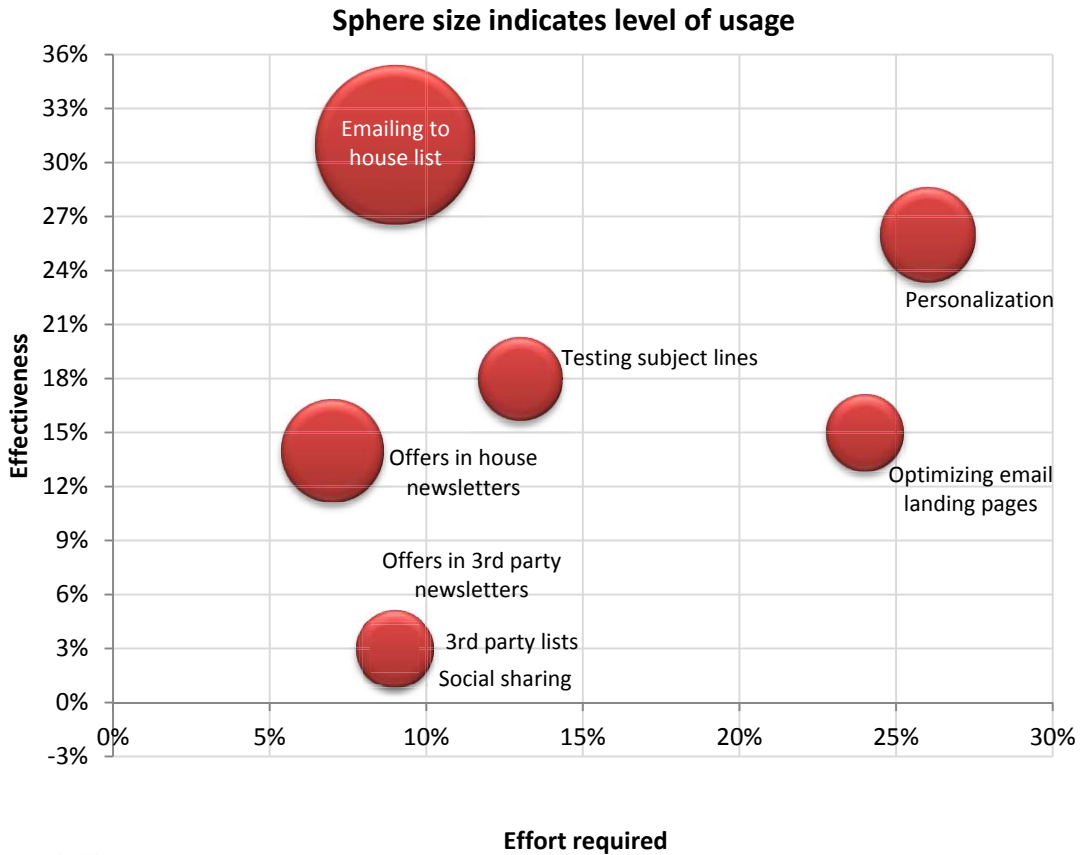
**EMAIL MARKETING**

Email marketing is one of those tactics that can be either inbound or outbound in nature, depending on its execution. For example, an email sent out to a rented list as a scheduled delivery is an outbound message. When used as an automatically triggered message, the lines between inbound and outbound are blurred. When a new subscriber opts into a list on their own accord, the lines are once again blurred. When an email is deployed to a list that opted in to a relative list, well, you get the point.

It is an interesting time for email marketing. Email as a marketing channel is old enough that many tactics and strategies have been tested and proven, and yet still new enough that many marketers are still catching up with established best practices. For the latter, there is ample opportunity to apply proven strategies to receive impressive gains.

To learn more about best practices in email marketing, we asked study participants about the use, effectiveness and level of effort required for various email marketing tactics. The results are included in the following chart.

**CHART: EMAILING TO HOUSE LIST BOTH HIGHLY EFFECTIVE AND COMMONLY USED**



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
 Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

The above chart is an indication of the high level of efficiency for many email marketers. Because emailing to house lists has been rated as the most effective tactic and requiring a lower level of effort, it is also the most commonly used tactic. Please note that the spheres for offers in third party newsletters, emailing to

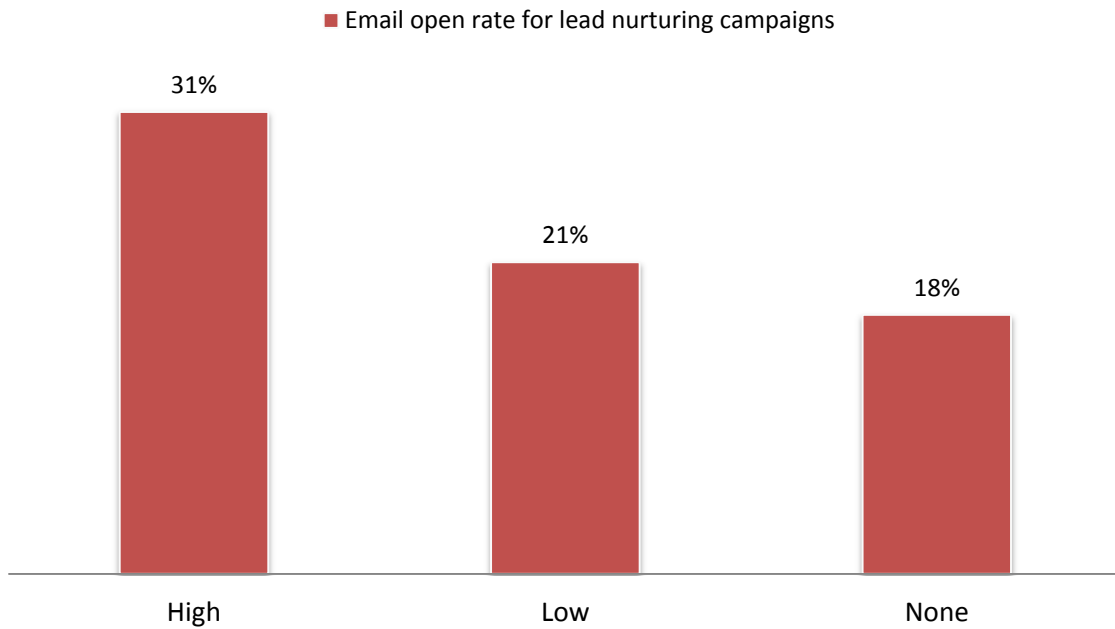
third party lists and social sharing were overlapped in this chart because they have approximately the same levels of effort required and effectiveness.

The testing of email subject lines presents a great opportunity for B2B email marketers because it has been rated as the third most effective email marketing tactic, and it has a lower level of effort required.

Much like direct mail, personalization of email messages offers great opportunity to increase relevance. Personalization has been rated as the most labor intensive email marketing tactic; however, the results can be well worth the additional effort.

**CHART: HIGH LEVEL OF PERSONALIZATION SHOWS GREAT IMPACT ON OPEN RATES**

*Q. Please indicate your organization's approximate open rate for your lead nurturing campaigns.*



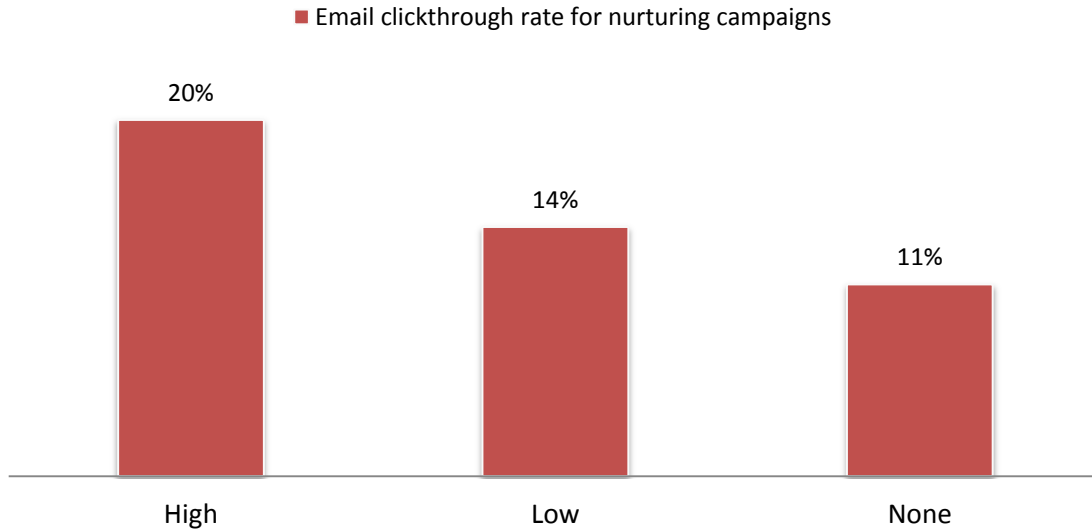
Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

The above chart conveys the benefit of the regular personalization of email nurturing campaigns specifically. We asked study participants to indicate whether they applied a high level of personalization, a low level, or a nonexistent level to their media. Organizations with high levels of personalization received a 47% improvement in open rates for their email nurturing campaigns over organizations that had a low level of personalization.

Organizations with a high level of personalization also experienced a lift in clickthrough rates, as conveyed in the following chart.

CHART: HIGH LEVEL OF PERSONALIZATION IMPROVES CLICKTHROUGH RATES

Q. Please indicate your organization's approximate clickthrough rate for your lead nurturing campaigns.



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=925

Organizations with a high level of personalization experience a 42% lift in clickthrough rates of their email nurturing campaigns over organizations with a low level of personalization. They also saw an 81% lift in clickthrough rates of email nurturing campaigns over organizations that did not use any personalization.

When executing an email marketing campaign, the same principles you apply to your direct mail campaigns will be useful. This includes list, messaging and call-to-action. In addition to the consideration of these factors, we have provided the following list of five important tips to improve all areas of your email marketing initiatives, from content development to deliverability.

- **Be relevant.** This encompasses content, format of content, personalization, and the timing and frequency of delivery.
- **Be real and authentic** in your email messages. Consumers are becoming more interested in hearing from other humans and less interested in hearing from corporate entities. This is a guiding principle for email and many other marketing tactics.
- **Don't hide the option to unsubscribe.** If a subscriber wants to be removed from your list, make it easy for them to avoid complaints to email service providers. If your subscribers don't want to receive messages from you, you shouldn't be sending them.
- **Make list building a priority.** List building tactics include social sharing, using incentives to encourage site registrations, mobile capture, co-registrations, etc.
- **Test, measure, then test again.** Email marketing offers ample opportunity to test content, subject lines, delivery timing, and more. Use every advantage to the data available to you to test and improve the performance of your email marketing campaigns.

## CASE STUDY: CONTENT-DRIVEN EMAIL UPDATES BOOST CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE: 6 STEPS

Case Study ID: 31568

Location: MarketingSherpa Member Library

Summary: The conference management team for the American Cancer Society revamped their marketing strategy with content-driven email updates to increase registrations. Learn the six steps they took to surpass their registration goals.

### CHALLENGE

With the recession taking a big bite out of travel budgets in 2009, Linda Blount, MPH, was worried about turnout for The American Cancer Society's 2009 Disparities Conference. As National VP, Office of Health Disparities, Blount leads the group that organizes the biennial conference focused on health disparities in underserved populations.

In the past, the team dedicated its efforts to organizing the conference and arranging speakers from the research and medical communities. The promotional outreach to encourage registrations was often a secondary concern. But with the risk that attendance numbers would be down in 2009, they needed a new approach.

"As we started planning, we asked ourselves how we could communicate and market the event up front," says Blount.

The team realized they needed a more holistic strategy that used email and the Web to support a wide range of communications in the organization and promotion process. They wanted to create more relevant, personalized communications before, during and after the conference.

### CAMPAIGN

The team created a new focus for the 2009 conference that called for inviting leaders of community intervention programs to present alongside academic, medical and research participants. Although the ACS had a strong network of health researchers and policy experts, they were not as connected to those community intervention leaders who turn research into action.

So they worked with key partner organizations to reach out to a broader audience with a new multichannel marketing strategy. Besides advertising, telemarketing and personal outreach, the strategy relied heavily on email and online communications built on three key tactics:

- Simplified messaging
- Automated and triggered email
- A continually-updated conference website

Here are six steps they took to create and manage the integrated web/email portion of the outreach program:



### **Step #1. Develop simplified messaging strategy**

Promotional emails for previous events were often written in the specialized language of the research and medical communities.

"We're very good at speaking over the heads of laymen," says Blount. "We tended to say things in many, many words and many paragraphs."

But for this event, they created a messaging strategy that was more accessible to a broader audience.

- Simplified text

The team focused on using shorter copy in their emails, emphasizing key themes and important benefit/value statements about the program's focus areas and the event itself.

For example, the first email announcing the 2009 conference distilled the event's goal in four bullet points:

"We will answer 4 key questions:

- What is working to increase early detection or prevention of breast, cervical and colorectal cancer and to improve quality treatment availability and prolong survivorship?
- What policies have been most effective at promoting health equity and how can they be implemented at the local, state and federal level?
- How do we address the social determinants of health to improve cancer outcomes?
- Who and what initiatives have been successful in reducing obesity and smoking rates?"

- Personalization

Emails were personalized from Blount, and included an image of her signature at the end of each message. This tactic reinforced the notion that the conference was a community gathering where constituents could exchange ideas, rather than a top-down dissemination of information.

### **Step #2. Create conference website as an information hub**

To enable the use of shorter email copy, the team built a conference website to serve as the hub for all conference promotions.

The website, [TheCancerLens.org](http://TheCancerLens.org), contained more detailed information about the conference itself, as well as community features to engage the audience before, during and after the event.

Website sections included:

- In-depth conference overview, including "who should attend" and key themes
- Conference agenda and detailed speaker information
- Online registration form
- Conference blog

- Featured videos

The team could then include links to relevant sections of the website in outbound email messages, allowing them to keep messages succinct while providing access to more information for recipients that needed it.

- Request for abstracts

Another key component of the conference website was an online abstract submission form. Members of the research and medical community were encouraged to submit research abstracts as potential topics for the event's general and breakout sessions.

The online submission form made it easy for researchers to upload an abstract, and for Blount's team to export those files for consideration during the event programming phase.

#### EXAMPLE: AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY'S ONLINE CALL FOR ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS



#### Step #3. Email campaign to ACS database

The team created a multistage email campaign to be sent to their house database of medical and research professionals. These messages were staggered over a five-month period to encourage registrations and abstract submissions.

Rather than sending repeated, hard-sell registration requests, the team designed a content-driven message thread that would highlight different aspects of the conference as the agenda was developed:

- The first email, sent three months before the event, provided a general conference announcement and highlighted the key themes of the 2009 conference.

- Subsequent emails were delivered every other week, and provided programming updates and promotions of important elements within the conference, such as:

- Keynote speaker
- Workshops
- New panelists
- Event takeaways

- Calls-to-action included registration and hotel information, requests for abstract submissions, and the opportunity to register for website updates.

#### **Step #4. Email campaign to partners' databases**

Blount's team organized the event with five partner organizations, including:

- The National Medical Association
- The Intercultural Cancer Council
- The National Hispanic Medical Association

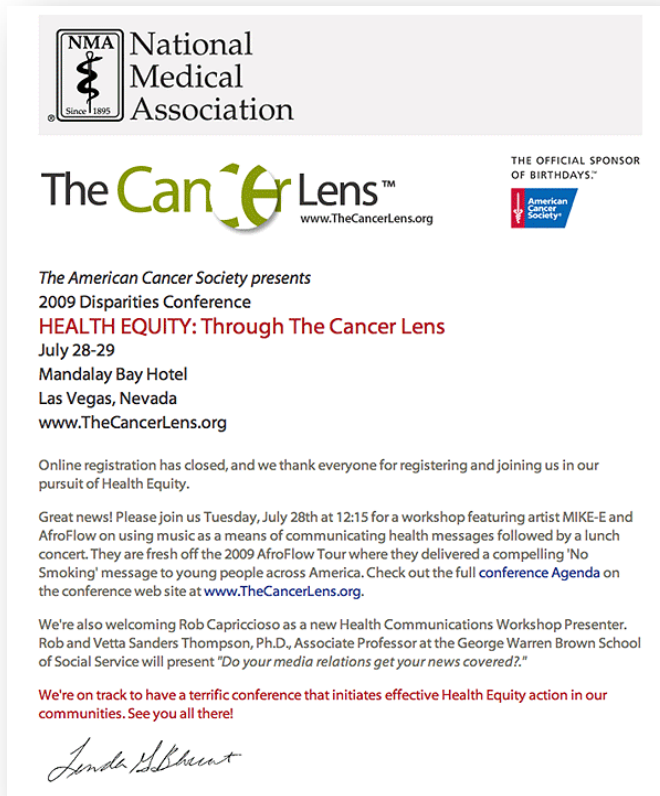
Each of these organizations had their own contact databases that included the community organizations that Blount's team wanted to attract to the conference. They wanted to promote the conference to this broader network, but didn't want the partners to bear the burden of developing messaging on their own.

"We understood who we wanted to talk to, but how do you get to them? You don't have relationship with them," says Blount. "Working through our partners to get to their community partners was really helpful. We could let our partners get to community folks on the ground."

The team created a series of messages that mirrored the ones sent to their own database, which partners could then send to their own lists:

- The message template included a header where partners could place their own logo and other branding, so recipients understood that the message came on behalf of an organization with which they had a relationship.
- Messages were sent from a partners email server for CAN-SPAM compliance.
- Registration requests and other calls-to-action linked back to the conference website.

EXAMPLE: AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY'S EMAIL MESSAGE TO PARTNER LIST



**Step #5. Send triggered email to website registrants**

The team used its conference website as a third channel for email outreach.

A small registration box on the website allowed visitors to enter an email address to receive notification of site updates. Then, whenever the team updated information on that site, registered users received an automated email featuring a link to the new content.

Visitors could specify which categories of information were most important to them, and then receive updates on relevant topics, such as the conference agenda, new speakers, blog posts, etc.

**Step #6. Pre- and post-show email for registrants**

Registration for the event or for website updates triggered another series of email messages timed for the conference schedule.

- Registered attendees received two pre-show reminders about the conference:

- 10 days prior to the event
- 3 days prior to the event

- Immediately following the conference, the team sent automated follow-up emails to three constituent groups:

- Presenters received a thank you note that included an invitation to provide feedback
- Attendees received a thank you note that notified them that all presentations were available on the website and invited them to fill out an evaluation survey
- Community members who had registered for website updates but hadn't attended the conference received an email informing them that presentations were available online

"We got a lot of positive feedback from people thanking us for letting them know [the presentations were] there."

## RESULTS

The new communication strategy helped create one of the most successful Disparities Conferences ever, says Blount. The team attracted 500 registrations, far exceeding their goal of 300.

"It particularly helped with community leaders – we were talking to them, not *at* them," she says. "The tone was right, level of personalization was right, and people reported having a positive experience on our website and with our emails."

- Creating an online abstract submission form and broadening the scope of their outreach led to a 40% increase in abstract submissions.

- Email messages generated for the program generated strong results, such as:

- 38%+ open rates
- 6% clickthrough rate

- The conference website also generated strong results:

- 89% of conference attendees visited TheCancerLens.org
- 12% of site visitors signed up for email updates
- 73.2% of site visits lasted longer than five minutes
- 91% of visitors found the site user-friendly
- 83% found the website met or exceeded their expectations

The effort also impressed Blount's colleagues within the ACS who organize their own conferences, and now want to learn more about her team's website and email strategy.

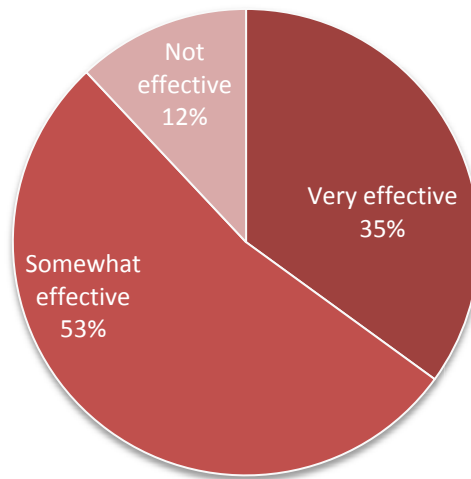
## TELEMARKETING

Telemarketing involves contacting prospects with a phone call to generate leads. This practice is also referred to as cold calling, since often times there is no existing relationship between the company and the prospect. The sales team commonly executes this tactic, since they are highly skilled in interacting with prospects over the phone. This tactic can also be executed by Marketing or through a telemarketing agency.

While telemarketing is one of the most seasoned marketing tactics, many organizations are still finding great value in this tactic.

### CHART: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TELEMARKETING

*Q. Please indicate the effectiveness of telemarketing for your organization*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=225

Telemarketing can be a long and cumbersome process where a large volume of calls is required to reach one qualified prospect; however the majority of B2B marketers indicated this tactic was at least somewhat effective. The value of interacting with that prospect through a one-to-one conversation is clearly worth the significant amount of effort required in executing this tactic.

Clearly telemarketing can be an effective lead generation tool for the B2B marketer, but once you get a prospect on the phone, you'll have a limited amount of time to make an impression. Because this time is so critical, it's important to consider guiding principles in this telemarketing including:

- **Be human.** No one wants to engage with a zombie reading a scripted message on the phone, and no one wants to go through a long transfer process to reach a salesperson who really called them in the first place. When you get a prospect on the phone, be sure to have a human-to-human conversation with them. Ask them questions and respond to their statements.
- **Be knowledgeable.** Since it can take a significant number of outbound calls to get an interested prospect on the phone, be sure the person doing the calling is knowledgeable enough in your product or service to address any questions the prospect might have. This is especially important to consider when outsourcing this tactic or employing an intern.

- **Build a relationship.** Traditionally, telemarketing has been executed as a one-time call to determine a prospect's interest however; telemarketing offers the opportunity to build a relationship with a two-way conversation. To convert a prospect into a lead, it may require multiple phone calls to build a relationship with one prospect.

Whether you execute telemarketing in-house, use an agency and / or employ tools like predictive calling technology, these guiding principles will help your organization to establish meaningful conversations with your prospects which could make telemarketing an effective component of your marketing mix.

## LIVE EVENTS AND TRADE SHOWS

If a key benefit to telemarketing is having a one-to-one conversation with a potential lead, live events and tradeshow add another layer of effectiveness to this benefit by making that conversation face-to-face. It simply doesn't get more human than this type of interaction and the conversations that take place during live events represents the most basic form of marketing. Before there was the telephone, a direct mail or print system, let alone the internet, business owners and farmers alike would gather at local markets to sell their products in a face-to-face environment.

Fast forward to today, and many marketers have indicated that that live events and trade shows are still effective means of marketing their business. As consumers continue to expect more from brands, clearly, they value the individualized attention they receive when engaging with an individual working a trade show booth.

As we learned earlier in this chapter, when we analyzed the allocation of B2B marketing budgets, live events and tradeshow can be expensive. Overall, this tactic took up the second largest slice of the B2B marketing budget, next to website design, management and optimization. There are a number of costs associated with trade shows, including travel, booth rentals, set-up / break down services, electrical, and the list goes on. Additionally, trade shows often require a number of individuals to be out of the office for several days, which only adds to the ample cost.

Since such significant investments are required in executing a trade show, it is essential that marketers protect their investment by following best practices and strategies, including:

- **Plan ahead** If your trade show marketing plan begins on the first day of the show, you are missing out on ample opportunities to engage prospects prior to the event in order to drive qualified booth traffic. Reach out to your list of leads that are currently in the pipeline to identify those who are planning to attend the show. Work with the organization holding the trade show to learn about any pre-show marketing and sponsorship opportunities. Don't leave your booth traffic to chance. Plan ahead to make the most out of the budget and resources you're committing to each trade show.
- **Schedule customer appointments.** Part of your pre-show marketing plan should involve setting up appointments for prospects to meet individually with a salesperson or trade show staff. Be sure that your booth setup has a place for these meetings to take place, or check with the show to see if meeting rooms can be held. Consider scheduling prospect meetings at the same time as customer meetings. Encouraging interaction between prospects and (happy) customers can be a highly effective selling strategy.
- **Offer perks.** Perks can come in the form of hosting a breakfast, dinner or cocktail hour for invited trade show attendees only, or offering a courteous gift. Check with your trade show about any opportunities to sponsor meals or events, or gifts such as a book or a newspaper that can be delivered to all hotel rooms of attendees, or circulated during the event. Offering perks like these provide you with the opportunity to create a memorable experience and a lasting impression on attendees and stand out from the other exhibitors.



SECTION SUMMARY: OUTBOUND MARKETING

In this section, we covered a number of tried-and-true outbound marketing tactics that are still relevant for a large percentage of B2B organizations today.

Before we move on to cover the hub of the B2B marketing plan, or the company website, please take a few minutes to complete the assessment for this section.

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1. List three of the benefits covered in this section of outbound marketing.

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2. What are the three components of a successful direct mail campaign?

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3. Please indicate whether the following statement is true or false. High levels of personalization improves open and clickthrough rates of email nurturing campaigns.

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4. What are the three guiding principles of telemarketing?

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*If you were unable to answer any of the above questions, please review the previous sections again before moving on.*

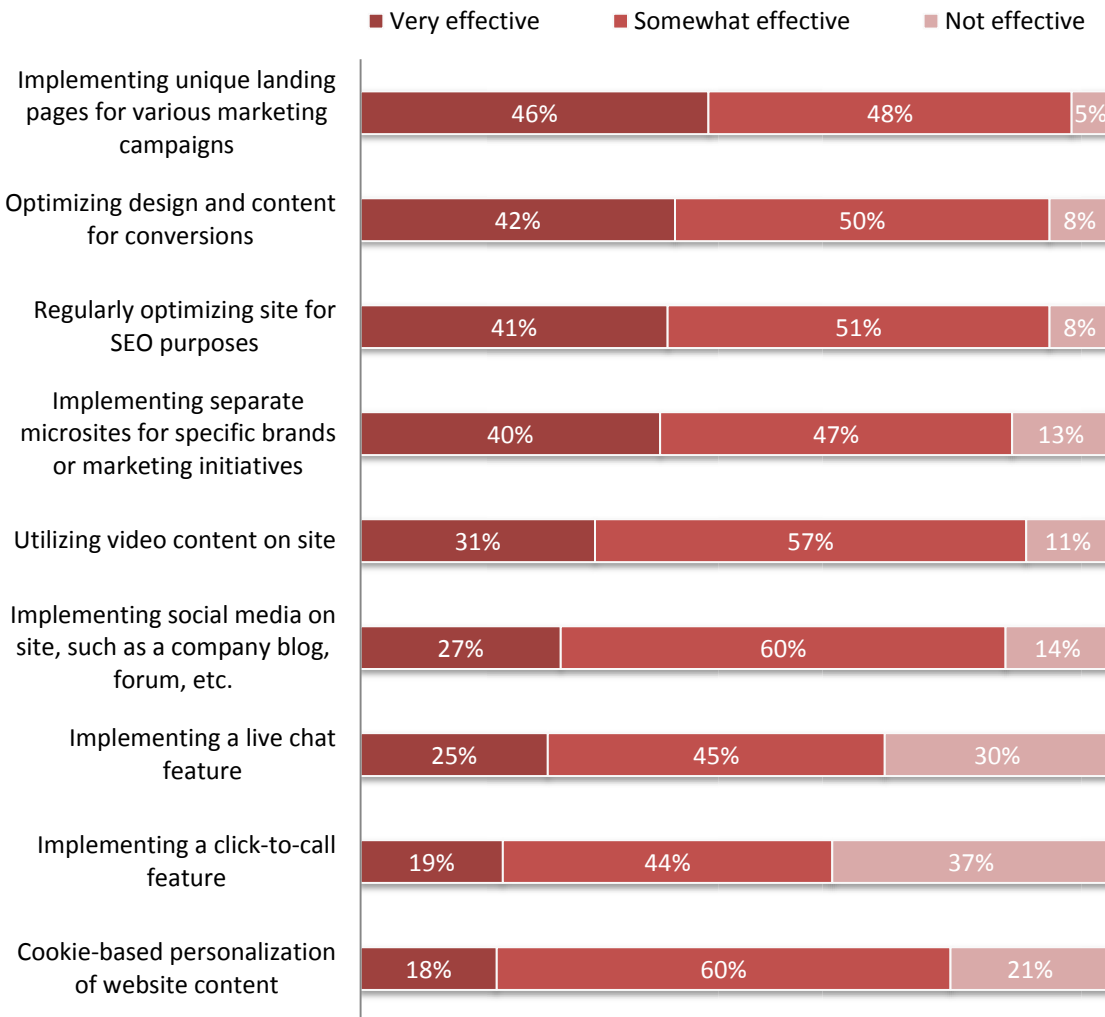
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## THE HUB

The company website is the center of the B2B marketing plan. All lead generation activities, whether inbound or outbound in nature drive traffic back to the website, which is why it is commonly referred to as the hub.

Rated as the most highly effective B2B marketing tactic, and the most expensive, the hub is arguably the greatest asset of the B2B marketing mix. You may be wondering what you can do to maximize the return from your hub, so we have included the following chart to identify the most effective website design, management and optimization tactics.

**CHART: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WEBSITE DESIGN, MANAGEMENT AND OPTIMIZATION TACTICS**  
 Q. Which of the following website design, management and optimization tactics does your organization currently use? Please check all that apply.



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
 Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

Earlier in this chapter, we have discussed the importance of relevance and the impact that increasing relevance in various tactics can have. Clearly, relevance is of great importance to the hub as well, as the top rated tactic is implementing unique landing pages for various marketing campaigns. The process of developing and implementing unique landing pages with a continued message from a specific marketing campaign creates a relevant experience for the prospect, which makes them more likely to convert.

Since personalization is a factor of relevance, we were surprised to learn that cookie based personalization of website content was rated as the least effective tactic overall. This may be a result of the level of effort required to execute such a tactic. Often, this will require marketing collaborating with IT, and may involve a lengthy roll-out period.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, how many words is a video worth? Utilizing video content ranks somewhere in the middle in terms of effectiveness when compared to other tactics. The creation of a video for marketing purposes can range in complexity. On one hand, a marketer can quickly record a video using a webcam or a handheld recorder and then have it up on the site within minutes of downloading. On the other hand, a marketer may need to hire an agency to cast and film a video. This varied level of effort may explain why this tactic is ranked in the middle in terms of effectiveness. Those investing significant resources in the video may not feel that it was worthwhile, and those investing minimal resources may have been pleased with their results.

The importance of the tactic rated second in overall effectiveness is profound. By optimizing the design and content of your website for conversions, enormous gains can be achieved. Just a minor increase in conversion rate can impact the number of qualified leads generated for your business, and revenues achieved.

**SECTION SUMMARY: THE HUB**

This was a quick section, so we'll keep the assessment brief. Please take a moment to complete it before continuing on.

- 
1. Please name the most highly effective tactic in website design, management and optimization.

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*If you were unable to answer this question, please review the previous section again before moving on.*

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## HOW TO SELECT YOUR MIX

Now that you're familiar with the inbound and outbound marketing tools available, how do you select the right combination for your business? As marketers, we may feel compelled to do everything, but in this section, we'll take a strategic approach to selecting the right mix of tactics that will enable you to drive qualified lead generation for your organization.

Traditionally, in marketing, we have been highly focused on the quantity of leads generated for sales each month, however; this formula does not always lead to optimal results. We're not suggesting that you remove quantity from your lead generation goals, but that you balance the need for quantity with the quality of leads generated. In this chapter, we'll provide strategies for selecting the right mix of marketing tactics that will generate a lead flow of this nature.

You have a number of marketing channels that you have been using over the years, so start with a complete analysis of the performance of these activities. This means it's time to put on your marketing analyst hat and prepare for some serious number crunching. Take the following steps to analyze this historical performance:

### **Step #1. Review from the bottom of the funnel to the top**

As marketers, we need to connect our activities to revenue, so start with an analysis of the deals that have closed. Take a look at all the deals that have closed for the last month, quarter, year, and previous year. The more data you analyze, the more reliable your results will be. Review the deals that have closed to find out how the lead entered the system. Did they find you through search or respond to a direct mail campaign? Record the number of deals closed, total revenue, average deal size, and any other key metrics that are uniquely important to your organization and tie them in to their marketing channel, and specific campaign.

For example, you may end up with a conclusion similar to the following: "Our company has generated \$3 million from direct mail as a whole this year, and \$500K of that came from our Fall direct mail campaign."

Earlier in this chapter, you conducted a preliminary evaluation of your marketing mix. Be sure to include this data in your evaluation as well.

You will also want to gather information on the buyer personas that made a purchase after responding to various channels, so any information on the company, industry, interests, etc. that you can record will be highly valuable.

### **Step #2. Review from the top of the funnel to the bottom**

Now that you have an idea of what marketing tactics have generated revenue for your organization in the past, let's look at the top of the funnel. How many leads were generated from each of your campaigns for the last month, quarter, year and previous year? Attribute lead volumes to channels and specific campaigns.

### **Step #3. Ask Sales**

Your sales team probably has campaigns in mind that they just love to get leads from. Ask them what these campaigns are, and explain how their experience compares to the data you have found. You may find that

their experiences are in line with your data, or you may also be surprised. Dig deeper into those surprises, they may reveal new opportunities to you. Keep an open mind, they may be onto something.

Additionally, you will likely need buy-in from Sales for your new marketing mix going forward, so best to get them onboard early.

#### **Step #4. Identify opportunities**

Use the complimentary data you have collected to identify the most effective marketing channels and campaigns for your organization. In your analysis, consider lead volume, revenue generated and the insights you received from Sales. Are there any channels or campaigns that generated a low volume of leads but a great amount of revenue? Are there any channels or campaigns that generated a massive volume of leads but few of them actually closed? This analysis may reveal some surprises.

Keep in mind, there are many factors that impact whether a sale closes. For example, was a highly skilled salesperson working the lead, or was it assigned to a salesperson unfamiliar with that industry? Were aggressive discounts offered to leads that closed in one month? Did this have an impact on the results of that month's marketing campaign? To avoid having discrepancies like these derail your selection of marketing channels, consider the whole picture, and remember that you're looking for general performance. This is another reason why it is so important to collect as much data as possible.

*What if I don't have data?*

These steps assume that you have ample data available to you, but what if you don't? If you're beginning your selection process without data, you're starting off at a severe disadvantage, however; that doesn't mean that you can't effectively select a marketing mix.

First, you'll want to identify a solution to tracking data for any marketing campaign you execute going forward. This is of the utmost importance. You will have to work with internal departments to roll out a CRM and you can do so by conveying the importance of marketing and sales data. If you have a CRM, great. You'll need to learn how to set up tracking mechanisms within that system. If you don't have a CRM, can't get a CRM, or know it will take ample time to implement, at the very least you should make it a priority to set up a marketing tracking system.

So you don't have data, but you do have resources. Talk to your sales team to learn what campaigns they love to get leads from. Be sure to ask them which campaigns they feel are the most successful at generating revenue. Again, the quantity of the information you collect here is important, so the more salespeople you talk to, the better. Pay attention to the most commonly mentioned campaigns.

#### **Step #4. Test**

Your marketing plan going forward should not be limited only by what you have done in the past. Be sure to allocate resources to test new channels and tactics each month. This may reveal new emerging opportunities for your organization.

#### **Step #5. Draft your mix**

You now have enough information to make a draft of your new marketing mix. When doing so, be sure to develop an interrelated strategy that incorporates the use of multiple tactics as an overall demand and lead

generation program. It may take multiple touches to generate a response from one prospect. Also, be sure to include programs that are effective in generating awareness. You'll also want to check in with Sales. They helped you develop this mix and will appreciate being kept in the loop.

**EXAMPLE: SAMPLE MARKETING MIX**

We have provided the following sample to give you an idea of how your new marketing mix might look. This mix is based on an annual marketing budget of \$500,000.

<b>Marketing channel</b> (email, direct mail, search, social media, etc.)	<b>Annual spend</b>	<b>Percent of annual budget</b>
Website design, management and optimization	\$100,000	20%
Tradeshows	\$75,000	15%
Email marketing	\$60,000	12%
Search engine optimization (SEO)	\$55,000	11%
Paid search (PPC)	\$50,000	10%
Direct mail	\$45,000	9%
Public relations	\$35,000	7%
Social media	\$35,000	7%
Virtual events / webinars	\$20,000	4%
TESTS – Telemarketing, print advertising	\$25,000	5%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%

**EXERCISE: DRAFTING YOUR NEW MARKETING MIX**

Earlier in this chapter, you conducted a preliminary evaluation of your marketing mix, and now it's time to map out your new mix. How does it compare to your previous evaluation?

Marketing channel (email, direct mail, search, social media, etc.)	Annual spend	Percent of annual budget
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%
	\$	%

**WORKSHEET: QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN DEVELOPING YOUR MIX**

Now that you have developed your new marketing mix, take a moment to answer the following questions to make sure you've got all of your bases covered.

<b>Questions to ask when developing your mix</b>
1. Does your plan align with your organization's revenue generation strategy?
2. Do you feel that you have completed ample research to develop this plan?
3. Does your research support every aspect of your plan?
4. Do you have an understanding of which buyer personas will be targeted with each campaign?
5. Does the sales team support this plan?
6. Have you allocated resources to continually test new initiatives?
7. Do you plan to integrate tactics in your mix as a single demand and lead generation campaign?
8. Does your plan include tactics to increase awareness?
9. Does your plan include a strategy for delivering multiple touches to one prospect?
10. Take a moment to get up from your desk, take a brief walk, and then come back. Do you still feel good about your mix?
<i>If you answered no to any of the above questions, consider revising your mix.</i>



CAMPAIGN EXECUTION

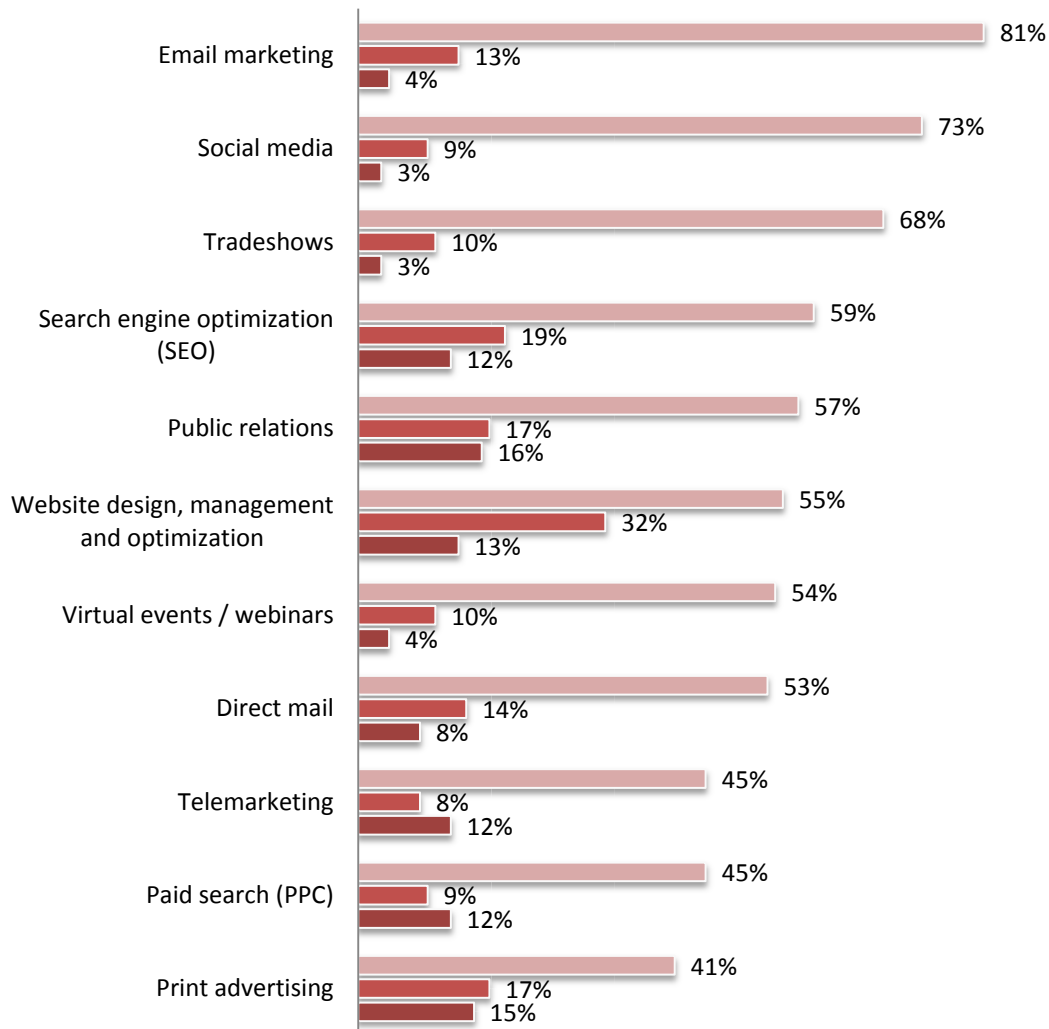
By now, you have a solid foundation for a successful lead generation campaign. You have developed buyer personas, a powerful and concise value proposition, reviewed a number of inbound and outbound lead generation tactics, and assembled your marketing mix with ample supporting data. Now all you have to do is act on that plan. Doing so is much easier said than done, and will require you to identify and allocate resources.

You will need to utilize a combination of in-house resources and outsourced services. We were interested in how marketers were executing various tactics within their marketing mix, so we asked them which tactics they conducted in-house, which they outsourced to an agency, and which they used a combination of in-house and agency time. The results are included in the following chart.

CHART: THE EXECUTION OF MARKETING TACTICS

Q. For each tactic that you use, please select the statement that best represents your current practices.

■ We do this in-house ■ We use a combination of in-house and agency time ■ We use an agency for this



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

There are far more organizations executing each tactic in-house, but don't let this stop you from hiring a consultant or an agency. The help in execution and expertise these parties can provide may be just what you need to take your campaigns to the next level. If there is a particular channel that your organization is struggling with, enlist the help of an expert in that area, even if just for a few meetings, before completely writing that channel off.

Organizations are most likely to enlist the help of an agency to execute their website design, management and optimization practices, as 45% of organizations indicated that they either used a combination of in-house and agency time or completely outsourced this to an agency. As we learned earlier in this chapter, the company website is the hub of all marketing activities. It was rated as the single most effective B2B marketing tactic and also the most expensive. Clearly, marketers are willing to protect this asset by enlisting the assistance of experts to properly design, manage and optimize their hubs.

Of all the tactics listed, social media is the least likely to be outsourced to an agency. Since this is the most recent addition to the B2B marketer's mix, organizations may still struggle with allocating significant budgets to this tactic.

## IS BAD DATA HURTING YOUR BUSINESS? DATABASE QUALITY AND MAINTENANCE

Earlier in this section, the importance of the marketing database was discussed in conducting research to develop your marketing mix. Since your marketing database is a highly valuable asset, it should be treated as such.

Maintaining a clean, organized marketing database is tedious work, and many marketers struggle with this task. This data drives all marketing decisions, so maintaining a clean, accurate database is of supreme importance.

We have provided the following guidelines to help you in this process.

### **1. Determine which database fields you must have, which would just be nice to have, and develop a strategy for collection**

In a perfect situation, we would collect as many data fields as we saw fit in order to collect the most information on our leads and customers. In reality, gathering all of this information can dramatically reduce the volume of conversions you receive on your Web forms. Contact information is a must; your sales team must have a way to reach prospects. At the first point of conversion, contact information must be required. Additional information like company size, budget, concerns, interests and timeframe to purchase are highly valuable as well, but good luck collecting all of this information from your prospects up front. You will need a strategy to collect the information you need over time.

When you ask your prospects to reveal personal information, you will need to offer them something of value in return. The content you developed earlier in this chapter can be put to good use here. Offer your audience a free whitepaper download, a webinar, or other collateral of value to them in exchange for a number of data fields. The more valuable the collateral, the more information you can require.

When you have contacts repeatedly filling out forms and being entered into the database, you will need to take measures to prevent duplicate records. This may involve implementing an advanced CRM system that uses cookies as unique identifiers to prevent duplicate records entering your database by merging new contact data with existing records. Whether or not you choose this option, you will also need to take additional measures to prevent duplicate records, as there can be some inconsistency with the use of cookies.

Duplicate records should be identified using multiple fields. Using an email address alone won't be a true indication because of leads having multiple email addresses, changing addresses, etc. By checking multiple fields such as email, name, company and location, you will achieve a more accurate determination of duplicate records. Once duplicate records are identified, they should be merged into one contact file. This contact may have a primary and secondary mailing address, email address, etc.

### **2. Centralize your database**

If you're currently using massive spreadsheets within the marketing department to track the performance of your marketing campaigns, stop. Your data needs to be central to the entire organization. Sales, Customer Service, the C-Suite and Marketing all need to operate off the same data. This minimizes confusion within the organization and holds various parties accountable. Sales wants to make sure you're generating a sufficient volume of highly qualified leads just as much as you would like to ensure that Sales is following up on those leads in a timely manner. Only with a centralized database will this be possible. In

support of this goal, you'll also want to determine what dashboards and reports will be used universally throughout the organization, and then make them available to various departments.

### **3. Make database maintenance a priority**

Consider employing a resource responsible for ongoing maintenance of your database. This person's time could be used up merely identifying and merging duplicate records within your database, let alone verifying the quality of data collected and streamline reports, dashboards, etc. Sales is not typically consistent in the updating of contact records, and Marketing is often challenged with manipulating intricate CRM systems to extract valuable data, so it makes sense to employ an individual with strong technical skills and an understanding of Sales' and Marketing's database needs.

SECTION SUMMARY: HOW TO SELECT YOUR MIX

Before moving on to the next step of the FUEL methodology, take a moment to answer these questions.

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1. What four steps should you take before mapping a new marketing mix?

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2. What should you do if you have limited data on the performance of your marketing tactics?

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3. Before removing a marketing tactic from your mix, with whom should you consider meeting?

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4. Please indicate whether the following statement is true or false. Tracking marketing performance in a series of spreadsheets is an effective practice.

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*If you were unable to answer any of the above questions, please review the previous sections again before moving on.*

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## CHAPTER 1 NOTES

## CHAPTER 2: FUEL - UNCOVER QUALIFIED LEADS

The second step of the FUEL methodology is to uncover qualified leads. Now that you have refined your marketing mix, you will need to establish processes to effectively manage the flow of leads entering the system.

Not all of these leads are created equal. You will need to partner with Sales to identify qualified leads and establish lead scoring, nurturing and management processes. The lack of alignment between Marketing and Sales is so common that it borders cliché, however many organizations are still faced with this challenge. We will begin this chapter by providing key strategies and tools you can use to bridge the gap between Marketing and Sales, including communication strategies and goal alignment. Improving this relationship is of paramount importance for your lead scoring, nurturing and management campaigns to be effective.

Next, we'll teach you how to find the gold in identifying and qualifying leads. First, you will map out your Marketing-Sales funnel. You will then identify your universal lead definition and establish a scoring methodology to identify leads that make the grade. Next, we'll show you what to do with those leads that do not make the grade in harvesting high-quality leads. In this section, you will learn how to establish lead nurturing campaigns and determine initial timing and frequency of contact. Finally, you will learn how to manage the hand-off of qualified leads from Marketing to Sales.

## BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN MARKETING AND SALES

One of the greatest issues to impair B2B organizations is a lack of alignment between Marketing and Sales, and it has been an issue since the departments have been created. Sales is commonly dissatisfied with the leads they are getting, and Marketing commonly feels that Sales should follow up on the leads they have in a more timely manner, and simply “sell better.” The sales team feels that they are the only ones concerned with meeting their monthly and quarterly goals, and Marketing feels that they are the only ones who think strategically. Sales gets the glory and recognition of closing a large deal within the organization, and Marketing is frequently asked to order t-shirts and company “swag.” Sales thinks that marketing is easy, and Marketing thinks that sales is easy. The list goes on and on, and these issues stem from varying skill sets and goals of these two departments.

The skill sets of these two departments breed different types of personalities, which commonly clash by nature. The skill set of the B2B marketer involves analytical thinking, creativity, writing and planning skills. The skill set of the B2B salesperson involves seasoned selling techniques like overcoming objections, and creating a sense of urgency, as well as powerful verbal communications and pipeline management skills. The salesperson has to be primarily tenacious, and the marketer must be primarily methodical.

Another culprit of the lack of alignment between Marketing and Sales is the timeliness of their goals and how their performance is evaluated. The sales team is highly focused on generating revenue now to meet their monthly and quarterly goals, because that’s how their performance and paychecks are measured. Part of Marketing’s role is to improve reputation and branding, and these goals are more long term. Marketing also commonly compares year-over-year performance, which is also more long term than the goals of the sales team.

### TABLE: TRADITIONAL MARKETING GOALS VS TRADITIONAL SALES GOALS

Please take a moment to review the varying goals between Marketing and Sales. These goals are generalizations based on traditional departmental goals, and are intended to help you gain an understanding of how the lack of alignment between Marketing and Sales originated.

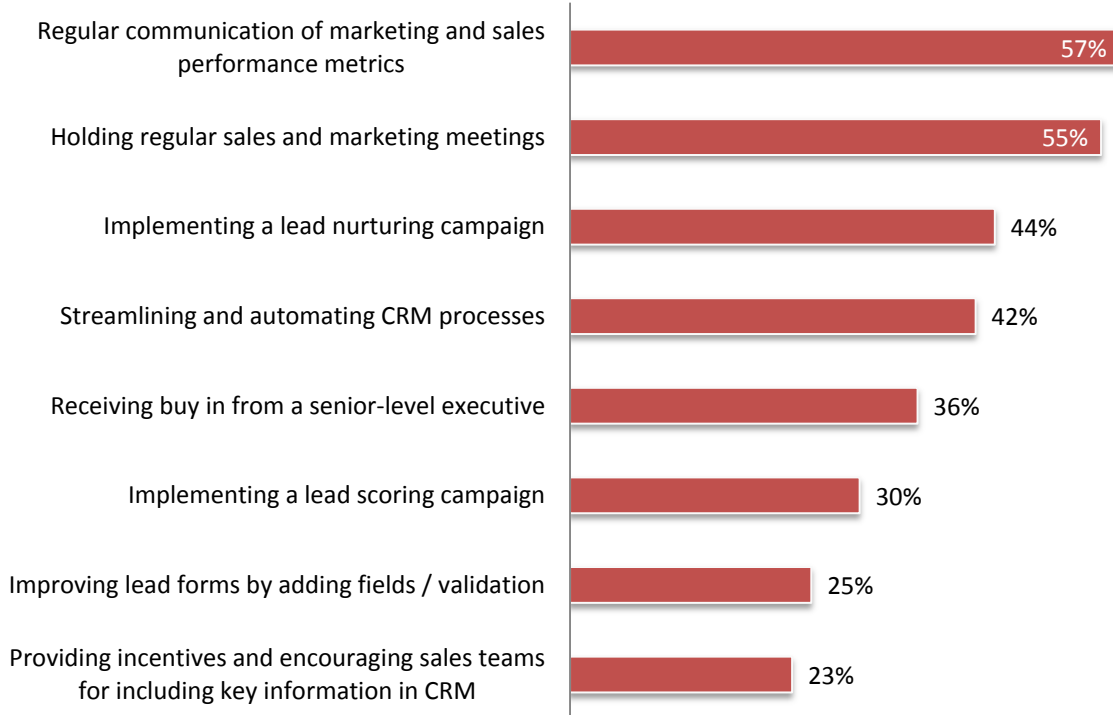
<b>Traditional Marketing Goals</b>	<b>Traditional Sales Goals</b>
Generate leads for the sales team	Generate revenue for the company
Improve reputation and branding, increase awareness over time	Close the prospect you’re talking to now to meet monthly and quarterly targets
Manage multiple projects and deadlines	Make a large number of dials per day
Continually optimize marketing campaigns to improve performance	Continually overcome objections and create a sense of urgency
Develop messaging for a wide audience	Meet the needs of individual prospects
Maintain a clean lead database	Manage a predictable revenue pipeline
Manage a firm marketing budget	Invest in high-value prospects with travel, meals, entertainment, etc.



We wanted to learn about the measures organizations are currently taking to bridge the gap between Marketing and Sales. Our findings are included in the following chart.

**CHART: BEST TACTICS IN IMPROVING MARKETING AND SALES ANALYSIS**

*Q. What have you found to be the best tactics in improving marketing and sales data analysis?*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

Improving marketing and sales analysis is an essential first step in bridging the gap between Marketing and Sales. Communications strategies like regularly reviewing key performance metrics and holding regular meetings top the list in improving marketing and sales analysis. The effectiveness of these tactics lies in the execution, and the actions that are taken as a result of what’s discussed. You can encourage regular communications and schedule all the meetings you want, but these acts alone will not solve a Sales and Marketing alignment problem. In order for these communications to have an impact, all parties must:

1. Approach discussions with mutual respect
2. Listen and recognize the problems that exist in marketing and sales processes
3. Take real actions towards a solution

If you have a Sales and Marketing alignment issue within your organization, it is highly likely that there are core operational problems at the base of this issue. Take a look at your marketing and sales operations. Do you send all leads immediately to Sales? Do you have a universal lead definition? Have you mapped out a Marketing-Sales funnel? Have you identified a process to hand sales-ready leads off to Sales and nurture non-sales-ready leads? Your answers to these questions may reveal real opportunities for your organization. Fix these problems, and such Sales and Marketing alignment issues will become a thing of the past. You will also be pleased with the revenue impact of these actions.

**WORKSHEET: SALES AND MARKETING ALIGNMENT ASSESSMENT**

Please respond honestly to the following questions on key alignment factors. Your answers will help guide you in improving Sales and Marketing alignment.

Key alignment factor	Y / N?
Sales and Marketing agree on what constitutes a qualified lead	
Your organization has an established lead scoring campaign	
Your organization has an established lead nurturing campaign	
Your organization has defined a Marketing-Sales funnel	
Your organization has defined a process for handing leads off from Marketing to Sales	
Sales and Marketing have regular communications to provide feedback on marketing campaigns and sales performance without engaging in “finger-pointing”	
Before launching a new marketing or sales campaign, Sales and Marketing collaborate on strategic development prior to launch	
Marketing and Sales monitor performance based on the same data and metrics	
The sales team does not produce their own sales collateral because Marketing has provided ample collateral for them	
Sales does not accuse Marketing of not meeting their end of the bargain by producing qualified leads	
Marketing does not accuse Sales of not selling effectively enough	
There is a true team mentality between Sales and Marketing, and not an “us vs. them” mentality	

Now, add up the total number of “no” and “yes” responses.

Total “No” responses	
Total “Yes” responses	

The questions that received a “no,” should reveal opportunities for you to improve the alignment between Sales and Marketing within your organization.

You have already begun the process of bridging the gap in the first step of the FUEL methodology. You have shown Sales that you value their expertise and opinions in developing buyer personas and your marketing mix and initiated a collaborative dialogue. These actions alone have left a positive impression on your sales team. As you continue toward FUEL marketing effectiveness, you will find that each step in the process will bridge the gap between Sales and Marketing, all while driving marketing efficiency to accelerate Sales pipeline performance.

The following case study will show you how one manufacturing company initiated collaboration between Marketing and Sales to execute a training program that resulted in a 14% lift in sales.

## CASE STUDY: ONLINE TRAINING FOR IN-STORE STAFF LIFTS SALES 14%: 7 STEPS

Case Study ID: 31560

Location: MarketingSherpa Member Library

Summary: The online marketing department at manufacturing company D'Addario and Company effectively collaborated with sales to gain sales team participation in their online product training program, resulting in an improved buying process and lifted sales. Learn the seven steps the team followed to create and gain participation in their online training platform.

### CHALLENGE

Danielle Record, Online Marketing Manager, D'Addario and Company, and her team did not want to leave customer questions unanswered. The musical instrument accessory manufacturer wanted to convey the finer points of their products to the people most responsible for selling them -- their dealer's on-floor sales reps.

"I think every company's in the same boat. They can't talk to every person that's selling their products," Record says.

The team believed that educating sales reps about D'Addario's products would help them better sell to customers. They just had to find a way to offer that training and incentivize the reps to take part.

### CAMPAIGN

The team built an online video training program to teach vendors about D'Addario products. They tied it to a rewards program that provided gifts to reps who completed lessons and passed quizzes.

Here are the seven steps the team followed to create and implement the training:

#### **Step #1. Get support from the top**

Building a training and rewards program required considerable work from multiple departments. Before pushing ahead, make sure you present a clear plan to superiors and ask for their support.

Record had experience managing a training program at a previous employer, and was familiar with a good plan of execution, she says. The experience, no doubt, helped her team sell the idea to executives.

#### **Step #2. Gather product information and training objectives**

The team gathered, organized and sifted through product information to distill the highlights of key categories. Vital information included:

- Key features
- Best suited use of product
- Product images

- Talk to other departments

The team also asked product managers and sales people what information they wanted emphasized in the training. This process ensured the program would meet every department's needs, and that they would not omit key information.

### **Step #3. Write scripts, outlines and quizzes**

The team outlined and scripted a video for each product category they wanted to feature. They organized the scripts into seven major categories, comprising 70 separate videos. Major categories included:

- Bowed string training
- Fretted string training
- Percussion training
- Reeds training

The outlines gave direction during video production and the scripts were later used for voiceovers.

*->Tip: Check in again with stakeholders*

Go back to your team's product managers, salespeople and any other stakeholders to ensure that you're hitting the right points in your outlines. Getting their input at the writing stage is better than getting it after the videos are created. Editing an outline is much easier than recreating a video.

- Create quizzes

As a follow-up to the video segments, the team created multiple choice quizzes that asked fewer than ten questions on a product's key points. Hold off on creating quizzes until outlines and scripts have been reviewed by the rest of the team. This will cut back on editing time.

### **Step #4. Create short training videos**

The team created short videos to train reps on certain products. The videos were two to five minutes in length and featured:

- Product
- Text overlay
- Voiceover descriptions
- Other video footage

"We always end the video with top features of the product so that the sales rep who watches it will leave the training really taking in the most critical information," Record says.

The team had a library of archived footage they were able to use for some of the videos, such as a sponsored artist describing or using the product.

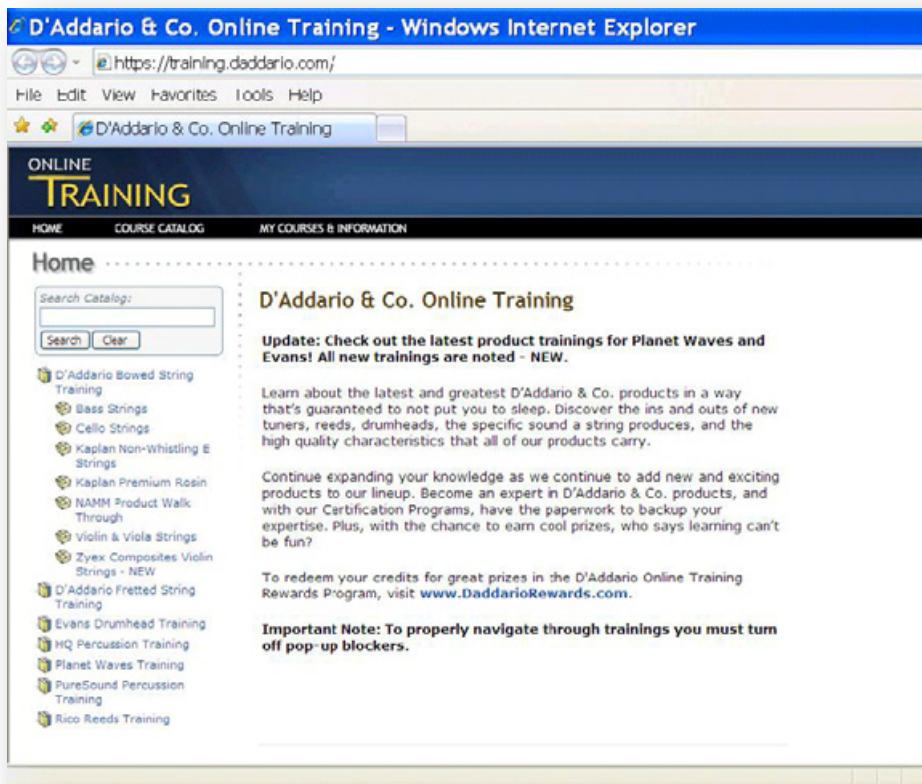
## Step #5. Build a platform

With the quizzes and videos built, the team needed to create a platform to host them. They created a restricted access training website which featured:

- A searchable video catalog
- Short descriptions of videos
- User account information such as courses passed and certificates received

The videos played on a template page that shifted design with the video's subject. After a video's completion, users clicked the "next" button to take the quiz in the same player window. If users passed the quiz, a certificate was sent to the "My Certificates" area of their account page, and they received points redeemable at a rewards site.

### EXAMPLE: D'ADDARIO & CO. ONLINE TRAINING PLATFORM



## Step #6. Tie in a rewards program

The team needed to incentivize sales reps to complete the training. They set up a website where reps who passed quizzes could redeem points for rewards, such as:

- Apparel
- MP3 players
- Other music-related equipment

The website included:

- Rewards and their descriptions
- Program rules
- Frequently asked questions
- Link to training website
- Link to brand pages

Reps that logged into the training website and clicked to visit the rewards site would automatically be logged into the rewards system.

### **Step #7. Announce program to dealers**

Lastly, the team had to get the word out to dealers that this program was available and free to use. Here are the tactics they used:

- Email

The team sent an email to promote the training to its dealer database. It included:

- Images of the training player
- Bulleted explanation of the program
- Button to "sign up today"

- Business cards

The team created business cards on which reps could write their user names and passwords for the training. One side of the card mentioned highlights of the program. The other featured the training program's logo and a space to write the rep's information.

The team distributed cards to dealers to give to their floor sales teams, and also to leave in their break areas.

### **EXAMPLE: BUSINESS CARD FOR ONLINE TRAINING**



- Single sheets

The team created two one-page descriptions of the program to be sent to dealers. One description was designed for floor salespeople, the other for managers. The team included these sheets with product shipments during the program's launch, and also handed them to dealers during visits.

- Phone

During the launch, the team mentioned the program to dealers during regular business calls.

- B2B website

The team maintains a restricted access website for dealers. When launching the program, they hosted an image on the site announcing the training and linking to the training website.

**RESULTS**

"We're very excited about the training program, and we're excited to see an increase in sales," Record says.

The team noticed a 14% sales increase among dealers who used the training, compared to those who did not.

About 25% of dealers are using the program, Record says.

- Well-received

"We got a lot of great feedback from users, too," Record says. "A lot of people were happy to get that direct knowledge. I think people are sometimes hesitant to ask a question, or they don't know who to ask."

- Building vendor loyalty

"Besides learning about our products, I would hope the sales reps that were using it are feeling a bit of loyalty because we're giving them free products and rewards for the training," Record says.



**RECRUITING A MARKETING-SALES ALIGNMENT TEAM**

A key strategy that lead to the success of D’Addario and Company’s sales training plan involved gathering support from the top, and 36% of marketers indicated in our study that receiving buy-in from senior level executives was an effective strategy in improving marketing and sales analysis. The targeting of key executives and influencers within your organization could make or break the success of your Sales and Marketing alignment plan, and your overall implementation of the FUEL methodology.

Start by identifying the executives and key parties that have a great deal of influence within your organization. This may include department heads, top salespeople, etc. Pay attention in company meetings to see which individuals are driving the decision making process, and what decisions they are driving. Ask to sit in on sales meetings as a “fly on the wall” to identify which sales people have the most influence and any ideas they might have for current processes.

Once you have identified these individuals, take an interest in their opinions and ideas for the operations within your organization. Your discussions should include, but not be limited to marketing operations. Then take real actions towards supporting the initiatives that you agree with. By showing these influencers that you are committed to the overall success of your organization, they will be more willing to help you sell new plans internally.

As your reading this, you may come to the realization that you are one of the key influencers of your organization. If this is the case, you will still benefit by gathering a team of supporters.

**WORKSHEET: RECRUITING A MARKETING-SALES ALIGNMENT TEAM**

Please take a moment to identify the key influencers within your organization, their concerns, and the actions you can take to show your support.

Key influencer	Key concerns	Strategies

**SESSION SUMMARY: MARKETING AND SALES ALIGNMENT**

Before moving on to the next section on identifying the Marketing-Sales funnel, please take a moment to answer these questions.

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1. What are the two key issues cause the lack of alignment between Sales and Marketing?

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2. What are the three steps that must be taken in order to have effective communications?

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3. What is the first step in identifying a Sales and Marketing alignment team?

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*If you were unable to answer any of the above questions, please review the previous sections again before moving on.*

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## IDENTIFYING THE MARKETING-SALES FUNNEL

Identifying the stages of your Marketing-Sales funnel will enable both Sales and Marketing teams to quantify key performance metrics that will hold both departments accountable. Without a defined funnel, you run the risk of an ambiguous analysis process which will ultimately lead to a lack of alignment between Marketing and Sales. By identifying a Marketing-Sales funnel, Marketing is able to deliver content to prospects in specific buying stages in order to optimize their progression through various funnel stages until the sale is won.

The funnel does not begin once a lead is handed off to Sales; it begins once a lead has responded to a marketing campaign and enters the system. We wanted to learn more about the funnel stages that B2B organizations recognize, so we asked our study participants to indicate their recognition of the following stages in their Marketing-Sales funnel:

### REGISTERED LEADS

Registered leads include all inquiries that respond to a marketing campaign by calling in, sending a direct response card, submitting a form on an organization's website, or responding in some other form.

### RULES-VALIDATED LEADS

Rules-validated leads are registered leads that pass the criteria as valid leads that appear to be in the organization's target market.

### PHONE-READY LEADS

Phone-ready leads are rules-validated leads that meet certain criteria agreed upon by Sales and Marketing as a lead that is ready for Sales follow up.

### PHONE-VALIDATED LEADS

Phone-validated leads are phone-ready leads that have been validated by Sales and confirmed to meet agreed upon criteria.

### SALES-READY OPPORTUNITIES

Sales-ready opportunities are phone-validated leads that are willing to begin the sales process with a salesperson and often meet another set of criteria agreed upon by Marketing and Sales.

### SALES-VALIDATED OPPORTUNITIES

Sales-validated opportunities are sales-ready opportunities that have been validated by sales to meet agreed upon criteria.

### SALES-FORECASTED OPPORTUNITIES

Sales-forecasted opportunities meet the criteria defined by sales management for forecasting future deals.

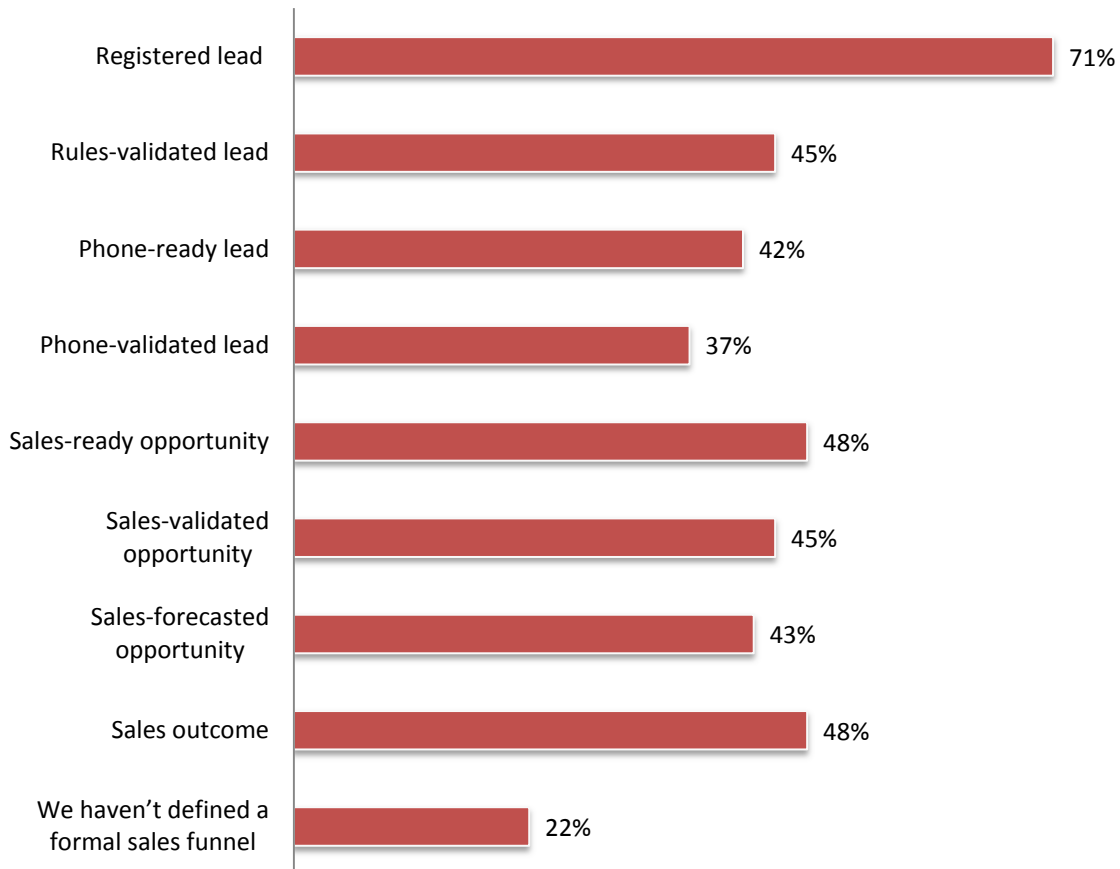
### SALES OUTCOME

Sales outcome is determined when the sale is won, lost, or indefinitely postponed.

These funnel stages map out a general process that can be applied to a wide range of organizations, but there will be cases of organizations having funnel stages of varying complexities. Later in this section, we'll provide you with tools and exercises to map out your own Marketing-Sales funnel, which may or may not match the examples provided, depending on the unique needs of your business. First, let's take a look at the results from our study in the following chart.

**CHART: THE IDENTIFICATION OF SALES FUNNEL STAGES**

*Q. Please indicate which stages in the Marketing-Sales funnel below are tracked in your organization.*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

A significant percentage of organizations indicated that they have not yet defined a formalized sales funnel, nearly a quarter of all respondents. For these organizations, there are great gains to be had from taking this essential step.

Other than during the first funnel stage of a registered lead, many of the stages show slightly fewer than half of organizations indicating they have recognized them in their current funnel. This may be evidence of less complex buying processes for a number of respondents, or a lack of a fully mapped-out funnel.

In order for any funnel to be efficient, both Marketing and Sales must agree upon the various stages that exist in the buying process and identify common terminology that can be used throughout the organization. As you begin to map out your funnel, keep in mind that the number of stages and names of your funnel

stages are far less important than having both Marketing and Sales agreeing on a process. For example, instead of using stage names like “registered lead” you may feel that “interest” may more accurately describe the first stage of your funnel. The vocabulary that best supports both Marketing and Sales in conceptualizing the various funnel stages in your buying process will be the best solution for you. Again, the key best practice here in mapping out your funnel is to have both parties agree upon all stages.

You don’t have to define the specific criteria of a qualified lead at this stage, just the stage and overall expectations for that stage in the process. For example, during your meeting with sales, you may come to an agreement that a phone-ready lead is a lead that meets the criteria to be defined by Marketing and Sales. At this stage of the process, you are plotting a process. In the next section of this chapter, we’ll walk you through defining various criteria for qualified leads, and help you establish lead scoring methodologies to identify those leads.

But first, we’d like to demonstrate the impact that can be achieved by mapping out funnel stages in the upcoming case study. You will learn how networking equipment company Nortel optimized lead progression from one funnel stage to the next by implementing various communications strategies to specific stages of the funnel to accelerate sales pipeline performance. Nortel’s campaign was truly a comprehensive strategy, and at the core of this strategy was a solid foundation. Nortel’s marketing team worked with Sales to identify which funnel stages to target for this campaign, and what content should be delivered to prospects in those stages in order to optimize their progression to a sale. Read on to learn just how they did it.

## CASE STUDY: HOW NORTEL'S Q4 PUSH TOUCHED 30% OF PIPELINE AND HELPED CLOSE DEALS

Case Study ID: 31556

Location: MarketingSherpa Member Library

Summary: Facing bankruptcy and an acquisition, Nortel needed to keep leads from being plucked away by competitors. Learn how they used a highly-focused message strategy, a microsite, and in-person and virtual events to answer prospect's questions about the firm's future and keep them engaged with sales, optimizing progression from one funnel stage to the next.

### CHALLENGE

The fourth quarter is typically when marketers shift their focus from generating new leads to helping convert their existing leads into deals. But in 2009, this job was even more pressing for Chris Waldo, Americas Demand Generation Leader, Nortel.

The networking equipment company had recently filed for bankruptcy and was in the process of being acquired by a major competitor, Avaya. Although the marketing team helped generate \$1.6 billion in pipeline value that year, they were concerned that news of the bankruptcy and acquisition would cause prospects to take a "wait-and-see" approach before closing deals with Nortel, or be targeted by competitors.

In response, the team needed to bring a new message to the market to help alleviate prospects' concerns, and accelerate deals currently in the pipeline.

"To finish off the year, we had to take some of the same techniques used to generate leads and point back to opportunities in the funnel to assist the sales team to close," says Waldo.

### CAMPAIGN

The team created a Q4 "close the pipeline" initiative that used several channels to engage with prospects, answer questions, and move them toward discussions with salespeople. Key elements included:

- A new microsite
- Paid search and social media
- In-person and online events
- Email nurturing

Here are eight steps they took to enact the campaign:

#### **Step #1. Collaborate on campaign plan with sales team**

Moving "down the funnel" was something Waldo's team had never done before, so they needed upfront and ongoing communication with the sales team to develop a strategy.

They scheduled a meeting with team members from Sales and Marketing to identify:

- Target accounts
- Specific audiences within those accounts
- Hot button issues for campaign messaging

"We consciously chose the most vocal salespeople [to participate in the process] to accelerate buy-in," says Waldo

## **Step #2. Develop message map**

One of the first tasks was to develop a "message map" for the campaign, which would address the concerns of key decision makers and influencers within targeted accounts. The marketing and sales teams knew that prospects had questions about the company, and they wanted their campaign to proactively answer as many of those questions as possible. In some respects, the bankruptcy and pending acquisition made this job easier.

"It was very clear what the hot button was for customers," says Waldo. "Sometimes it's not so clear."

They settled on four key approaches for campaign messaging:

### - Assurance

These messages were intended to alleviate prospects' concerns about adopting the company's tools and technology by highlighting Nortel's recent growth and product innovations despite the down economy.

### - Rebuild Trust

These messages reminded prospects about Nortel's brand by highlighting the company's reputation for quality equipment, service offerings, market share and history of innovation.

### - Urgency

These messages offered reasons for prospects not to "wait and see," by emphasizing the strong pricing discounts offered in Q4 and the importance of staying current with technology.

### - What's next for Nortel

These messages focused on the company's future by addressed issues related to technology development, industry consolidation, and other trends.

After developing the message themes, the team conducted a content audit to determine which existing content assets – such as case studies, calculators and whitepapers – could be matched to the new message map. They identified more than 60 pieces of content to use, but also discovered gaps where new content needed to be created.

Marketing remained in close contact with the sales team during this process, offering several iterations of the message map and content selections to ensure the two teams remained in agreement on the campaign plan.

### **Step #3. Segment audience**

Identifying the right audience for messages was another key piece of the plan. The team wanted to focus on deals most likely to close, but also to tailor the level of engagement to the size of the opportunity.

After examining the recommended accounts and audiences with those accounts, the team created three messaging tracks for the campaign.

- Prime Accounts:

- Strongest relationship with sales team
- Largest opportunities
- High-value, one-to-one messaging, such as invites to executive-level events

- Select Accounts:

- Opportunity value of more than \$50,000 but not in the Prime segment
- Medium-value, one-to-few messaging, such as invites to virtual events

- Other Accounts:

- Smaller opportunities that didn't have direct sales coverage
- Basic-value, one-to-many messaging, such as news updates and access to online resources

### **Step #4. Create campaign microsite**

The team created a new microsite as the hub for content and communications related to the campaign:

- URL – next.nortel.com
- Page title – "What's next for enterprise solutions?"

- Each week, the team updated the site with news, content offers, virtual event announcements and other features related to the four message themes. For example, one week they highlighted an independent analyst report on the pending acquisition by Avaya. Another week, they highlighted ongoing innovation in the company's products.

- A left navigation bar included links to news and facts about the acquisition, current promotions, and new content offerings.



EXAMPLE: NEXT.NORTEL.COM MICROSITE



- The team integrated social media into their content and messaging strategy in several ways. First, they included links to Nortel’s existing social media outlets, such as:

- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- YouTube

They also monitored social media channels to gauge customer and prospect sentiment about the company. When they saw a particular issue coming to the forefront of social discussions, they knew what type of content and messages to push out through the microsite to address those concerns.

- They drove traffic to the site through paid search ads and social media outreach, posting content and messages to their various channels that linked back to the microsite.

- Calls-to-action included phone and email contact details to get in touch with the company, and a voluntary site registration. Visitors that registered on the site received regular email updates on news and content, but registration was not required to access information on the site.

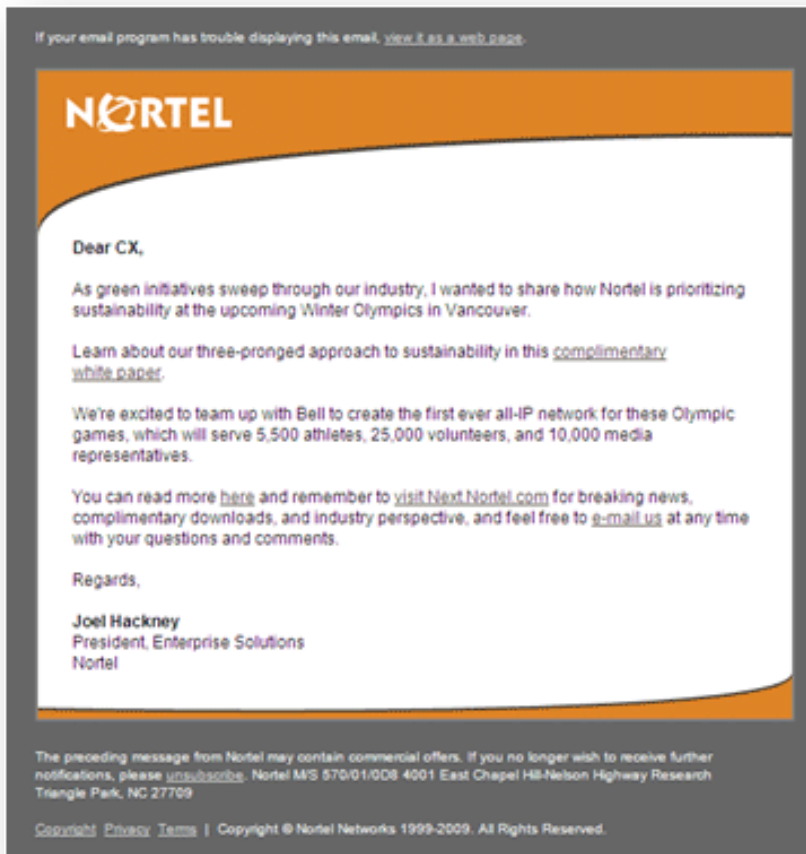
**Step #5. Email nurturing**

Visitors that registered at next.nortel.com were entered into an automated email nurturing campaign. The four-message program supported the key themes of the message map over a six-week cycle.

Message subjects included:

- Details about Nortel's role in providing communications infrastructure for the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Winter Games
- Third-party analysis of the value of implementing VOIP networks
- An analyst report about trends in the IT industry, and how CIOs should evaluate the impact of mergers and acquisitions
- Reminders of the special deals and discounts being offered for Q4

EXAMPLE: NORTEL NURTURING EMAIL



## Step #6. In-person CXO roundtables

In October, the team scheduled intimate, in-person events in 12 cities for key contacts in their Prime Account segment. These "CXO Roundtables" were invite-only events that allowed top customers and prospects to ask questions of company executives and a third-party analyst.

- The team analyzed its pipeline to find cities that represented the largest number of opportunities.
- They worked with sales managers to hand select contacts and customers from high-value accounts in

those regions. Their goal was to attract five to 15 attendees at each event.

- They sent a personalized invitation to each potential guest that provided details about the meeting and link to register for the event. They offered registrants a free Kindle, on which they could receive news and content updates from next.nortel.com

#### **Step #7. Virtual CXO webinar**

In November, the team adapted their in-person CXO roundtable meetings for a webinar that included:

- Company executives giving an update on the planned acquisition
- An analyst's presentation on trends in industry consolidation
- Video testimonials from Nortel customers
- Attendee Q&A session

- The team worked with sales managers to build an invitation list from its segment of Select Accounts.

- They sent an email invitation and registration form to those contacts, and conducted telemarketing follow-up calls to secure registrations.

- A reminder email prior to the event invited registrants to submit questions for the company in advance.

- They made the webinar available on demand from next.nortel.com 30 minutes following the live event.

- Sales representatives scheduled viewing days for customers to watch the on-demand webinar and ask their own questions.

#### **Step #8. Sales team follow-up**

The team monitored prospect activity throughout the campaign to find opportunities for Sales follow-up. For example:

- All microsite registrations were mapped back to the current opportunity list. Then, the team compiled weekly "heads up" reports for members of the sales team, which showed activity from contacts in their accounts. Reports details included:

- Site visits
- Email activity
- Webinar or event attendance

Sales representatives used these activities to decide when to call prospects, and which topics to discuss.

- The team also monitored the questions prospects submitted during the live webinar (the event reminder email generated roughly 60 pages of questions). The sales team then used those questions to develop discussion topics for follow-up calls.

## RESULTS

"It was our first foray into going down the funnel, and the results are great," says Waldo.

- The number of prospects and customers that registered for the microsite or participated in the events represented 30% of the company's sales pipeline.
- 34% of revenue generated in November and December came from accounts that had interacted with the program.

The team also saw impressive metrics from the team's microsite, webinar and email nurturing campaign:

- 14.7% of visitors to next.nortel.com registered to receive updates.
- Nurturing emails generated open and clickthrough rates far above the team's average. For example:
  - First nurturing email – 43.6% open rate, 11.51% CTR
  - Second nurturing email – 34.9% open rate, 17% CTR
  - Third nurturing email – 31.3% open rate, 7.1% CTR
- 65% of registrants attended the webinar, compared to the team's average 35% attendance rate.

## DRAFTING YOUR MARKETING-SALES FUNNEL

If you currently lack a Marketing-Sales funnel, or if you feel your current funnel is not an accurate representation of your buying process, you will need to re-evaluate. For any new initiative, inspiring change within your organization can be challenging. Luckily, you have already begun to bridge the gap between Marketing and Sales in the previous section and identified the key influencers of your organization. Now it's time to partner with those individuals to provoke key decision making and change within your organization. Make sure that in all of your internal communications your goal for this process of supporting the acceleration of sales pipeline performance.

Insight from your sales team will be invaluable in this process, and they may have the experience to map out all of your Marketing-Sales funnel stages. Throughout your process, you will want to develop a funnel that includes the following criteria:

### **1. It should be measurable**

Your funnel should clearly identify the various stages that a lead goes through on their journey to becoming a customer for your organization. Since the goal is to optimize progression from one funnel stage to the next, you will need to quantify the number of prospects in each stage, and the velocity of their progression. *Hint: once you have defined your funnel, benchmark current performance*

### **2. It should encourage accountability**

Marketing and Sales should work as a partnership, and both parties should be accountable to one another. Within your funnel should be ample opportunity for one department to validate the product of the other. For example, if Marketing sends a lead to Sales, Sales should then have the opportunity to validate or confirm that that lead is, in fact sales-ready. If Sales sends a lead back to Marketing saying that it is not sales-ready, Marketing should then have the opportunity to validate or confirm this statement. By creating validation processes throughout your funnel, you encourage mutual accountability between Marketing and Sales.

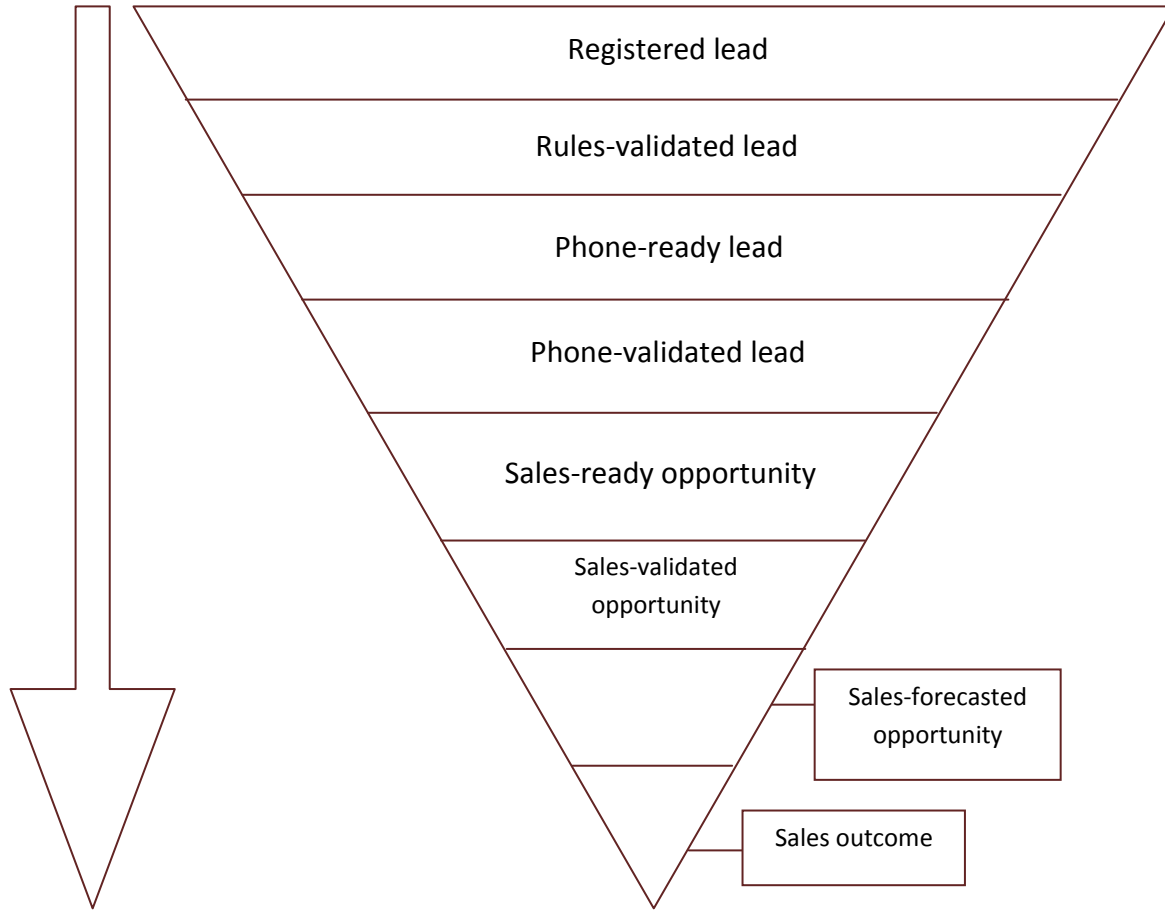
### **3. It should be simplified**

You may have a very complex buying process, but your definition of funnel stages doesn't have to be. Resist the urge to get incredibly detailed in mapping out this process. It's the overall process that counts, and the agreement between Marketing and Sales.

As you are drafting your Marketing-Sales funnel, it may be beneficial for you to use an example of a defined Marketing-Sales funnel in your initial meetings. To support you in this end, we have provided the following example:

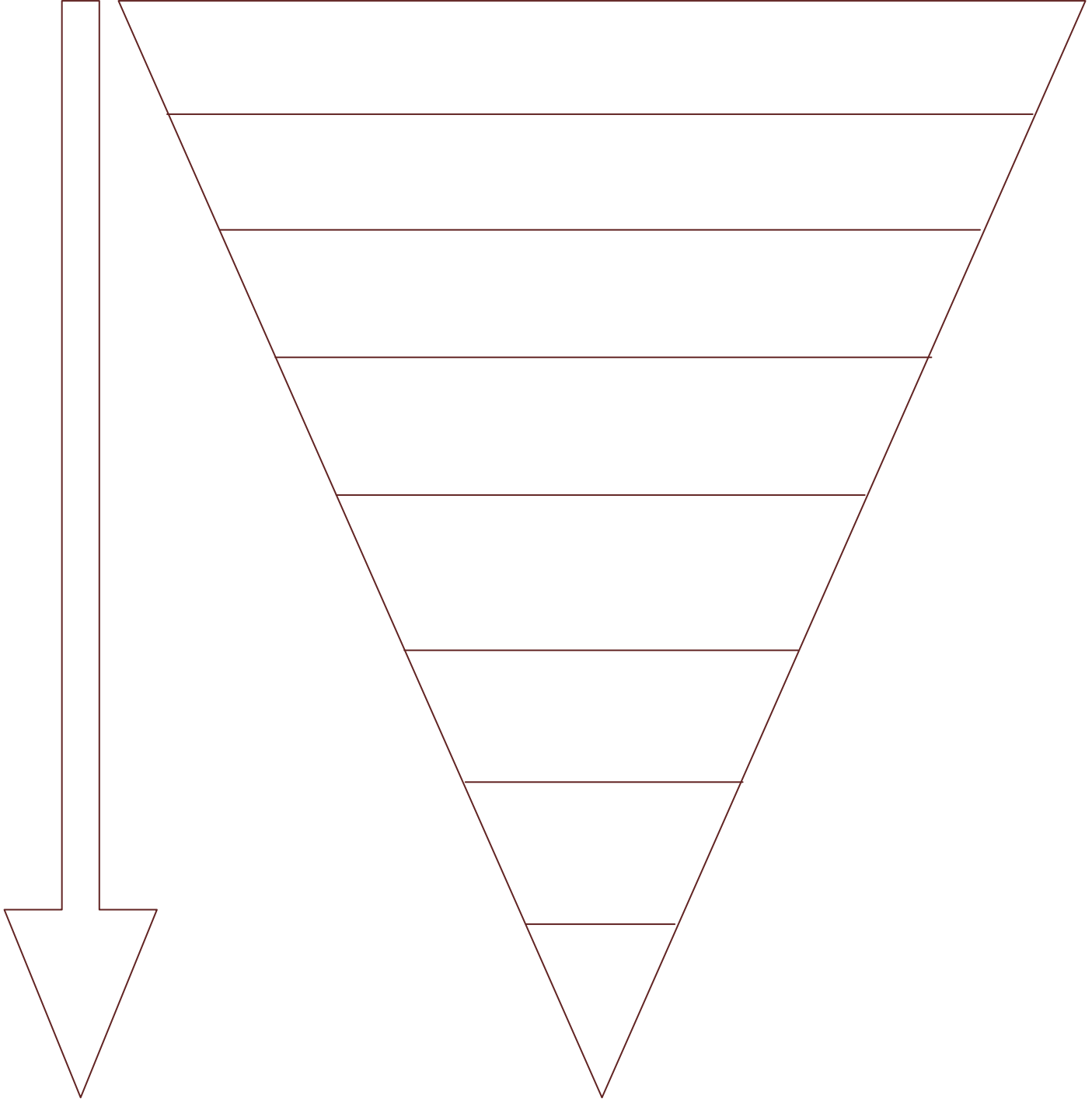
**SAMPLE MARKETING-SALES FUNNEL**

Below is an example of how the Marketing-Sales funnel would appear using the funnel stages outlined earlier in this chapter.



**EXERCISE: DRAFT MARKETING-SALES FUNNEL**

We have provided the following template for you as you draft your Marketing-Sales funnel. You may choose to take a moment to complete this now, or use it in your meetings with Sales and key influencers to visualize your funnel stages.



SESSION SUMMARY: IDENTIFYING THE MARKETING-SALES FUNNEL

Before moving on to the next section on lead qualification, please take a moment to answer these questions.

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1. What are the two priorities you should focus on when identifying your Marketing-Sales funnel?

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2. Please name the three criteria that your Marketing-Sales funnel should meet.

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3. What does it mean to produce a Marketing-Sales funnel that encourages accountability?

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*If you were unable to answer any of the above questions, please review the previous sections again before moving on.*



## FINDING THE GOLD: IDENTIFYING AND QUALIFYING LEADS

What is a lead? Ask three members from different departments of your organization and, unless you have identified a universal lead definition, you may find yourself with three different answers. Look up the term “lead” in the dictionary and you will find a number of definitions including the first and foremost position, or a competitive advantage. Just the mere essence of this word may encourage organizations to act fast and get a salesperson in contact with the lead right away. But not all leads are created equal.

For many B2B organizations, any person who provides their contact information in exchange for something of value is considered a lead that must be contacted as soon as possible. The lead is handed off to Sales so they can close the deal. This practice prevents your organization from reaching its full revenue potential. This practice also creates an environment where Sales and Marketing are not aligned. Marketers will hear “these leads are bad” from Sales, and then continual finger pointing will ensue.

Sales’ reaction to this process is telling. While the leads may not be “bad,” it is likely that many of the leads were not ready to engage with a salesperson. When that lead began to receive phone calls and emails from their salesperson, they were completely turned off from the company for feeling hounded to make a purchase.

If this sounds familiar, your organization will need to embrace change, starting by defining what is considered a lead.

### DEFINING A LEAD

Defining a lead sounds like a simple process, but for many organizations there are a number of factors that identify whether or not a lead is ready to engage with Sales. Identifying these factors can be a complex process. In order to establish common vocabulary, you will need to define a universal lead definition. This phrase was developed by Brian Carroll in his bestseller, *Lead Generation for the Complex Sale*. His definition for a universal lead definition is as follows:

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*“By definition, a universal Sales lead is one that has been determined to fit the profile of the ideal customer, has been qualified as Sales-ready, and spells out the responsibilities and accountabilities of the participants in the program, Sales and Marketing.”*

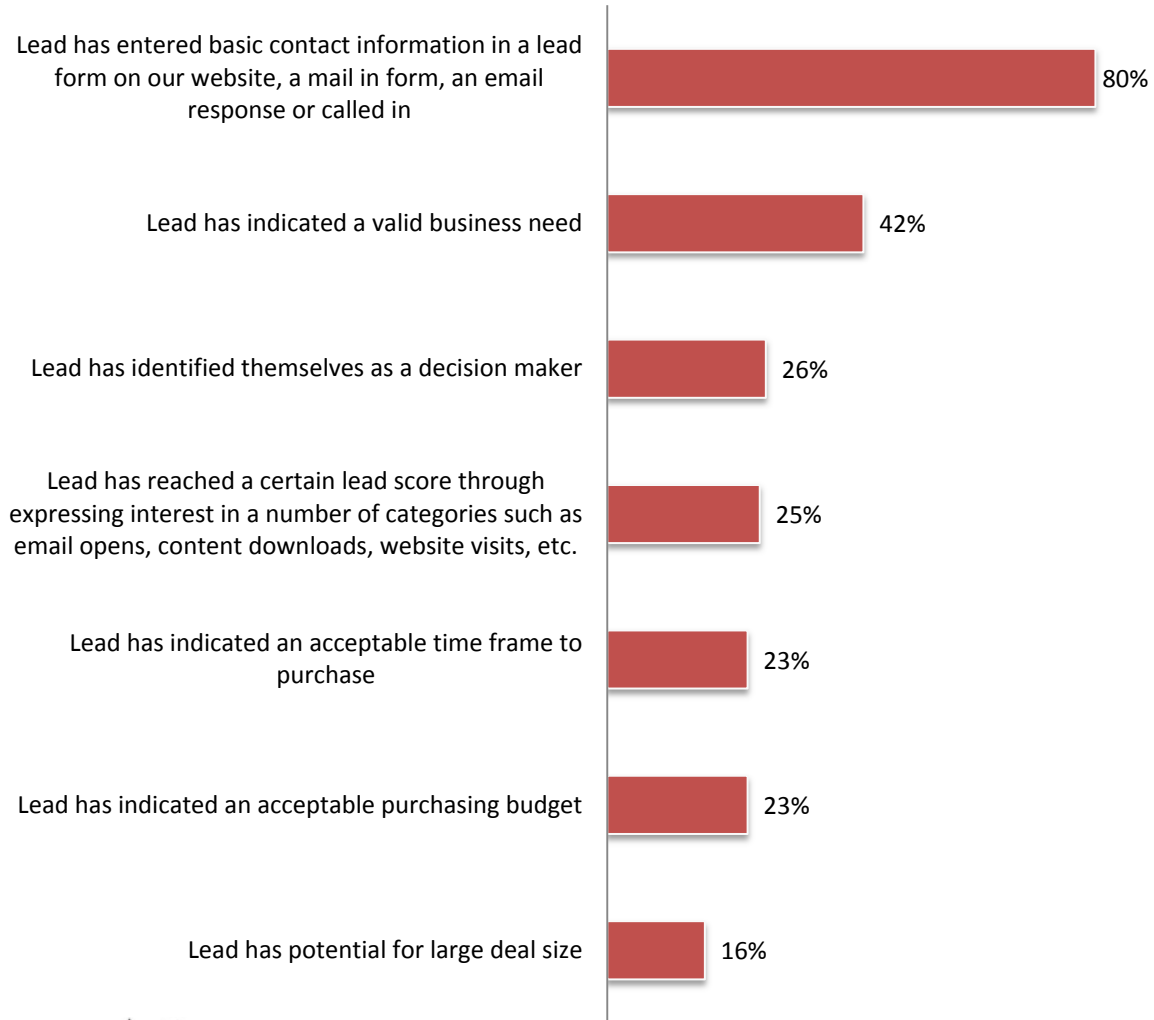
*-Brian Carroll  
Executive Director of Applied Research, MECLABS  
CEO, InTouch*

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Later in this section, we’ll walk you through the steps required to identify your universal lead definitions and define accountabilities for Sales and Marketing. First, let’s take a look at the following chart, which shows the information our study participants required of their leads before passing them to Sales.

CHART: INFORMATION REQUIRED BEFORE PASSING A LEAD TO SALES

Q. What information is required before a lead is passed to sales?



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
 Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

Lead qualification is an area that presents great opportunity for B2B marketers. As represented in the above chart, there are not a great number of organizations using multiple forms of qualification.

For example, 80% of respondents indicated that a lead must provide basic contact information. The highest level of participation after that is 42% for an indication of a valid business need. From there, the participation levels continue to decline. Furthermore, the average number of qualification criteria selected (per respondent) to this question was only two criteria.

What’s shocking about this data is that fewer than half of all respondents verify that a lead actually has a valid business need for their product or service before passing the lead to Sales. For the majority, these leads may not even have a valid business need for their product or service, and they are being delivered to their sales teams to close. This is a fundamental issue that can lead to a lack of alignment between Marketing and Sales.

So, how do you begin this daunting task to accelerate sales pipeline performance, maximize revenues and align sales and marketing teams? We recommend taking the following steps.

### **Step #1. Analyze past sales-ready leads**

In this first crucial step, you will identify common characteristics among your best leads and your best customers. Which leads closed the fastest and had the largest deal sizes? Which customers make the most repeat purchases and recommend your products and services? Are there common job titles? Locations? Industries or company sizes? Lead generation sources should also be considered. Refer to the ideal customer profile you created in Chapter 1, as you may have already identified some of these characteristics.

Through your analysis, you'll want to identify the criteria that the most successful leads have in common. This list of criteria will support you in Step #2.

### **Step #2. Meet with Sales**

Marketing and Sales must agree on the universal lead definition. Set up a meeting where Marketing and Sales can come to a collaborative decision. You will need support from the key influencers of your organization to accomplish this. You will also need to act as a facilitator of this meeting. Plan an agenda of topics to discuss beforehand and circulate it to all parties that will be in attendance. You may also want to circulate the criteria you have already identified.

Once you have everyone gathered, ask the question "What is a qualified lead for our company?" Allow for everyone in the room to chime in with their thoughts. You may want to give each team member the floor for a few minutes by circling around the room. Your job here is to listen intently. (*Hint: in the next section, you will be provided with a list of telling questions to guide this meeting*).

Take copious notes or consider recording the conversation. You don't want to miss the valuable insights that will come out of this meeting. If the topic goes off point, you (as the facilitator) will need to pull the conversation back to the topic at hand and refer to the meeting agenda. There will likely be some disagreement between teams and individuals. You will need to navigate these disagreements with care and keep the meeting productive.

### **Step #3. Confirm with Sales**

Based on the insights you have collected in the previous meeting, you will want to schedule a second meeting to confirm. Opinions can change quickly, and you'll want to be sure to only keep the criteria that are consistently mentioned between these two meetings. Schedule them at least two weeks apart so that all parties approach the new meeting with a fresh perspective. Again, your job in this second meeting is to primarily listen and facilitate.

During this meeting, you will also want to establish accountabilities between Marketing and Sales. You'll want to clearly define what is expected of each department, and agree to it. For example, Marketing is expected to generate a certain percentage of qualified leads to total leads each month and Sales is expected to improve their closing percentage by 5%. During this step, you'll want to set expectations for timeframe of roll-out. This could take anywhere from 1-6 months depending on your organization, how long it takes to come to an agreed universal lead definition, benchmarking the results from month one, etc.

#### **Step #4. Draft and roll out**

By now you should have plenty of data and insights collected to draft your universal lead definition. Be sure to include the insights that were common between the initial and follow up meeting and balance this with the data you have collected. *(Hint: in the next section, you will be provided with sample universal lead definitions).*

#### **Step #5. Confirm again**

Once drafted, you will need to confirm with Sales to make any necessary edits and receive final buy in. This could be executed through a third follow up meeting, or by distributing the definition via email. If there was significant disagreement in the first two meetings, you'll want to hold a third and final meeting. If most of the room was in agreement, a simple email will suffice. Be sure to ask for approval or comments and suggested changes. You should expect response within one week, and could even include a deadline to encourage timely feedback.

#### **Step #6. Publish**

Make your universal lead definition as public as possible. Post it on cubicle or office walls, message boards, etc. Bring it up in company meetings. Work with HR to include it in your employee handbook or new hire materials. You want this definition to become a term that is understood and used throughout your organization.

#### **Step #7. Edit and republish**

Over time, you will find that your leads change. They may be influenced by circumstances like the economy, or a new industry innovation. When this happens, you will find that new criteria need to be added or altered within your universal lead definition. As a result, you'll want to make the universal lead definition a continual work in progress that evolves as your audience does.

The result?

As a direct result of collaborating with Sales to identify your universal lead definition, you will:

- Generate a greater volume of qualified, sales-ready leads
- Dramatically reduce any frustrations that exist among sales
- Improve Sales and Marketing alignment
- Increase sales effectiveness
- Accelerate sales pipeline performance
- Ultimately increase overall revenues

In the upcoming pages, you will be provided with worksheets that identify questions that can generate revealing comments during your meetings with Sales, and map out the characteristics of qualified and un-qualified leads. You will also receive a sample universal lead definition, and have a chance to draft your own.

**QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR SALES TEAM TO DEFINE A QUALIFIED LEAD**

Bring this list of questions with you to your meetings with sales, or use it to inspire your own questions that are unique to your organization's needs.

<b>Identifying your universal lead definition</b>
What makes a good sales lead? What type of leads do you love to receive?
What need, concern or business issue makes these leads a good fit?
What makes a bad sales lead? What type of leads do you hate to receive?
What need, concern or business issue makes these leads a bad fit?
What can we start doing to give you better leads?
What should we stop doing?
What information do you want to have on a lead before you receive it?
What information is a must-have and what information is nice-to-have?
Are there specific lead behaviors that you're looking for? What behaviors do your best leads take?
Are leads from one Marketing channel better than another? What is the best lead source?
What do you expect from Marketing? In return, what can we expect from Sales? (lead volume, nurturing, closing percentage, etc.)

**WORKSHEET: QUALITIES OF QUALIFIED AND UNQUALIFIED LEADS**

Use this worksheet to identify desirable lead traits, and undesirable lead traits.

Criteria of qualified leads	Criteria of unqualified leads
(For example: indicates a valid business need, visits the website, downloads whitepapers, has adequate budget, etc.)	(For example, is not clear if there is a business need, has not visited the website multiple times, has not downloaded a whitepaper, does not have adequate budget, etc.)

#### SAMPLE UNIVERSAL LEAD DEFINITIONS

We have provided the following samples to familiarize you with universal lead definitions. These are not actual universal lead definitions and were developed for the purpose of these examples only.

*“A sales-ready lead for our company has a need for CRM software, and 'gets it.' They have some level of education on CRM and a clear understanding of the benefits. They have an adequate budget set aside for their purchase and they have downloaded one of our whitepapers on CRM software benefits. Approximately 30% of leads generated from Marketing will be sales-ready and approximately 15% of sales-ready leads will be closed by the sales team.”*

- CRM Software developer

*“Our organization considers a lead to be sales-ready once they have indicated interest by opening and clicking through on multiple emails, visiting our website multiple times and downloading multiple whitepapers. Sales-ready leads also must indicate their interest in engaging with a salesperson by checking off a box on our lead forms that says 'please have a consultant contact me.' If this option has been selected without ample activity, the lead is still considered sales-ready Marketing will generate 300 sales-ready leads each month, and the sales team will close 10% of those leads within three months.”*

- Website consultancy

#### EXERCISE: DRAFTING A UNIVERSAL LEAD DEFINITION

Now that you have gathered data and insights to support your universal lead definition and familiarized yourself with sample universal lead definitions, it's time to draft your own. Please use the space provided below.

**LEAD SCORING PROCESSES AND CALCULATION**

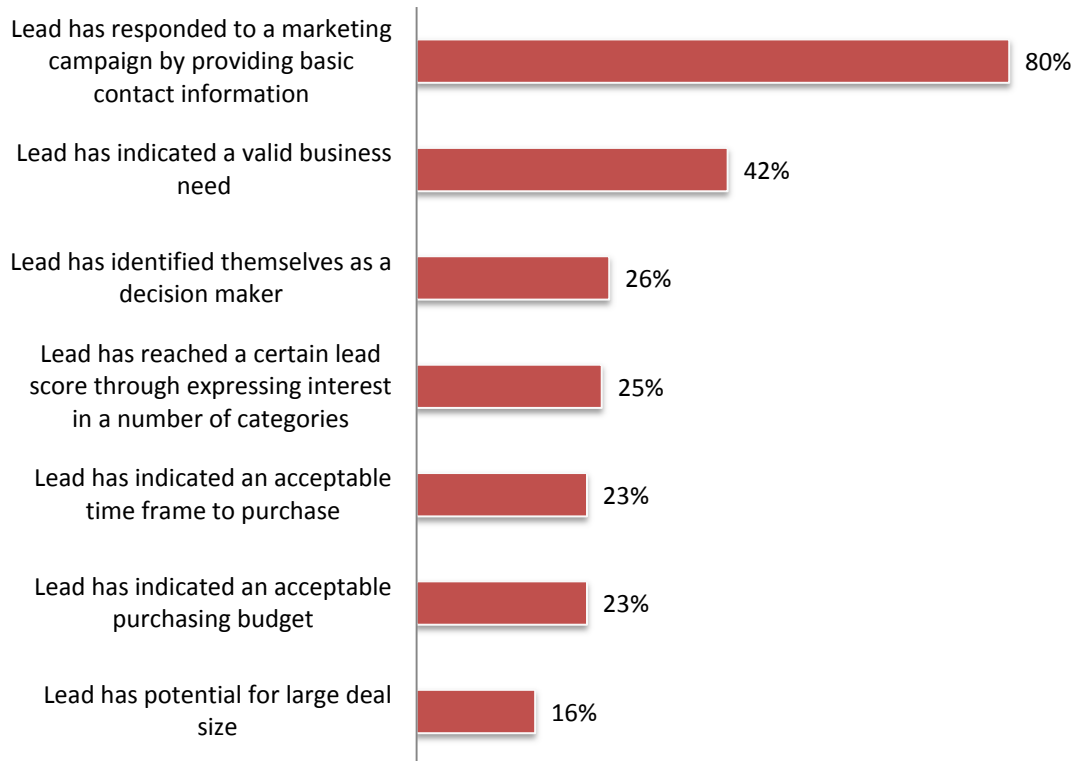
Now that you have identified the criteria that define a sales-ready lead and created a universal lead definition, it's time to develop lead scoring methodology that will enable you to identify which leads meet that definition.

Lead scoring is the process of adding or subtracting points as a result of various lead attributes and behaviors that identify sales-ready leads. Any lead that submits their contact information to an organization should be assigned an immediate score based on their attributes and initial behaviors. The lead will then receive additional points over time for any new information that indicates desirable traits or by executing desirable actions. The lead should also have points subtracted for undesirable traits or actions.

Determining a magic number for your sales-ready lead score will take plenty of trial and error. Much like your universal lead definition, your lead scoring methodology will evolve over time. To get you started, we have provided you the following data on factors that other B2B organizations are using in their lead score calculations.

**CHART: FACTORS OF LEAD SCORE CALCULATIONS**

*Q. What actions or traits are currently considered in your lead scoring calculation?*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

Much like lead qualification, lead scoring is an area that presents great opportunity to B2B marketers. The results of our study show that only a quarter of respondents are executing the best practice of identifying a sales-ready lead based on the lead's expression of interest over time and reaching a particular lead score.



Lead behaviors are excellent indicators of engagement, interest, and ultimately lead quality, which is why they should be included in lead scoring methodologies. Marketing automation applications enable organizations to score leads based on behaviors or activity, such as visiting a website or opening and clicking through on an email, as well as demographics and attributes. In the next chapter, we'll cover marketing automation, but first, let's gain an understanding of what key components build a successful lead scoring campaign.

#### CRITERIA

To properly assess the sales-readiness of a lead, you will need to consider multiple criteria. These criteria should include demographics or attributes, such as company size or industry, and behaviors, such as website visits and email opens. All of the criteria you include should reveal how close of a match that lead is to your universal lead definition.

#### EXECUTION

Many companies embarking on a lead scoring campaign attempt to execute it manually. This really limits the number of criteria that can be considered. This is also not the most accurate form of lead scoring, as it opens the door for human error. The best practice is to automate your lead scoring methodology with the help of a software solution. This option is far more accurate and flexible. You will also have the capability to score leads based on a wide range of criteria (*Hint: we will cover marketing automation in detail in the next chapter*).

#### ASSUMPTIONS

When deploying a lead scoring campaign for the first time, there is limited data available. Marketers have to make their best guess as to what numerical score a lead must meet in order to be sales-ready and fulfill the universal lead definition. This takes a lot of guesswork. The answers to a lot of marketer's questions regarding lead score threshold will be answered within the first few months of deployment.

#### FLEXIBILITY

Since the initial lead scoring methodology and threshold are primarily the products of Marketing and Sales guesswork, your lead scoring calculations will need to be flexible. Be open to editing lead scoring criteria and thresholds over time. Deploying a lead scoring campaign is – and should be – a continual process of trial and error.

#### FEEDBACK

Check in with Sales regularly to see how recent leads have been, and how close they are to matching your universal lead definition. In the early stages of deployment, you will want to check in on a daily basis. As your lead scoring methodology becomes more accurate, you can check in on a weekly basis. You want to do this frequently to catch any potential problems early – before they impact Sales' monthly goal. Some of the key changes needed in your lead scoring methodology will come from these conversations.

## ATTRIBUTES AND BEHAVIORS FOR LEAD SCORING

As you brainstorm on what criteria will be included in your lead score calculation, we have provided the following list of attributes and behaviors to inspire your creativity.

### Lead scoring attributes

- Industry
- Company size (number of employees)
- Annual revenue
- Location
- Budget
- Job title
- Key problem / pain point
- Whether or not the lead has a current solution
- Whether or not the lead “gets it” (i.e. are they educated on the benefits of your product or service? Do they place value on these benefits?)
- Explicit indication of interest in being contacted
- Indication of timeframe to purchase
- Number of employees from that company who are also leads
- Indication that they are not currently looking for a solution (subtraction of points)

### Lead scoring behaviors

- Website visit
- High-value website page visit
- Email open
- Email clickthrough
- Whitepaper download
- Webinar registration
- Phone call
- Email sent
- Visited your booth at a tradeshow
- Frequency of activity
- Recency of activity
- Email unsubscribe (subtraction of points)
- Inactivity (subtraction of points)

You may find that you will be able to use multiple examples from the above list in your own lead scoring methodology, or you may develop an entirely new one. Various criteria are going to apply to your unique business, and the important thing is the ability for your scoring methodology to identify leads that meet your universal lead definition.

On the next page, we'll provide a sample lead scoring methodology so that you can conceptualize how a fully developed lead scoring methodology looks like. Again, your final product may look exactly like the example, or may vary greatly. We encourage you to develop a methodology that meets the unique needs of your business.

**SAMPLE LEAD SCORE CALCULATION**

We have provided the following sample to familiarize you with a lead score calculation. This is not an actual lead score calculation and was developed for the purpose of this example only.

<b>Lead scoring criteria</b>	<b>Addition / Subtraction of points</b>
Lead works for a company with more than 100 employees	+3
Lead has indicated an acceptable budget of US \$5,000 for purchase	+5
Lead has indicated a timeframe to purchase of three months	+5
Lead has a job title that includes the word Manager or Director	+3
Lead indicated that they wanted to be contacted by a consultant or salesperson	+8
Lead visited the website	+1
Lead visited the pricing page of our website	+2
Lead opened a company email	+1
Lead clicked through on a company email	+2
Lead unsubscribed from the email list	-5
Lead has not shown any activity for 14 days	-3

**EXERCISE: DRAFT LEAD SCORE CALCULATION**

Please use the worksheet provided below to draft your lead score calculation.

Lead scoring criteria	Addition / Subtraction of points

SECTION SUMMARY: LEAD QUALIFICATION AND SCORING

Before moving on to the next section, please take a moment to complete the following assessment.

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1. What is a universal lead definition?

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2. Please list two benefits of identifying a universal lead definition for your organization.

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3. Please list two components of a successful lead scoring campaign.

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4. Please indicate whether the following statement is true or false. Executing manual lead scoring methodologies leads to highly accurate and consistent lead scores.

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*If you were unable to answer any of the above questions, please review the previous sections again before moving on.*

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## HARVESTING HIGH-QUALITY LEADS

Now that you know what constitutes a qualified lead for your organization, and what doesn't, you will be able to deliver only the most qualified leads to your sales team. What happens to the rest of the leads that aren't ready to interact with a salesperson? These leads should be placed in a lead nurturing campaign until they are ready to engage with Sales.

Lead nurturing is a process of building and nurturing relationships with ongoing, relevant and valuable communications. Lead nurturing campaigns should provide value to the audience regardless of whether or not the prospect makes a purchase.

Lead nurturing can be used as an additional channel to drive qualified leads to the sales team. They can also be used to re-engage dormant sales opportunities. No matter what your goals are, it is likely that you will find a solution in lead nurturing. Here are a few ways that lead nurturing can be used:

### ONGOING NURTURING

Ongoing nurturing is consistent communications intended to keep brands on prospects minds. Examples of ongoing nurturing include regular company newsletters.

### OUTREACH NURTURING

Outreach nurturing campaigns aim to capture new leads, or permission from new leads to have a salesperson reach out to them. Outreach campaigns can also be used to collect additional data from a lead. When marketers ask for more from their prospects in an outreach nurturing campaign, they should expect to provide something of value.

### ENGAGEMENT NURTURING

Engagement nurturing campaigns are targeted at prospects who are early in the sales cycle. The goal is to build stronger relationships with new prospects to increase interest. Engagement nurturing can also be used to re-engage dormant sales opportunities. Examples of engagement nurturing include content specific to prospect needs, such as webinars, articles, whitepapers, etc.

### CONVERSION NURTURING

Conversion nurturing campaigns are targeted at prospects who are further along in the sales cycle. The goal of these campaigns is to drive prospects to make a purchase. Examples of conversion nurturing content include buyer's guides, case studies, etc.

### NEW CUSTOMER NURTURING

New customer nurturing provides educational "how-to" information to new customers to propel customer satisfaction.

**WHAT LEAD NURTURING IS, AND WHAT IT ISN'T**

To give you a clear idea of what your lead nurturing campaigns should be, and what they shouldn't be, we have provided the following list:

<b>Lead nurturing IS</b>	<b>Lead nurturing IS NOT</b>
Providing valuable, relevant and timely content to your audience	Continually sending promotions to your audience
Segmenting your audience to deliver the most relevant content to various segments	Sending one monthly newsletter out to an entire database, without any regard to segmentation
Calling leads to notify them of a valuable article, or having another valid business reason to make the call	Calling leads once a month to "touch base" and see if they are ready to buy
Offering content of value to your audience, whether it's self-promotional or not	Offering only self-promotional whitepapers or product brochures
Providing valuable content and communications to your audience, whether or not they ever buy from you	Intending to encourage a purchase of your product or service with every interaction

**ESTABLISHING LEAD NURTURING CAMPAIGNS**

By now, you should be ready to protect the investments you have made to generate your non-sales-ready leads with a nurturing campaign that will consistently deliver more qualified leads to your sales team. The following steps outline how you can develop your campaigns. Lead nurturing campaigns can take time to implement, and you may want to start small with a basic campaign, and improve it over time.

**Step #1. Define segments**

By now, you have learned that you cannot expect to receive great results by sending one message or piece of content out to a massive audience without regard to segmentation. In order to deliver valuable content to your prospects, you will need to segment your lead nurturing database by a number of factors, and develop unique lead nurturing tracks for each segment.

You already have the buyer personas you developed in Chapter 1. These buyer personas are a great start for your lead nurturing segmentation because they identify traits, interests and needs of your various prospects. When it comes to nurturing, you will also have to consider the prospect's stage in the buying cycle and identify whether your lead nurturing campaign will be for ongoing, outreach, engagement, conversion or new customer nurturing.

**Step #2. Collect and develop content**

You will need a large library of content to execute a successful lead nurturing campaign. Back in Chapter 1, you took an inventory of your existing library and learned how to develop new content. Be sure to develop

this content so that it meets the needs of your various buyer personas in different stages of the buying cycle. Use as much data and information as you can get on your prospects to drive content development.

### **Step #3. Add a human touch with teleprospecting**

If you're having trouble identifying what buyer persona your prospect is, or what stage of the buying cycle they are in, you will need to collect more information from that prospect. This can be executed through teleprospecting.

Teleprospecting is separate from Sales, and can be used to collect prospect information while nurturing. Teleprospecting in this manner would be part of an outreach nurturing campaign. In addition to outreach campaigns, teleprospecting can be used to alert contacts of new content, or to invite them to a webinar, making this tool valuable for multiple types of lead nurturing campaigns.

Teleprospecting is different from telemarketing, and does not involve robotic scripts or involve a stuffy, impersonal conversation. Teleprospectors are highly skilled in building relationships, and having conversations of value with prospects.

### **Step #4. Further expand the types of lead nurturing touch points**

Lead nurturing is not just about email and phone calls; it can include a number of touches. Just like various segments need to receive content that is relevant to them, they also will have preferred formats of the delivery of that content.

Think of all of the tools you used to generate those leads in the first place, and how they can be used for continual lead nurturing. Direct mail collateral can be delivered as part of a lead nurturing campaign. Social media can be used as a touch point. Webinars can be used in lead nurturing both in the early stage of the buying cycle as an engagement campaign and later as a conversion campaign. Mobile phone messages may be preferred over direct mail or email.

### **Step #5. Perfect your timing**

Timing is another factor of relevance in a lead nurturing campaign. You want to deliver relevant content to your prospects when they need it most. You have already addressed delivering relevant content to different stages of the buying cycle, now it's time to determine relevant timing and frequency of your messages.

Lead nurturing campaigns can be scheduled or triggered. A scheduled nurturing message is developed and deployed at a pre-determined time. A triggered nurturing message is sent in response to an action that a lead has taken. By using a combination of scheduled and triggered lead nurturing messages, you will be able to deliver valuable content to your audience in a timely manner.

To get started, consider the average length of your sales cycle when determining timing, and then make your best educated guess for initial timing. You could also ask your prospects how often they want to hear from you. Your initial timing should be tweaked over time, leading us to our final step.

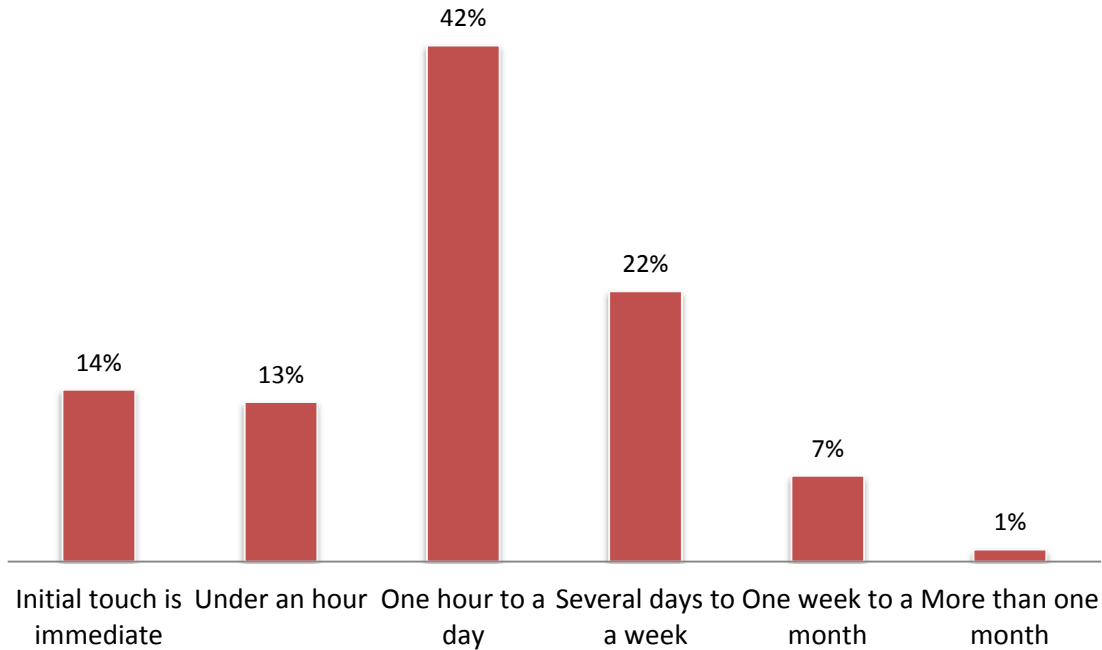
### **Step #6. Test, test and test again**

You'll want to continually test your messaging and timing of lead nurturing communications to optimize your campaigns. Test subject lines, content, timing and frequency. By executing A/B tests, you may uncover a number of opportunities to improve the results received from all of your lead nurturing campaigns.



Let's take a closer look at the timing and frequency of lead nurturing messages in the upcoming chart. This chart shows the approximate timeframe B2B marketers are waiting to make initial lead touches once a lead enters the system. We have also provided a second chart on the frequency of messages once initial contact has been made.

**CHART: MAJORITY OF ORGANIZATIONS MAKING INITIAL LEAD TOUCHES WITHIN FIRST 24 HOURS**  
*Q. Approximately how long do you wait for the initial lead nurturing touch once a lead or inquiry performs a desired action, like filling out a lead form on your website or downloading a whitepaper?*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
 Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

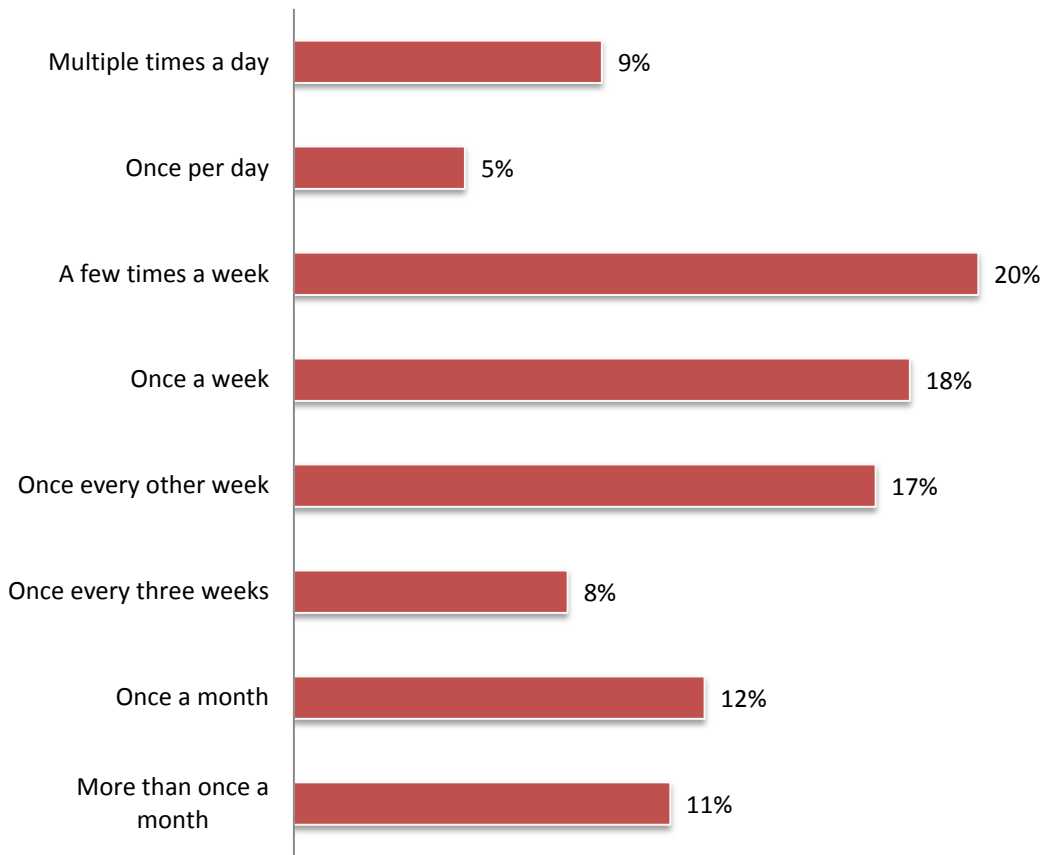
The initial lead touch is almost always a triggered event. A lead responds to a marketing campaign by providing essential contact information, and the company responds with their initial lead touch.

An initial lead touch is commonly an email or a phone call. On average, the most common timeframe for initial lead touch is anywhere from one hour to one day, and the majority (69%) of B2B organizations make their initial lead touch within the first 24 hours of initial lead activity.

The 14% of B2B organizations indicating that their initial lead touch was immediate are likely using triggered auto-responder emails that deploy once an email address is collected through an online form. This function can be highly valuable if your audience is evaluating a number of your competitors, and responding to their campaigns around the same time that they respond to yours. By being the first to initiate valuable communication to that prospect, you can leave a lasting impression that goes a long way in beating out your competition for that business.

**CHART: FREQUENCY OF LEAD NURTURING TOUCHES**

*Q. Please select the time frame which best represents the frequency of touches in your lead nurturing campaign.*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

Getting the right frequency for your lead nurturing campaigns is of great importance. You don't want to inundate your audience with a frequency that they find too high, but you also want to remain on their minds and encourage their progression through the Marketing-Sales funnel. Much like your initial lead score calculation, the initial frequency of your campaigns will have to be an educated guess that is then tested and refined over time.

The frequency of lead nurturing touches can impact lead nurturing campaign performance in a number of ways. If an organization hasn't achieved the right frequency for their audience, open rates, clickthrough rates and overall engagement will suffer. Unsubscribe rates may also increase.

The majority of B2B organizations have a frequency of a few times a week, once a week or once every other week. For those 20% of organizations that have a frequency of a few times a week, this is likely a result of an aggressive promotion strategy or an active audience receiving triggered emails for their activity on these organizations' websites.

**EXERCISE: DRAFT LEAD NURTURING CONTENT**

Use the following grid to identify the content you will need for your various buyer personas and their stage in the buying cycle.

		Stage of the buying cycle				
Buyer personas		Ongoing	Outreach	Engagement	Conversion	New customer
Buyer persona 1						
Buyer persona 2						
Buyer persona 3						
Buyer persona 4						

## MANAGING HAND-OFF FROM MARKETING TO SALES

You now have two methods of generating sales-ready leads. You have your inbound and outbound lead generation tactics that generate leads, and you have your database of non-sales-ready leads that become ready for Sales overtime as a result of lead nurturing. The leads that are immediately sales-ready from the moment they respond to your marketing campaign are delivered to Sales, but how do you hand off leads from nurturing campaigns to Sales? What if a lead goes to Sales that is not sales-ready? In this section, we will guide you through solutions for these questions.

### NURTURED LEAD HAND-OFF

When a lead becomes sales-ready as a result to nurturing, a timely handoff can be the key to that lead's progression through the buying cycle. The best way to manage this is by leveraging features in your CRM or marketing automation software solution. The lead's status should be updated, and the date and time that the lead was passed to Sales should also be recorded. This enables tracking of the length of time a lead was nurtured and how long it took for that lead to make a purchase once passed to Sales. It also holds Sales accountable; because you will have the exact date and time that the ball was in their court.

Throughout this process, be sure to set expectations for your sales team. Initially, it will be difficult to determine how many sales-ready leads will be produced from your lead nurturing efforts each month. Track performance for the first three months to establish an estimate. Since both teams need to be accountable, work with your sales team to determine what is expected of them once the lead is passed to them. It will be difficult for Sales to commit to timeframe to close the deal, but they should be able to commit to a certain timeframe to make initial contact.

### RETURNED LEADS

Sales should have the opportunity to send leads back to Marketing for further nurturing. This may be caused by the lead not meeting the universal lead definition, or a decreased lead score due to inactivity. It may have been a result of the salesperson not being able to reach out to them in time. Whatever the cause may be, there should be an established process for that lead to be handed back to Marketing.

### LIMBO LEADS

Some nurturing campaigns, especially conversion campaigns, may be executed while the lead is in possession of Sales. We call these "limbo leads" because they lie somewhere in-between. For these leads, Marketing and Sales are mutually responsible for their progression through the buying cycle.

In order to minimize confusion and ensure consistent, valuable communications with these leads, Sales and Marketing will have to be on the same page. This will involve detailed tracking of every communication sent to that lead that is visible to both teams.

Sending duplicate content to these individuals is a risk, and you may want to consider creating a separate lead nurturing track just for limbo leads that includes new content that they would not have received earlier in existing nurturing campaigns.

SECTION SUMMARY: LEAD NURTURING

Before moving on to the next section, please take a moment to answer the following questions.

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1. Please name three different types of lead nurturing.

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2. What is the first step of establishing a lead nurturing campaign?

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3. What is a limbo lead?

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*If you were unable to answer any of the above questions, please review the previous sections again before moving on.*

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## CHAPTER 2 NOTES

## CHAPTER 3: FUEL – ESTABLISH AUTOMATED

### MARKETING PROCESSES

By now, you have all of the pieces to a successful lead scoring, nurturing and management system. You have established a universal lead definition and developed a scoring methodology to identify sales-ready leads. You have mapped out a lead nurturing campaign segmented by buyer persona and stage in the buying cycle. You have mapped out processes for leads to be handed off to Sales, returned from Sales, and limbo leads. The next step in the FUEL methodology is to tie all of these activities together by establishing automated marketing processes.

In this chapter, we'll show you how to create an automated marketing machine that will accurately execute and track lead scoring, nurturing and management processes. You will learn how to identify your needs in an automation software solution. You will also be provided with tools including a vendor evaluation sheet, and implementation checklist and an upkeep checklist.

You will also be provided with case studies on investing in marketing automation, as well as a lead generation revamp with automation and scoring.

If you're looking for an answer as to which specific marketing automation software solution you should choose, you will not find the answer here. That answer will be revealed during your process of evaluating your needs and addressing those needs with your vendor.

## CREATING AN AUTOMATED MARKETING MACHINE

By now, you may have realized a key concept about marketing automation, that it is a software solution that supports marketing processes in execution and measurement. Your level of success with marketing automation is dependent on the processes you have established for lead scoring, nurturing and management, your implementation of the software solution, and your measurement of these activities.

There are a number of automation solutions on the market for you to choose from, and there is a wide range of features available. If you decide to automate your lead scoring, nurturing and management processes with a CRM, a website management system, or another software solution with some automated features available, you will not have all of the capabilities and benefits you will receive from a true marketing automation solution. These solutions are perfectly fine to use if your processes aren't highly complex. If you do have complex lead scoring, nurturing and management processes or plan to, chances are you will need a marketing automation solution.

## SELECTING MARKETING AUTOMATION SOFTWARE

How do you go about selecting a marketing automation software solution for your business? The following steps will walk you through this process.

### **Step #1. Justify your investment**

If you want to select a marketing automation software solution, you will need to have an adequate budget set aside for it. Justifying this expense to those individuals within your organization that control budgets can be challenging.

Marketing automation solutions are typically priced based on the size of your database. Fees can range anywhere from \$1,500 per month to \$10,000 per month or more. Work with the vendors you speak with to determine a cost based on the size of your database, any set-up or support fees and your needs.

Get your key influencers together to make this argument to your budgeting team. Showing that Marketing and Sales are both campaigning for this spend can go a long way towards winning approval.

When campaigning for your budget, base your argument on improving lead quality and the impact this can have on your organization. Make it clear that you have already established processes with Sales to improve the quality of the leads they receive, and generate more highly qualified leads through nurturing.

Explain that these processes simply can't be executed manually. In order to improve lead quality, you will need to implement lead scoring, nurturing and management campaigns. This cannot be done accurately by any human.

### **Step #2. Consider integration**

Your marketing automation solution will need to be integrated with the existing CRM that Sales works out of. If you plan to track website visits in your lead scoring calculation, you may also need to integrate with your Web analytics solution.

### **Step #3. Determine timeframe to implement**

Determining how long it will take you to get up and running with a marketing automation solution will help you plan your implementation and set expectations within your organization. Many implementation



processes can be delayed as a result of purchasing a marketing automation solution prior to developing processes for lead scoring, nurturing and management. Since you have already established these processes, you are ahead of the game.

**Step #4. Identify your in-house resources**

Some marketing automation solutions require the user to be technically savvy. Is this you, or someone on your team? The person who works on the implementation of this software will need a strong knowledge of your existing CRM and the processes, rules and segmentation you already have in place.

**Step #5. Evaluate support**

When selecting a marketing automation software solution, you should understand the support options available to you. Identify the support offerings of the vendors with whom you speak.

The following case study is an example of how one company executed a pilot campaign in their process of selecting a marketing automation solution, and justifying their investment.

## CASE STUDY: INVESTING IN MARKETING AUTOMATION: THE BENEFITS OF PILOT TESTING

Case Study ID: 31362

Location: MarketingSherpa Member Library

Summary: Reed Business Information used a series of pilot campaigns to determine whether a marketing automation solution would benefit their business. The process of setting up automated lead qualification and nurturing campaigns opened their eyes to a more efficient marketing strategy, resulting in executive buy-in for purchase.

### CHALLENGE

Lawrence Mitchell, Marketing Director, Reed Business Information, needed a better way to nurture, qualify and manage the leads his team sent to the sales department. They often were generating thousands of leads a month for the company's business information products, but had no system to prioritize those leads for the global sales team.

The team was interested in using technology to help qualify leads, nurture those that weren't sales ready, and automate key elements in their marketing process. But they needed to prove to themselves – and to the financial executives that had to sign-off on a technology investment – that a marketing automation system would deliver results.

"In theory it makes sense, but we had to see whether there was a commercial benefit in using marketing automation to do more demand generation campaigns," says Mitchell.

With that goal in mind, Mitchell and his team began a testing program to determine how a marketing automation package could benefit their company.

### CAMPAIGN

Different teams within the company tested different marketing automation solutions. The cornerstone of their vetting process was a series of pilot campaigns that put the technology through its paces. At the same time, designing and running those pilots challenged Mitchell's marketing team to adopt a new approach to lead generation.

They ran roughly 12 campaign pilots, which featured:

- An automated email communication series, typically using ten or more emails
- Multiple landing pages or calls to action, such as downloading a whitepaper, registering for a trial offer or signing up for an email newsletter
- Lead scoring that assigned a value to each action
- A specific marketing goal, such as converting new leads, or reviving cold leads

Here are two examples of campaign pilots the team conducted:

### **Pilot Campaign #1. Reviving "dead" leads**

This campaign was designed to generate subscriptions for ICIS Heren, an online information service for the oil, gas and energy industry. But the target audience for the campaign was previously-qualified leads that had been deemed "dead" by the sales team.

- Marketing goal: Re-engage and convert dead leads

- Campaign elements:

- Ten emails, including offers to sign up for a newsletter, view a sample report or take a free trial
- One form
- Six landing pages/one Thank You page

- Lead scoring applied:

- +12 points – Form completion
- +3 points – Click on newsletter sign-up
- +5 – Click to view a sample report
- +8 – Click on trial link (Landing Page)
- +8 – Click on trial link (Email)

### **Pilot Campaign #2. Cleaning the database and enhancing relevant records**

This campaign used whitepaper offers to generate leads for XperthHR, an online information resource for HR professionals.

But the team also wanted those offers to help refine their database: The information collected on the registration forms would identify the most relevant prospects, and weed non-HR professionals out of the database.

- Marketing goal: Nurture leads by demonstrating industry expertise through whitepapers; collect data to qualify leads and eliminate irrelevant records from the database.

- Campaign elements:

- 14 emails, including whitepaper and demo offers, and lead alerts for the sales team
- One form
- Four landing pages/Four Thank You pages

- Lead scoring applied:

- +2 points – Click on whitepaper
- +50 points – Click on demo link
- +70 – Completes demo form
- +10 – Job title (HR/Personnel Manager, Head of HR, HR Director)
- +5 – Job title (HR/Personnel Advisor, HR/Personnel Officer, HR/Personnel HR Assistant)
- -100 – No HR department
- -200 – Unsubscribe

## RESULTS

The process of pilot-testing marketing automation software, by itself, helped Mitchell and his team improve their lead generation strategy.

"It's changed the way we think about campaigns," says Mitchell. "The emphasis moves away from just sending things out to really planning campaigns – setting up communications, optimizing them and analyzing results."

Even though the team hasn't finalized a contract with a marketing automation software vendor, or rolled-out a company-wide system, they've put their lessons into action. They've already reduced the number of monthly leads sent to the sales team from about 4,000 to 3,000, thanks to better qualification efforts.

The pilot campaigns also showed the potential positive impact of using marketing automation and lead scoring. For example:

- For the ICIS Heren pilot campaign aimed at reviving dead leads:

- 14% of recipients downloaded a sample report
- 4.8% requested a trial

- For the XpertHR campaign aimed at nurturing leads and cleaning the database:

- o 3.2% of recipients requested a demo
- o 20% provided additional information about themselves, enhancing the database and creating a cleaner list

Now, all the key divisions – Marketing, Sales, IT, and finance – are on board with making the technology investment. But the potential value Mitchell's team demonstrated through their pilot campaigns encouraged them to explore a wider role for the system. They're continuing their test, but bringing in more departments and piloting more complex, cross-channel campaigns, such as integrating email and online advertising.

**WORKSHEET: QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN SELECTING A MARKETING AUTOMATION SOLUTION**

Use the following list of questions to ask when selecting a marketing automation solution to guide your decision making process.

<b>Selecting a marketing automation solution</b>
1. Will special programming be required to integrate this solution with my existing CRM and / or analytics tool?
2. How technical is the integration?
3. On average, how long does it take to implement your solution?
4. What support options do I have?
5. Are there additional fees for support?
6. Do you provide best practices or start up guides for new clients?
7. How technical is the set-up of lead scoring, nurturing and management programs?
8. Can you walk me through a pilot campaign?
9. What reporting features are available?
10. Approximately how much downtime do you have each month?
11. What features set you apart from your competition?

**WORKSHEET: MARKETING AUTOMATION VENDOR EVALUATION SHEET**

Use the following worksheet to guide your marketing automation vendor evaluation process.

<b>Marketing automation solution</b>	<b>Integration</b>	<b>Timeframe for implementation</b>	<b>Level of technical skill required / ease of use</b>	<b>Support options</b>	<b>Key features / benefits</b>
Solution #1					
Solution #2					
Solution #3					
Solution #4					

## CASE STUDY: LEAD-GEN REVAMP WITH AUTOMATION AND SCORING: 7 STEPS

Case Study ID: 31447

Location: MarketingSherpa Member Library

Summary: Software provider Jaspersoft developed robust prospect profiles, segmented their database and automated lead scoring and nurturing campaigns to increase sales conversion rates by 190%. Learn the seven steps they took to implement their plan.

### CHALLENGE

Nick Halsey, VP Marketing, Jaspersoft, says his smaller software company has the house database of a much larger business. Visitors have downloaded ten million copies of the company's open-source business intelligence software, and there are 105,000 developers registered on the company's community site.

The company also has more than 11,000 paying customers who have bought a professional edition and support services. And then there are prospects who fall somewhere in between -- currently using an open-source version, but may transition to a paid platform at a later date.

"It's a real challenge," says Halsey. "We need to communicate effectively to all those segments, and we need to be respectful of their desire to receive different categories of information based on different user profiles."

Open-source developers don't want to receive sales promotions. But the team couldn't ignore commercial prospects. They needed a better way to segment their database, and automate as much of their marketing communications as possible to deliver the most relevant information.

### CAMPAIGN

Halsey and his team undertook a major overhaul of their marketing strategy that involved new technology and processes. The goal was to create a powerful combination of:

- Customer profiling
- Database segmentation
- Automated/triggered campaigns
- Outbound promotions
- Lead scoring

Here are seven steps the team took to develop their new approach:

#### **Step #1. Merge databases and systems into a unified platform**

A lack of integration between existing marketing, analytics and communications platforms hampered the team's ability to segment, personalize and automate marketing processes.

They were using:

- CRM software to deliver commercial leads to the sales team

- A separate database for their open-source developer community site
- An email tool to provide bulk email messaging about events and new products
- Web analytics to track visitor behavior

Before they could change their marketing communications strategy, they needed a new infrastructure plan:

- First, they implemented a new marketing automation platform.
- Second, they integrated their CRM and Web analytics systems with their marketing automation platform.
- Third, they automated much of their ecommerce system and tied it directly to their accounting platform and marketing database.
- Finally, they upgraded their online community platform. The result of this work was a single database that tracked and recorded all key customer, prospect and community activity.

### **Step #2. Segment database according to profile and activity**

Working from that unified database, the team began to segment each contact based on their activities and demographic profile.

Halsey describes a two-phase segmentation process:

- Coarse grain
- Fine grain

Coarse grain segmentation defined in broad terms whether a contact was a commercial prospect or an open-source community member. For example, users who registered on the community site were considered non-commercial prospects until further actions or demographic information indicated otherwise.

- The team also let visitors self-segment by specifying what type of application they were interested in. Website visitors were invited to click on three product segments:

- Standalone BI
- Embedded BI
- SaaS BI

Those segments helped the team decide what type of information was most relevant to a contact in their database. For example, a Standalone BI customer might be more interested in data warehousing information, while an Embedded BI customer might be more interested in how to integrate dashboards into a CRM or ERP solution.

Fine grain segmentation occurred as contacts engaged in different activities on the website or responded to marketing campaigns. The team tracked each action and looked for behavioral patterns that placed contacts into a demographic segment.



For example:

- A contact who downloaded a technical whitepaper might be tagged as a developer
- A contact who downloaded a whitepaper on the benefits of building a BI system vs. buying one might be tagged as an economic buyer
- Further actions could specify contacts' roles within organizations, such as IT architect or business manager

"Over time, we get a pretty good matrix of information about each contact," says Halsey.

### **Step #3. Customize outbound communications for contacts' preferences**

The team applied its segmentation strategy to a series of outbound email communications.

- They sent four editions of their quarterly newsletter, The Jasper Source, based on a prospect's profile:

- Customer
- Community member
- Corporate Europe Edition
- Corporate North America Edition

- They also sent a monthly events email that promoted:

- Webinars
- Meet-ups
- Conference schedules

- They sent a new products email roughly three times a year.

- Registered users could manage their email preferences through an online subscription management center.

### **Step #4. Create automated drip campaigns for specific actions**

The team also created automated drip marketing campaigns that were triggered by prospect actions.

For example, the team created an automated email campaign for users who downloaded a 30-day trial version of the company's professional software edition. The automated campaign featured five scheduled emails over the course of the 30-day period, which were designed to help prospects install and use their software.

Messages included:

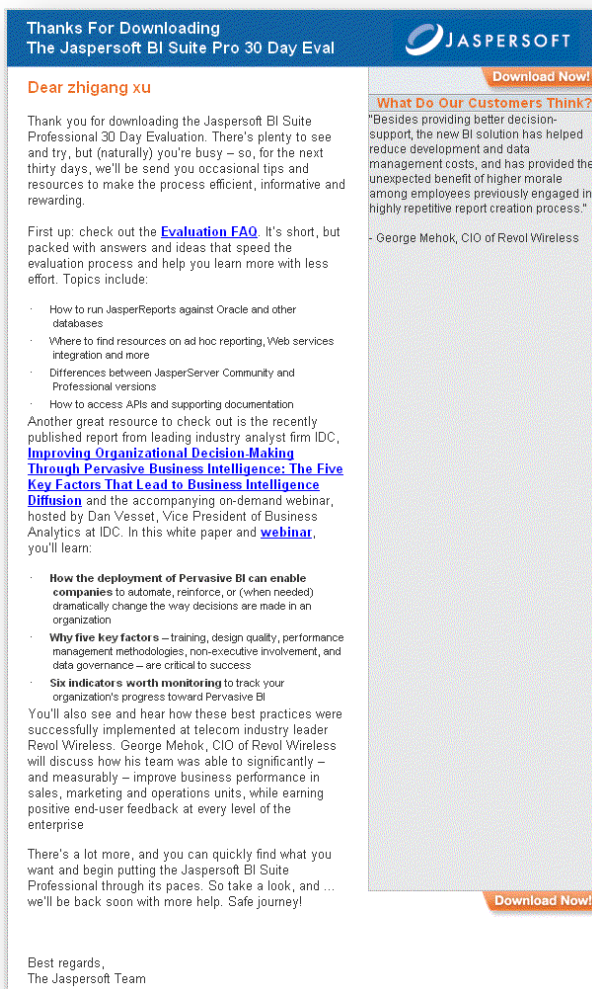
- A thank-you/welcome email
- Links to tools that helped them use the software
- Links to online documentation and online forums to help answer questions

- A final email asking if the prospect would like to speak with a sales representative about the professional edition

Recipients who clicked on a link or otherwise took action related to one of the five automated messages were sent into automated sub-campaigns that built on their previous activity. There were roughly 40 paths email subscribers could take based on their response to a given message.

The team fast-tracked leads to the sales team if prospects took an action that indicated a readiness to buy. For example, a prospect in the 30-day trial campaign that purchased documentation or signed up for a training course might be immediately forwarded to a sales rep.

EXAMPLE: SAMPLE EMAIL FROM JASPERSOFT DRIP CAMPAIGN



## Step #5. Use dynamic registration forms to develop prospect profiles

Prior to implementing their new strategy, the team was using the same registration form for nearly every piece of content a prospect downloaded. But new technology allowed them to use a dynamic registration form system that asked prospects for different information depending on the action they were taking, or the information already contained in the database.

Entry-level actions, such as joining the online community, only required users to submit a name and email address.

Subsequent actions by community members triggered additional questions, such as:

- State or country
- Company name
- Business role information – i.e., developer, project lead or executive

Downloading high-value assets, such as the 30-day trial version of the professional edition, required more detailed information, such as:

- Company size
- Status of BI initiative

"We build out our knowledge base around prospects over time, based on specific behavior," says Halsey. "Now we know what you're consuming, your profile, your sequence and timing."

### EXAMPLE: DYNAMIC WHITEPAPER REGISTRATION FORM

The screenshot shows a registration form on the JasperSoft website. The form is titled "Download The White Paper Now" and is for a "Requested Field". It includes a "First Name" field, a "Last Name" field, a "Company" field, a "Country" dropdown menu (set to "USA"), a "State" dropdown menu (set to "None"), a "Phone" field, a "What is your company size?" dropdown menu (set to "None"), a "Job Function" dropdown menu (set to "Please select one"), a checkbox for "Yes, I would like to receive future communications about our products, news, and upcoming events.", an "E-mail" field, a "Password" field, and a "Confirm password" field. A "Sign Up" button is at the bottom of the form. The form also includes a "Privacy Policy" link and a note: "Please choose a password for your account. It must be at least 8 characters long." The website header includes the JasperSoft logo and navigation links for Home, Services, Products, Support, and Contact Us.

### **Step #6. Implement lead scoring**

The ability to track and record a host of online activities, demographic information and email response rates in one database gave the team a chance to implement lead scoring. The scores were especially helpful in identifying commercial prospects emerging from their developer community.

"We have hundreds of thousands of names of people just simmering in the background," says Halsey. "Scoring helps to make you aware when their behavior shows signs of life."

For example, a prospect may have entered the database by downloading the open-source edition of the software. These names were considered "community" members, and assigned a low score (Halsey declined to share specific scores for actions, calling those his "secret sauce"). But those leads were not placed into a commercial marketing or sales funnel.

Over time, the database would record other activities, such as downloading a whitepaper, attending a webinar or purchasing advanced documentation. Each of those actions would receive a score that reflected the likelihood of becoming a commercial lead.

Only when a prospect's score reached a set level would the name be forwarded to a sales representative for follow up.

### **Step #7. Route leads to the appropriate sales person**

The team used a combination of factors to control the flow of leads to the sales team:

- Lead scoring
- Response to automated drip campaigns
- Clear indications of sales-readiness, such as calling or emailing to speak with a sales representative

When a prospect hit one of those thresholds, the team used the demographic information in their database to route the lead to the right salesperson, based on factors such as:

- Location
- Company size
- Type of customer (OEM or direct install)

Members of the sales team were also free to examine names in the marketing database for likely prospects, such as companies in their territory, or new contacts at companies that are already using the team's software in another division.

## **RESULTS**

"Marketing automation is a must-have for us, it's not a nice-to-have," says Halsey.

- Since implementing the new strategy, the team has achieved a 190% increase in conversion rate from qualified leads to closed sales.

- Prospects who asked to be contacted by a sales rep represent the team's highest close rate.

"What we're able to do with marketing automation is manage people so far through the funnel, fulfilling product information and letting them evaluate their own needs, that they say, 'Yes, please call me with pricing information,' or 'I have a specific question about different versions of your software.'"

- Prospects who enter the automated drip campaign for the professional evaluation 30-day trial represent the team's second-highest close rate.

- Prospects who have purchased something from the e-commerce store, such as advanced documentation, represent the team's third-highest close rate.

The key for Halsey and his team is being able to monitor all those activities and deliver the best leads to their sales representatives.

"We've got this huge funnel. Plenty of people know us and use our software," he says. "My challenge is not to increase the number of leads, but to get improved conversion rates throughout the funnel."

#### MARKETING AUTOMATION SOFTWARE IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

Please use the following checklist to guide your marketing automation implementation process.

Have you...

- Benchmarked sales and marketing performance prior to implementation, including number of qualified leads generated, closing %, revenue, etc.?
- Reviewed all training materials provided by your vendor?
- Trained all potential users on how to use the software?
- Successfully integrated the solution with your existing CRM and (if applicable) Web analytics tool?
- Imported your existing database into the marketing automation software solution?
- Verified the integration was accurate?
- Set up initial lead scoring campaigns?
- Defined an initial threshold score that identifies sales-ready leads?
- Tested lead scoring campaigns for accuracy?
- Designed and build lead nurturing emails?
- Set up initial scheduled and triggered lead nurturing campaigns?
- Identified tracking mechanisms to record all lead nurturing touches?
- Tested the delivery of lead nurturing communications?
- Set up processes for sales-ready leads generated from marketing campaigns to be immediately handed off to Sales?
- Set up processes for leads that become sales-ready from nurturing campaigns to be handed off to Sales?
- Set up processes to notify Sales when a new lead has been assigned to them?
- Set up processes for Sales to send unqualified leads back to Marketing?
- Set up any landing pages required for marketing campaigns?
- Built any report templates or dashboards applicable to your business?

## MARKETING AUTOMATION UPKEEP CHECKLIST

Once you have implemented your marketing automation software solution, a certain amount of upkeep will be required. Use the following checklist to guide your upkeep.

### WEEKLY UPKEEP

- Check in with Sales on lead quality, and the efficiency of your lead scoring campaign in identifying qualified leads.
- Look for any major or uncommon results in lead statistics such as lead volume from specific campaigns, leads handed off to sales, lead scores being calculated. By investigating uncommon results, you may be able to identify a bug in the system such as a broken link, or an error in the rules you have set in your processes.
- Hold Sales accountable by reviewing their follow up on the sales-ready leads you have sent them. If there are any that haven't been followed up on, they may need to go back into the nurturing cycle if their interest level has declined, or assigned to a new salesperson with a strong lead follow up record.
- Benchmark sales-ready lead generation and percentage of total leads that were sales-ready.

### MONTHLY UPKEEP

- Benchmark performance of lead scoring, nurturing and management campaigns.
- Benchmark sales performance including lead follow up time and closing percentage on sales-ready leads.
- Review results with Sales and other key parties.
- Execute new tests in lead nurturing content and timing, lead scoring methodology, lead score threshold, or all of the above.
- Roll out the winning test results across lead scoring and nurturing campaigns you learned from the previous month.
- Add new, relevant content to lead nurturing campaigns.

### LONG TERM UPKEEP

- Continually add new content to lead nurturing campaigns. Consider developing content around emerging industry issues, product updates and other timely matters.
- Continue to benchmark performance. Be sure to compare post-automation results to pre-automation results.
- Add new segmentation as required.
- Continually optimize lead scoring, nurturing and management campaigns.
- Continually check in with Sales to evaluate performance and ensure accountability between both departments.

SECTION SUMMARY: CREATING AN AUTOMATED MARKETING MACHINE

Please take a moment to answer the following questions before moving on to the next section.

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1. What is a marketing automation software solution?

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2. Please name three of the five key criteria you should use to compare automation solutions.

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3. What is the first step you should take when implementing an automation solution?

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*If you were unable to answer any of the above questions, please review the previous sections again before moving on.*

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## CHAPTER 3 NOTES



## CHAPTER 4: FUEL – LIFT RESULTS

By now, you have fully developed and implemented a comprehensive and modernized approach to B2B marketing with MarketingSherpa's FUEL methodology. You have already begun to combat the growing challenges facing you including generating highly qualified leads for your sales team and marketing to a lengthening sales cycle. Now that you have established and implemented new processes, you want to continually improve, and this can be achieved through ongoing analysis and optimization.

The final stage of the FUEL methodology focuses on this analysis and optimization. In this chapter, you will learn how to conduct lead generation analysis, and marketing automation analysis. You will also be provided with a case study on how budget cuts prompted one company to review their marketing performance and improve efficiencies.

In the last section of this chapter, we'll provide you with valuable tools to help progress your marketing career. First, we'll look at delivering Marketing value to the C-Suite of your organization, where you will learn strategies for communicating with the C-Suite, and how you can demonstrate Marketing's value. Next, we'll look at marketing leadership, where we'll provide you with tips on how you can become one of the most valued assets within your organization.

## MARKETING ANALYSIS

In order to continually improve, you will need to conduct regular analysis of your marketing programs to identify problems and opportunities. In your analysis, you should consider a number of metrics and aim to tie marketing activities to revenue generation. Analyzing based on one or two metrics alone can be misleading. In this section, we'll outline a number of metrics that can be used to evaluate and optimize marketing performance.

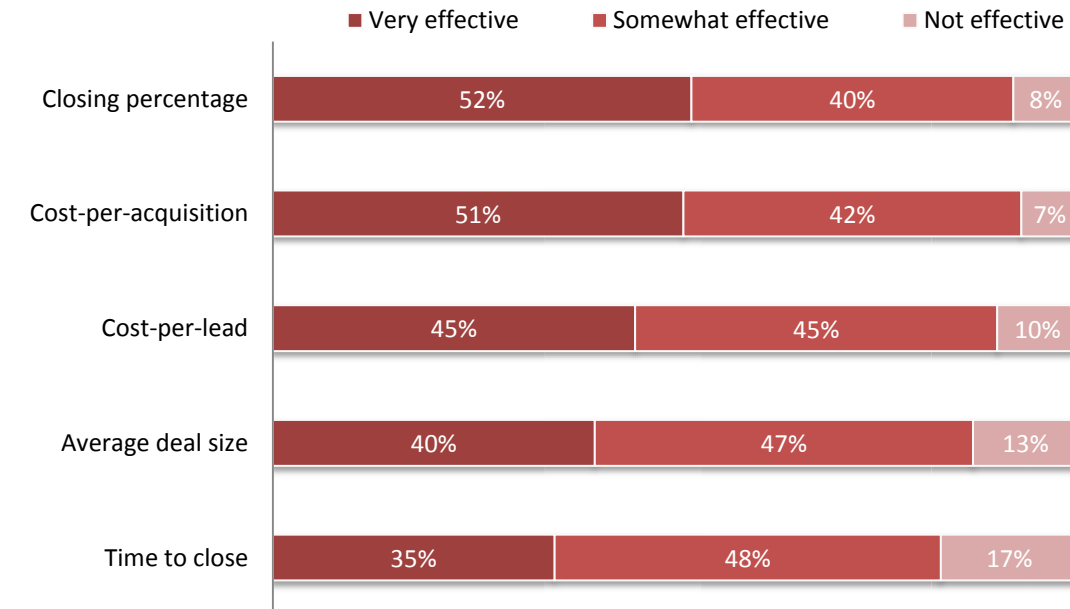
There will be two key areas of your analysis. You will need to analyze the performance of your lead generation campaigns including inbound and outbound tactics. You will also need to analyze the performance of your automated marketing processes including lead scoring, nurturing and management.

### LEAD GENERATION ANALYSIS

We wanted to learn how B2B marketers were conducting their lead generation analysis, so we asked them which key performance metrics helped them to evaluate marketing ROI. The results are included in the following chart.

#### CHART: EVALUATING MARKETING ROI

*Q. Please indicate how effective the following metrics are in helping your organization evaluate marketing ROI?*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

The above chart reveals the most effective metrics in accomplishing measurement of marketing ROI. Many B2B organizations evaluate marketing ROI through the measurement of a number of metrics,

Overall, closing percentage and cost-per-acquisition are rated as the most effective metrics in helping B2B organizations evaluate marketing ROI. In order to make key decisions on the effectiveness of various marketing tactics, some combination of all metrics included in this chart must be considered, as no more than 17% of organizations indicated these metrics were ineffective.

## CASE STUDY: BUDGET CUT PROMPTS MARKETING PERFORMANCE REVIEW: 7 TACTICS

Case Study ID: 31636

Location: MarketingSherpa Member Library

Summary: Learn how Application Security analyzed its marketing performance to determine which programs were really working, and which weren't. By adjusting their strategy based on the results of their analysis, the marketing team was able to increase total lead volume and opportunities delivered to their sales team.

### CHALLENGE

In 2009, Thomas VanHorn, CMO, Application Security, got word that his budget and staff were being reduced by about 40%. There was no choice but to examine his team's past marketing activities, and then make hard choices about the specific tactics and channels they were using.

"I think it's real easy to get sucked into a mentality of, 'I have to do all of these things: I have to do events, I have to do print, direct mail, social media...' the list goes on and on," says VanHorn.

With less money to spend, VanHorn and his team needed to discover which programs were really contributing to the company's sales. And with fewer staff members and outside help to perform early-stage lead development and qualification, they needed to automate as much of their processes as possible.

### CAMPAIGN

VanHorn and his team analyzed all past marketing activities to determine their ROI. Based on the trends they saw, they either reduced or increased their use of certain channels, or changed their objectives for specific activities.

Here are seven tactics they used to perform their analysis and adjust their marketing strategy:

#### **Tactic #1. Measure each channel's cost-per-lead**

The team had a system in place that tracked the originating source of each lead in their database. They then compared how much they spent in each channel to the number of leads the channels originated. This calculation determined a basic cost-per-lead.

Immediately, they saw that some channels were costing the team \$100 per lead and more, while others were only costing them \$4 to \$5 per lead.

#### **Tactic #2. Measure the value of opportunities created by each channel**

A basic cost-per-lead analysis didn't factor in lead quality. So the team conducted further analysis to determine the dollar value of the sales opportunities created by each channel.

Working in their marketing automation system, they traced each opportunity back to its initial lead source, mapping every marketing touch along the way.

Then, they took the dollar value of the opportunity and divided it equally among each marketing channel with which the lead had interacted before becoming an opportunity.

For example, if an opportunity was worth \$X, and the lead had engaged in 10 specific activities -- such as a downloading a whitepaper, attending a webinar, etc. -- each of those activities received one tenth of \$X.

Although imperfect, the analysis gave the team insight into how each marketing program was contributing to closed deals.

"When we checked the dollar volume of opportunities created we found no correlation to the cost-per-lead of the program," says VanHorn. "In fact, some of those [higher cost tactics] resulted in the lowest contribution to pipeline."

### **Tactic #3. Dial back on high-cost activities**

Once the team could see how much they were paying for leads from specific programs, they made decisions on what they could -- and could not -- afford to do.

For example, they saw that major trade shows and other large events were generating some of the highest-cost leads, which also took the longest to become opportunities. So VanHorn and his team reduced their participation in major events.

They did not eliminate events entirely. Instead, they looked for more opportunities at smaller, local events. They also maintained a presence at a few major industry trade shows, but changed their objectives for those activities.

Rather than viewing the trade shows as a strong lead generation opportunity, they approached them as ways to build brand awareness and buzz. They also used the events to meet with partners and existing customers -- recording those contacts in the marketing automation and CRM system, so the channel would get attributed a portion of any future revenue from that customer.

### **Tactic #4. Expand use of low-cost activities**

Limiting activities with a high cost-per-lead allowed the team to increase use of channels that delivered lower-cost leads. Here are a few examples of activities they created or expanded:

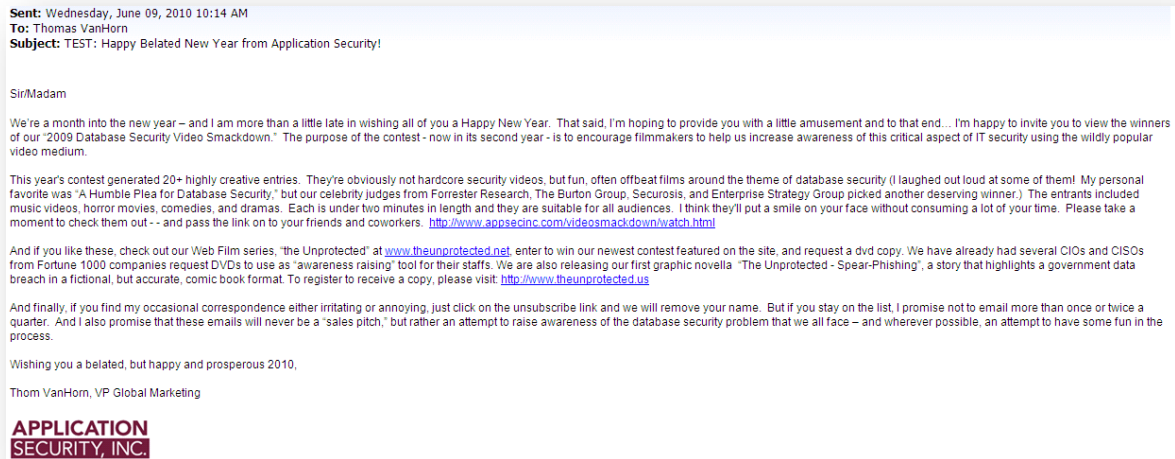
- Informal email updates

The team wanted to expand its use of email messages that revealed the personality of the company, and positioned it as a trusted advisor. So VanHorn created an informal email program to send a quarterly update to a large list of prospects.

The messages were personalized with VanHorn's signature, and did not contain sales pitches. Instead, they offered insights into important database security issues, alongside a touch of entertainment. For example, a

message sent early in 2010 contained a belated "Happy New Year" message and links to two company Web video projects.

#### EXAMPLE: APPLICATION SECURITY'S QUARTERLY UPDATE EMAIL MESSAGE



#### - Email drip nurturing

The team also expanded its use of automated drip nurturing for prospects who downloaded content from the website.

#### - Thought-leadership oriented virtual events

The team began hosting more virtual events that were not product or sales-oriented. For example, when a researcher discovered vulnerability in a particular type of database software, VanHorn's team worked with the company's technical experts to develop a free fix for the problem, and then hosted a free webinar to explain how to implement the solution.

#### **Tactic #5. Use CPL benchmarks to negotiate sponsorships and other paid marketing efforts**

Thanks to the team's cost-per-lead analysis, they were able to determine optimum CPL for various programs. Then, they used their optimum CPL to set limits and get guarantees from vendors for sponsorship or other paid-media campaigns.

For example, when the team set a limit on its cost-per-lead for a whitepaper hosting deal that was significantly lower than the vendor's offer, the vendor responded with several new options to guarantee a number of leads at a cost that would meet the team's goal.

"They made opportunities available to me that I otherwise wouldn't have known about," says VanHorn.

## **Tactic #6. Try new things**

Despite their focus on tactics with a proven ROI, the team continued to test new tactics and creative approaches.

"I don't think you can base everything on past results," says VanHorn. "We spend fair amount of time trying new stuff to see what sticks."

Here are a few examples of new activities:

### - Online film series

In 2009, the team created an online film series called "The UnProtected." The six-episode miniseries dramatized the importance of database security and risk management through the fictional story of a financial services firm that failed a database security audit and had its credit card files hacked.

The team hosted the videos on a microsite, which they promoted through email, social media and public relations. Besides the videos, the microsite included sections dedicated to the company's security solutions, including:

- Trial-version software downloads
- Data sheets
- Online demos

### - User-generated video contest

The team also ran a contest called "The Database Security Video Smackdown," which asked users to make their own creative, entertaining online videos about the importance of database security. A panel of security experts would then choose three to five finalists to receive \$500 prizes.

## **Tactic #7. Review numbers regularly**

After conducting their initial analysis, the team began reviewing key program performance metrics on a weekly and monthly basis.

VanHorn personally reviewed the previous week's reports each Sunday, then held a weekly meeting with the company's executive sales staff, CEO and other executives to review the company's current pipeline.

He also held monthly meetings with the marketing team to review performance metrics and decide whether to adjust programs and activities based on emerging trends.

## **RESULTS**

The team's marketing ROI analysis and shuffling of activities paid off in 2009:

- Even with the 40% budget cut, VanHorn and his team increased the number of leads generated by 12%

year-over-year. And they did it while also tightening the definition of what they considered a lead. Previously, the team considered any name associated with a particular marketing effort a lead. For example, if they attended a trade show and received a list of 1,000 attendees, they considered all 1,000 of those names viable leads.

But VanHorn raised the bar for lead definition by requiring a lead to have proactively engaged with the company, such as by downloading a whitepaper, registering for an event, and so on.

- They boosted the value of opportunities in the pipeline by 65%.
- They reduced their average cost-per-lead "significantly," says VanHorn.

"That's also about setting the bar for what you're willing to pay for a lead, and then saying 'Sorry, you're not going to come in at right number,' when something is too expensive to justify."

The team's willingness to test new ideas also delivered strong results:

- 45% of the visitors to the "UnProtected" microsite became qualified leads when touched with other marketing programs.
- 12.5% of the visitors to the Database Security Video Smackdown page became qualified leads when touched with other marketing programs.

#### BEGINNING YOUR LEAD GENERATION ANALYSIS

In Chapter 1, you conducted in-depth analysis of your previous lead generation tactics to develop your new marketing mix. You will want to repeat the first four basic steps of your analysis continually, but with new rules that apply for ongoing analysis.

To refresh your memory, we have highlighted these four steps below and included new rules you will need to apply for ongoing analysis.

#### **Step #1. Review from the bottom of the funnel to the top**

As marketers, we need to connect our activities to revenue, so start with an analysis of the deals that have closed. Take a look at all the deals that have closed for the last month, quarter, year and previous year. Review the deals that have closed to find out how the lead entered the system.

Determine closing rates, average deal size, time to close and revenue per marketing channel.

#### **Step #2. Review from the top of the funnel to the bottom**

Now that you have an idea of what marketing tactics have generated revenue for your organization in the past, let's look at the top of the funnel. How many total leads, and qualified, sales-ready leads were generated from each of your campaigns for the last month, quarter, year and previous year?

Record total lead volume, qualified lead volume and percentage of qualified leads per marketing channel.

### Step #3. Ask Sales

By now you have learned that Sales can be a great resource to help you improve marketing effectiveness. Check in with Sales to gather insightful feedback on the performance of lead generation campaigns. Be sure to ask specifically about the leads generated from each inbound and outbound lead generation campaign you're running.

### Step #4. Identify opportunities

Use the complimentary data you have collected to identify the most effective marketing channels and campaigns for your organization. Look at the entire picture, including lead volume, qualified lead volume, percentage of qualified leads per channel, revenue generated and the insights you received from Sales.

Again, the many factors that impact whether or not a sale closes still exist. Consider the whole picture, and remember that you're looking for general performance.

### MARKETING ANALYSIS METRICS

The following is a list of key metrics you can use to evaluate your lead generation performance.

- Total lead volume: The total number of leads collected from lead generation campaigns. Includes sales-ready leads and non-sales-ready leads.
- Qualified lead volume: The total number of sales-ready leads collected from lead generation campaigns that meet the universal lead definition.
- Percentage of qualified leads: The number of sales-ready leads in relationship to total leads generated.  $((\text{Qualified lead volume} / \text{total lead volume}) * 100)$ .
- Closing rate: The percentage of leads that closed out of the total lead volume.  $((\text{Number of closed deals} / \text{total lead volume}) * 100)$
- Qualified closing rate: The percentage of qualified leads that closed out of the total qualified lead volume.  $((\text{Number of qualified leads that closed} / \text{qualified lead volume}) * 100)$
- Average deal size: The average amount of all purchases made during a specified time period.
- Time to close: The average number of days it took for deals to close during a specified time period.
- Total investment: Includes the total financial investment made for a marketing channel or campaign. Can also include employee salaries or sales commission.
- Total revenue: The total revenue gained for a marketing channel or campaign.
- CPL (cost-per-lead): The price of each lead generated from a marketing channel or campaign.  $(\text{Total investment} / \text{total lead volume})$ . Use caution when evaluating marketing performance by cost-per-lead. This metric should not be used alone, but compared with the whole picture and revenue generation. For example, leads that cost less may also generate less revenue.
- CPA (cost-per-acquisition): The price of each new customer.  $(\text{Total investment} / \text{number of closed deals})$
- CLV (customer lifetime value): A measure of the total amount the customer is going to spend with a merchant during their tenure. Usually calculated by their spending per year multiplied by the average number of years they are likely to be a customer.
- ROI (return on investment): Either a percentage or dollar amount that represents the return achieved for total investment. Can be calculated in a number of ways, and is commonly calculated using the following formula:  $((\text{Return} - \text{total investment}) / \text{total investment}) * 100$ .



**WORKSHEET: EVALUATING LEAD GENERATION PERFORMANCE**

Use the worksheet below as a template to conduct your analysis of lead generation campaigns. You should feel free to add / detract metrics as needed.

Lead generation campaign	Total lead volume	Qualified lead volume	% of qualified leads	Closing rate	Average deal size	Time to close	Total investment	Total Revenue	CPL (Cost-per-lead)	CPA (Cost-per-acquisition)	ROI

## AUTOMATION ANALYSIS

In addition to analyzing the performance of your lead generation campaigns, you will also want to continually analyze the performance of your automated marketing processes for optimization purposes. By now, you have set up three automated marketing programs: Lead scoring, lead nurturing and lead management.

## LEAD SCORING

You will want to evaluate your lead scoring processes for their capability of identifying leads that meet your universal lead definition. You will want to evaluate whether or not your lead score threshold accurately identifies sales-ready leads. Key tips for lead scoring analysis include:

- Review scores of deals that closed. Did these meet your threshold?
- Review deal sizes and time to close for won opportunities. What were the lead scores for accounts with large purchases and short timeframes to purchase? Were they higher than other leads?
- Review scores of deals that did not close. Were these leads under your threshold? Were some over your threshold?
- Check in with Sales.

## LEAD NURTURING

You will need to measure the effectiveness of your lead nurturing campaigns. Key areas for measurement include:

- Monitor the rate of qualified lead generation from your lead nurturing database.
- Monitor the rate of qualified leads generated from various lead nurturing tracks.
- Monitor closing rate of qualified leads. How does this compare to the closing rate that existed prior to implementing a lead nurturing campaign? How is this rate changing over time?
- Monitor timeframe to close for qualified leads. How does this compare to time to close prior to implementing a lead nurturing campaign? How is this timeframe changing over time?
- Monitor average deal size for qualified leads. How does this compare to your average deal sizes prior to implementing a lead nurturing campaign? How is this changing over time?
- Monitor open rate, clickthrough rate, and unsubscribe rate on email nurturing campaigns.
- Check in with Sales.

## LEAD MANAGEMENT

You'll want to make sure your lead management campaigns are being executed as according to plan, and hold teams accountable.

- Check a number of leads that get passed to Sales to ensure they meet your lead score threshold.
- Verify total qualified lead volume from lead generation campaigns and lead nurturing campaigns.
- Verify the amount of time it takes for Sales to follow up on leads passed off to them.
- Verify that leads returned to marketing are re-entered into a lead nurturing program.
- Check in with Sales.

SECTION SUMMARY: MARKETING ANALYSIS

Please take a few moments to answer the following questions before moving on to the next section.

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1. What is the difference between total lead volume and qualified lead volume?

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2. What marketing analysis metric should be used with caution?

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3. Please indicate true or false for the following statement. A small number of metrics is sufficient for analyzing lead generation and marketing automation performance.

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*If you were unable to answer any of the above questions, please review the previous sections again before moving on.*

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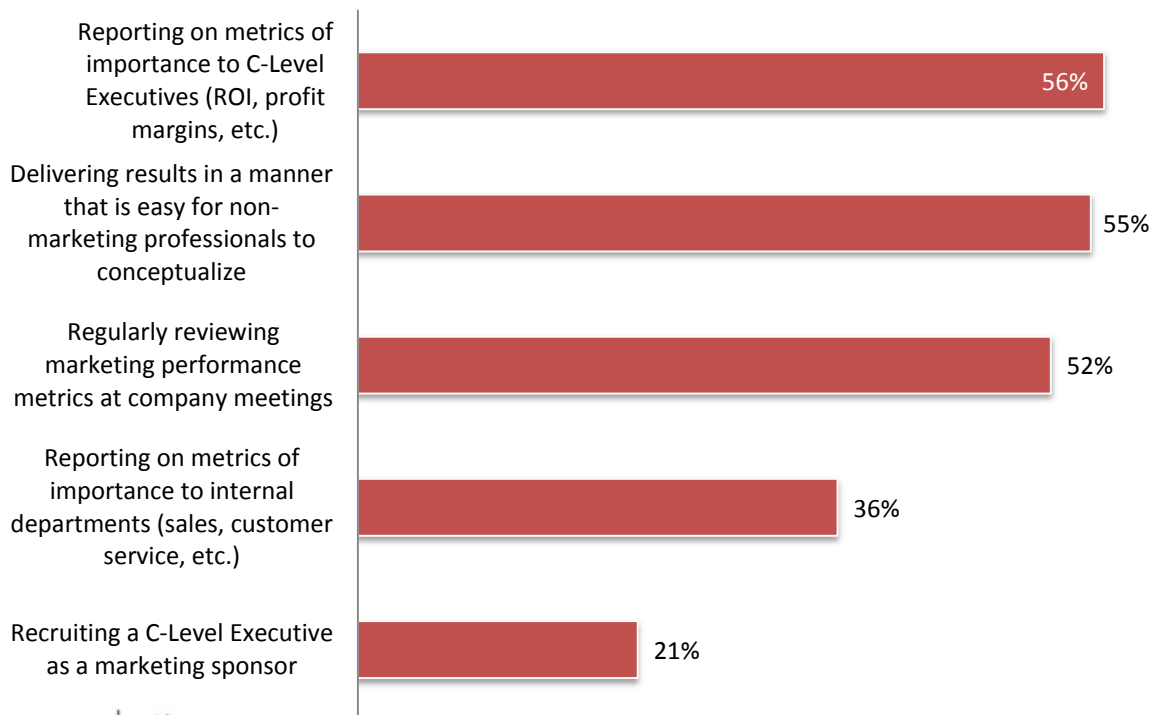
**DELIVERING MARKETING VALUE TO THE C-SUITE**

Conveying Marketing’s value to the C-Suite can be challenging. The C-Suite refers to the group of officers within an organization with the word “Chief” in their title and represents the highest level of management. It’s easy for this group to see marketing spend, but difficult for them to measure the impact of that budget. Sales is often credited with revenue generation, but in order for Marketing to have success, gain the budgets they need, and secure their jobs, they will need to demonstrate Marketing’s impact on revenue.

We wanted to learn more about the tactics marketers were using to deliver value to the C-Suite, so we asked them during our recent B2B study. The results are shown in the following chart.

**CHART: BEST TACTICS FOR DELIVERING MARKETING VALUE**

*Q. What have you found to be the best tactics for delivering value from marketing to Senior Level Executives or the C-Suite of your organization?*



Source: MarketingSherpa B2B Marketing Benchmark Survey  
Methodology: Fielded Aug 2010, N=935

Overall, the most effective tactics in delivering value to the C-Suite include reporting on metrics of importance to C-Level Executives such as ROI, profit margins, etc., delivering results in a manner that is easy for non-marketing professionals to conceptualize and regularly reviewing marketing performance metrics at company meetings.

An undervalued and possibly overlooked tactic is reporting on metrics of importance to internal departments such as Sales, customer service, etc. By winning over these departments, Marketing better its chance of effectively delivering value to C-Level executives.

Let’s take a closer look at each of these tactics, and how you can use them to deliver Marketing value to the C-Suite.

#### REPORTING ON METRICS OF IMPORTANCE TO C-LEVEL EXECUTIVES

When you review marketing performance with the C-Suite, make sure you talk about metrics that matter to them. Show them how your lead generation and automated marketing campaigns contribute to overall revenue. Talk to them about sales conversion rates and monthly revenue before and after your implementation of lead scoring, nurturing and management campaigns. Talk about qualified lead generation, and ROI. Talk about how you have collaborated with Sales and how they support the programs you implemented.

#### DELIVERING RESULTS IN A MANNER THAT IS EASY FOR NON-MARKETING PROFESSIONALS TO CONCEPTUALIZE

Unless the C-Suite of your organization is marketing savvy, you will need to communicate marketing performance in a way that is easy for non-marketers to understand. Talking on about recent A/B tests that panned out and improved landing page conversion rates won't impress with them. Pay attention to the language the CEO and CFO use when reviewing financials and revenue. Speak their language when communicating your results. Your conversation should explain simply what Marketing has accomplished, and what this means for revenues and future growth.

#### REGULARLY REVIEWING MARKETING PERFORMANCE METRICS AT COMPANY MEETINGS

Consistency is important. Showing strong marketing performance consistently at company meetings shows that Marketing is committed to making the company successful.

#### REPORTING ON METRICS OF IMPORTANCE TO INTERNAL DEPARTMENTS

It will be very difficult, if not impossible to win over the C-Suite without winning over other internal departments first. This is especially true for the sales department. Deliver value to these departments, and the C-Suite will take notice. Take time to ask internal departments what they would like you to communicate at regular meetings, and then communicate it in a way that's easy for non-marketing professionals to understand.

#### RECRUITING A C-LEVEL EXECUTIVE AS A MARKETING SPONSOR

This was the least commonly used tactic, which could indicate its level of difficulty. If there aren't any members of the C-Suite in your organization who are marketing savvy, you will need to win over a sponsor by impressing them with metrics that matter to them. For example, you could work with your CFO to see if there are any ways to reduce marketing spend, or talk to your COO about how you're working with Sales to bridge the gap between your departments and improve efficiencies.

A strategy that can be highly effective in supporting this tactic, and all of the above tactics, is requesting meetings with members of the C-Suite to learn how Marketing can better meet the needs of the organization. Ask them about specific company goals, their satisfaction with Marketing. What they would like to see more or less of. Put everything on the table, and then re-align marketing goals as necessary. Later, re-engage with these individuals on how you have adjusted Marketing to support the goals discussed during your meeting.

**WORKSHEET: C-SUITE INTERVIEWS**

The following questions can be used to guide your meetings with the C-Suite.

<b>C-Suite interview questions</b>
1. What are the high-level goals for our company this month, this quarter and this year?
2. How do you envision Marketing's role in supporting those goals?
3. Overall, how satisfied are you with marketing performance?
4. What would you like to see us do more of?
5. What would you like to see us do less of?
6. Do you think that Marketing provides enough support to the sales team?
7. What are your thoughts on the current marketing budget?
8. What information do you want to receive from Marketing on a regular basis?
9. What metrics matter to you?
10. How would you like to receive this information?

#### A NOTE ON MARKETING LEADERSHIP

Congratulations! By executing the entire FUEL methodology, you have propelled the success of your entire company, and your own career. You have broken down walls that were hindrances to your success, and revolutionized your marketing approach. You have also learned key strategies to communicate this success to the key parties of your organization.

By revamping lead generation campaigns, you have identified the optimal mix on inbound and outbound tactics to ensure a consistent flow of leads for your sales team. The effectiveness of these campaigns is fueled by the buyer personas, value propositions and quality content you have developed.

You have aligned with Sales and gained their partnership and respect. You have fueled sales team efficiency to accelerate sales pipeline performance with lead qualification, scoring, nurturing and management processes. You have ensured flawless execution of these processes by implementing a marketing automation software solution. Finally, you have the tools you need to analyze the performance of lead generation and marketing automation programs.

So, again, we'd like to congratulate you. With all of these achievements, you have become a true leader to your organization and have played a key role in its success. Now is the time to apply what you've learned and focus on increasing the revenue potential of your company.

## CHAPTER 4 NOTES



## APPENDIX

### B2B MARKETING GLOSSARY

An A-to-Z guide of commonly used B2B marketing terms.

**A/B split:** Refers to a test situation in which two randomized groups of users are sent different content to test performance of specific campaign elements. The A/B split method can only be used to test one variable at a time.

**Abandonment:** As in call or site abandonment, when people leave a site, telephone call, etc. The abandonment rate measures the efficiency of the marketing tool. The **abandonment rate** is the number of users who abandon divided by the total number of unique visitors for a given period.

**Above the fold:** The part of an email message or Web page that is visible without scrolling. Material in this area is considered more valuable because the reader sees it first. It refers to a printing term for the top half of a newspaper above the fold. Unlike a newspaper, however, email and Web page fold locations aren't predictable. Your fold may be affected by the user's preview pane, monitor size, monitor resolution and any headers placed by email programs, such as Hotmail, etc.

**Affiliate:** A marketing partner that promotes your products or services under a payment-for-results agreement. The affiliate relationship ranges from simply carrying a button on a Web page to full-blown email campaigns by the affiliate.

**Algorithm:** A set of mathematical rules that describe or determine a circumstance or action. In the case of search engines, unique algorithms determine the ranking of websites returned within search queries. Although some of the qualities used to determine ranking (number of referring sites, metatags, etc.) are known, the precise functioning of search engine algorithms is a closely kept secret to prevent the manipulation of the system

**Auto responder:** Automated email message-sending capability, such as a welcome message sent to all new subscribers the minute they join a list. They can be triggered by users joining, unsubscribing or by email arriving at a particular mailbox. Auto responders may be used for more than a single message and can be a series of date or event-triggered emails.

**Average deal size:** The average amount of all purchases made during a specified time period.

**Awareness:** The first phase of the product marketing cycle, during which prospects gain awareness of the product/service.

**B2B:** Business-to-Business (also B-to-B and BtoB).

**B2C:** Business-to-Consumer (also B-to-C and BtoC).

**Blog (weblog):** A style of Internet publishing using content management software that allows for quick posting of journals, news and articles.

**Blogosphere:** The term used to describe the totality of blogs on the Internet, and the conversations taking place within that sphere.

**Bookmarking:** Saving the address of a website or item of content, either in your browser or on a social bookmarking site.

**Bounce:** Includes the act of website visitors leaving after a single page visit, or leaving after a short period of time. Also refers to an email message that isn't delivered promptly is said to have bounced. Emails can bounce for dozens of reasons; among them: the email address is incorrect or has been closed; the recipient's mailbox is full, the mail server is down, or the system detects spam or offensive content. See **Hard bounce** and **Soft bounce**.

**Bounce rate:** Includes the percentage of website visitors that bounce. This term is also used in email marketing and refers to the number of hard/soft bounces divided by the number of emails sent. This is an inexact number because some systems do not report back to the sender clearly or accurately.

**Buyer persona:** A detailed profile that represents an actual, real-life group of a target audience. It includes common interests, motivations and expectations, as well as demographic and other behavioral characteristics. By establishing buyer personas, organizations are enabled to deliver unique content that will attract and nurture new and existing leads. Although buyer personas are profiles developed for marketing purposes, they should be based on sound qualitative and quantitative research.

**Buzz:** The cumulative coverage of an issue, event, company, etc. in all media outlets and the population at large. Companies that measure buzz examine the volume and tone of coverage in both individual-generated media — blogs, message board postings, discussion lists — and mass media outlets.

**Call to action:** In a marketing message, Web ad, email, etc., the link or body copy that tells the recipient what action to take.

**Churn:** The percentage of customers who decide not to continue doing business with an organization over a certain length of time. In email marketing, churn is the percentage of subscribers leave a mailing list (or how many email addresses go bad) over a certain length of time, usually expressed as a percentage of the whole list.

**Circulation:** Total distribution of individual copies of a publication. Distinct from the total readership, which refers to the total copies printed, multiplied by the average number of pass-along readers, which is different for each publication.

**Clickthrough rate:** Total number of clicks on search ads, email links, etc. divided by the number of impressions, emails sent, etc. Also known as CTR.

**Closing rate:** The percentage of leads that closed out of the total lead volume.  $((\text{Number of closed deals} / \text{total lead volume}) * 100)$

**Cold calling:** See *Telemarketing*

**Complex sale:** Refers to B2B sales cycles with a number of lead stages, generally with sales cycles of several months or more.

**Consideration:** The second phase of the buying cycle, when buyers are already familiar with a product, its features, benefits, prices, etc. Consideration is the phase during which relationship marketing using email,

telemarketing, etc., is commonly used to warm the lead, or move the lead from consideration to the sales funnel.

**CLV (customer lifetime value):** A measure of the total amount the customer is going to spend with a merchant during their tenure. Usually calculated by their spending per year multiplied by the average number of years they are likely to be a customer.

**Conversion:** The point at which a recipient of a marketing message performs a desired action. A conversion could be a monetary transaction, such as a purchase made after clicking a link. It could also include a voluntary act such as registering at a website, downloading a whitepaper, signing up for a Web seminar or opting into an email newsletter.

**Conversion nurturing:** Lead nurturing campaigns that are targeted at prospects that are further along in the sales cycle. The goal of these campaigns is to drive prospects to make a purchase. Examples of conversion nurturing content include buyer's guides, case studies, etc.

**Conversion rate:** The percentage of visitors/users who "convert" on the action of a Web page or campaign. For example, actions may be purchasing, submitting a form, downloading content, calling a telephone number or making an extended site visit.

**Co-registration:** Arrangement in which companies collecting registration information from users (email sign-up forms, shopping checkout process, etc.) include a separate box for users to check if they would also like to be added to a specific third-party list.

**Cost-per-thousand:** An ad-buying model more common in Web publishing than search where the advertiser pays for a set number of page impressions, paying by the thousand. Also CPM.

**CPA (cost-per-acquisition):** The price of each new customer. (Total investment / number of closed deals)

**CPC (cost-per-click):** A method of paying for advertising. Different from CPA because all you pay for is the click, regardless of what that click does when it gets to your site or landing page.

**CPL (cost-per-lead):** The price of each lead generated from a marketing channel or campaign. (Total investment / total lead volume).

**CRM:** Customer relationship management. The software and processes of tracking the information that defines a prospect or customer relationship. CRM systems typically store contact and interaction data, such as number and dates of touches, products considered.

**C-Suite:** The group of officers within an organization with the word "Chief" in their title and represents the highest level of management.

**Deferred conversion (latent conversion):** Sales that take place after visiting a website. With many online marketing tactics, it's not always possible to discern whether a sale took place as the result of some past interaction.

**Deliverability:** The degree to which emails are successfully delivered, or not. Also refers to the general issues surrounding this question.

**Deploy:** To send a marketing campaign into the field.

**Engagement nurturing:** Lead nurturing campaigns that are targeted at prospects that are early in the sales cycle. The goal is to build stronger relationships with new prospects to increase interest. Engagement nurturing can also be used to re-engage dormant sales opportunities. Examples of engagement nurturing include content specific to prospect needs, such as webinars, articles, whitepapers, etc.

**Forums:** Discussion areas on websites, where people can post messages or comment on existing messages asynchronously.

**Frequency:** The number of times someone is exposed to an advertisement or marketing message.

**Hard bounce:** Message sent to an invalid, closed or nonexistent email account.

**Heatmap:** An image of a Web page that displays where test subjects directed their attention.

**Hero shot:** A shot of a product or brand from its best position to make it look as good as possible.

**House list:** List of email addresses an organization develops on its own.

**Hub:** Refers to an organization's corporate website.

**Humanizing the brand:** Portraying human traits of a corporate entity. By humanizing brands, organizations are able to build trust, manage their reputations and generate leads that meet ideal customer profiles for their organization. Social marketing can be an effective tactic in humanizing brands.

**Ideal customer profile:** A buyer persona that identifies common interests, motivations and expectations, as well as demographic and other behavioral characteristics of an organization's ideal customer. The ideal customer may be the most profitable customers, or the customers that are the most ideal fit for a solution, for example.

**Inbound marketing:** Marketing strategies and tactics that increase the visibility of a company's website to prospects that are researching and shopping for a solution. Inbound marketing tactics include search engine optimization, pay-per-click and social media.

**Impression:** A single view of one page by a single user, used in calculating advertising rates.

**Landing page:** The destination Web page for people responding to an advertisement, designed specifically for that campaign and audience. The campaign might be in any medium, but is typically search or online-ad driven and email. The key difference between a homepage and landing page is that the former must be all things to all visitors, while the latter should be very narrowly designed for the campaign and, perhaps, for a segment of the audience responding to it.

**Lead nurturing:** A process of building and nurturing relationships with ongoing, valuable communications, whether or not the prospect buys from you.

**Lead scoring:** The process of adding or subtracting points as a result of various lead attributes and behaviors that identify sales-ready leads.

**Limbo leads:** Leads that marketing and Sales are mutually responsible for. This usually includes sales-ready leads that have been passed to Sales, and enrolled in a conversion nurturing campaign.

**Live chat:** A website alternative to customer service using real-time chat. Typically much less expensive than toll-free numbers, but not as widely used or accepted.

**Loyalty program:** A program initiated by a company to create or maintain customer loyalty by offering benefits for continued use of the brand.

**Marketing automation:** Software solutions that support marketing processes like lead scoring, nurturing and management in execution and measurement

**Mentions:** Number of times your brand is mentioned in any publicly communicated capacity. Mentions consist of press release pickups, news article coverage and financial message board postings. This is used as a barometer of PR share of voice.

**Microblogging:** A form of blogging allowing users to compose brief text updates and publish them.

**Multichannel:** A differentiator of merchants that employ multiple sales channels, as opposed to being strictly one (brick and mortar) or the other (Web-only or “pureplay”).

**Multichannel marketing:** Marketing efforts that use multiple media to target unique prospects. For example, sending direct postal mail and email with complimentary messaging and offers to the same people with coordinated timing.

**Multivariate testing:** Using a statistical model to allow the simultaneous testing of multiple variables. Contrast with A/B testing, which examines only one variable at a time.

**New customer nurturing:** Nurturing programs that provide educational “how to” information to new customers to propel customer satisfaction.

**Nofollow:** A value used in HTML to instruct search engine spiders that a URL should not be considered in ranking algorithms. Nofollow tags exist in order to maintain credibility of a “vote” that is represented when one site naturally links to another.

**Offline conversion:** Sales or other conversion events that take place in the real world, typically in a brick-and-mortar store.

**Ongoing nurturing:** Consistent communications intended to keep brands on prospects minds. Examples of ongoing nurturing include regular company newsletters.

**Open rate:** The number of HTML message recipients who opened your email, usually as a percentage of the total number of emails sent. The open rate is considered a key metric for judging an email campaign’s success, but it has several problems. The rate indicates only the number of emails opened from the total number sent, not just those that were actually delivered. Opens can’t be calculated on text emails. Also, some email clients allow users to scan message content without actually opening the message, which is falsely calculated as an open.

**Outbound marketing:** Demand and lead generation marketing activities that involve the delivery of a message from the company to a targeted audience. Outbound marketing tactics have been around a lot longer than inbound marketing tactics, and are viewed as more traditional marketing practices. Outbound marketing tactics include direct mail, email marketing, outbound calls, print advertising, etc.

**Outreach nurturing:** Lead nurturing campaigns that aim to capture new leads, or permission from new leads to have a salesperson reach out to them. Outreach campaigns can also be used to collect additional data from a lead. When marketers ask for more from their prospects in an outreach nurturing campaign, they should expect to provide something of value.

**Pay-per-click (PPC):** In regards to search engine marketing, refers to search engine advertisements based cost-per-click payment model. Advertisers place a bid on various keywords, and pay when their ads receive a click. The ranking position and number of impressions an advertiser receives is calculated by their bid, any other bids on that keyword, their daily budget and their quality score. Also known as **sponsored search**.

**Percentage of qualified leads:** The number of sales-ready leads in relationship to total leads generated.  $((\text{Qualified lead volume} / \text{total lead volume}) * 100)$ .

**Personalization:** A targeting method in which a Web page or email message appears to have been created only for a single recipient. Personalization techniques include adding the recipient's name in the subject line or message body, or an offer reflecting purchasing, link clicking or transaction history.

**Phone-ready leads:** Rules-validated leads that meet certain criteria agreed upon by Sales and Marketing teams as a lead that is ready for Sales follow up.

**Phone-validated leads:** Phone-ready leads that have been validated by Sales and confirmed to meet agreed-upon criteria.

**Preview pane:** The window in an email client that allows the user to scan message content without actually clicking on the message. See **Open Rate**.

**Prospect:** A lead that has progressed from the stage of qualified lead into the sales funnel. However, the term is often heard used as a synonym for qualified lead.

**Qualified closing rate:** The percentage of qualified leads that closed out of the total qualified lead volume.  $((\text{Number of qualified leads that closed} / \text{qualified lead volume}) * 100)$

**Qualified lead volume:** The total number of sales-ready leads collected from lead generation campaigns that meet the universal lead definition.

**Quality score:** A measurement of the relevance of a pay-per-click advertiser or ad to a search query that considers a number of factors including an advertiser's historic performance in clickthrough rate. In general, high-quality scores lead to higher ranking positions in sponsored search at a lower cost-per-click.

**Registered leads:** Includes all inquiries that respond to a marketing campaign by calling in, sending a direct response card, submitting a form on an organization's website, or responding in some other form.

**Research phase:** Initial stage of the buying process, when consumers are beginning to understand a product and its role in the market.

**ROI (Return on investment):** Either a percentage or dollar amount that represents the return achieved for total investment. Can be calculated in a number of ways, and is commonly calculated using the following formula:  $((\text{Return} - \text{total investment}) / \text{total investment}) * 100$ .

**Rules-validated leads:** Registered leads that pass the criteria as valid leads and appear to be in the organization's target market.

**Sales cycle** (sales funnel): All lead stages between first direct contact (may simply be a registration on a website) and ultimate sale. Sales cycle is a measure of efficiency of the sales organization.

**Sales-forecasted opportunities:** Meet the criteria defined by sales management for forecasting future deals.

**Sales outcome:** Determined when the sale is won, lost, or indefinitely postponed.

**Sales-ready opportunities:** Phone-validated leads who are willing to begin the sales process with a salesperson and often meet another set of criteria agreed upon by Marketing and Sales.

**Sales-validated opportunities:** Sales-ready opportunities that have been validated by sales to meet agreed upon criteria.

**Scheduled nurturing message:** A nurturing message that is developed and deployed at a pre-determined time.

**Search Engine marketing (SEM):** All of the tactics and versions of search engine advertising, including search engine optimization (SEO) and pay-per-click marketing (PPC).

**Search engine optimization (SEO):** includes a set of processes that increases the visibility of an organization's website, Web page, or multimedia content to be indexed by search engines in the natural, organic results. While there is no cost-per-click for organic listings, the cost of these programs typically includes the use of in-house resources or agency time

**Social media:** Applications and websites that allow for the publishing and sharing of user generated content and discussions. Examples of social media include social networks, blogs, microblogs, multimedia sharing sites and games.

**Social media integration:** The use of social media to support search marketing plans. For organic search, content development and link building tasks are facilitated. For pay-per-click, clickthrough and conversion rates are improved.

**Social sharing:** Tools and tactics that enable email recipients to share email content on popular social networks and other social media sites.

**Spider:** A small program that surfs the Web to index information for a search engine. Also **Bot** or **Crawler**.

**Spidering:** The process of surfing the Web, storing URLs and indexing keywords, links and text. Because there is far too much information available to index it all, every search engine has unique (and highly proprietary) ways in which it saves time and space.

**Sponsored search:** A method of search engine marketing based on a cost-per-click model. See **pay-per-click**.

**Target market:** A profile that an organization selects to target with marketing materials. Target markets are typically based on demographics, such as location, company size, annual revenue, etc. They differ from buyer personas, which are more in-depth profiles that include behavioral characteristics.

**Telemarketing:** involves contacting prospects with a phone call to generate leads and is also referred to as cold calling.

**Time to close:** The average number of days it took for deals to close during a specified time period.

**Total investment:** Includes the total financial investment made for a marketing channel or campaign. Can also include employee salaries or sales commission.

**Total lead volume:** The total number of leads collected from lead generation campaigns. Includes sales-ready leads and non-sales-ready leads.

**Total revenue:** The total revenue gained for a marketing channel or campaign.

**Triggered nurturing message:** A lead nurturing message that is sent in response to an action that a lead has taken.

**Universal lead definition:** A lead that has been determined to fit the profile of the ideal customer, has been qualified as sales-ready, and spells out the responsibilities and accountabilities of the participants in the program, Sales and Marketing (Brian Carroll, Executive Director of Applied Research of MECLABS, CEO of InTouch).

**Unsubscribe:** To remove oneself from an email list, either via an emailed command to the list server or by filling in a Web form.

**User-generated content:** Includes various types of content that is created by users of social media sites. Examples of user-generated content include comments, discussions, articles, blog posts and multimedia content such as videos or images.

**Value proposition:** A clear and concise statement that defines the key reason why an organization becomes the best choice their ideal customer. It should clearly communicate what the company does and its unique benefits over the competition.

**Virtual event:** Much like a webinar but intended to include a large number of participants, and is often marketed as an online conference or summit. See **webinar**.

**Webinar:** A meeting, presentation or training that is conducted online through a Web conferencing tool.

**Word-of-mouth (WOM):** An area of marketing that attempts to measure and/or harness the power of personal recommendations. With the explosion of blog readership, WOM has become a hot topic in virtually every industry.



# About MarketingSherpa LLC

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