

The Current State of B2B Sales & Marketing: The Evolution



FUTURE AHEAD

Why owners and “C” level execs should be pumped and
VPs of Sales & Marketing should be terrified!

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Foreword

We're business people. We've owned our own companies; which we've founded and grown. We understand your challenges with personnel, customers, regulation and an overflowing inbox.

So we've written this for you – with two objectives. We want to help you crack the B2B marketing code – and we can. But we are also determined to do it in a way that is accessible. So this isn't the standard 250 page business book.

Could we ramble on that long or longer? Sure. But if you can't read it thoroughly on a two-hour flight (or in a couple of sessions on the treadmill or where/whenver you steal some time to read) to form an opinion, it's not as effective as we intend.

We hope we've succeeded, that you can read and digest it quickly, and that the power of this system is both apparent and invigorating.

In case your wondering... Dave talks "B2B" and Ed slips into "industrial." For the purposes of this system, and most businesses, the two can be readily interchanged.

Now let's go market and sell some stuff! America's manufacturing rebirth awaits!

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Executive Overview

This book is intended primarily for owners of industrial companies. However the situation faced by industrial sales organizations mirrors very closely that faced by nearly every B2B company. Small business marketing, B2B marketing and industrial marketing in many ways face the same existential crisis. This book endeavors to establish the context of the current dysfunction, identify the causes, and propose solutions justified by metrics. (Some of the internet history may seem simplistic, but is key to understanding why the current environment is challenging and to framing the recommended response.)

The current situation is daunting. Delay in evolving the sales and marketing model is inadvisable as revenue growth is increasingly compressed, and enterprise deterioration is accelerating for many companies that have essentially stagnated and thus far failed to adapt. However the current environment also offers a basis for great optimism. Software tools and applications which only a few years ago would have been inconceivable are now available at affordable cost for simple (albeit not easy) implementation by even traditional manufacturing and industrial companies.

Commitment to change is fundamental, and sincere desire to embrace and maximize the potential of the tools and methodologies that are shown to create optimal results are the primary pre-requisites.

Inbound marketing levels the playing field in ways not previously feasible. This whitepaper outlines how we arrived, where we are now, the challenge we face, the solution available, the value justification and the broader opportunity. (In addition, it is supplemented by our eBook 13 step action plan for implementation, which is available separately.) This methodology allows any company, even very small and traditionally unsophisticated companies with small marketing budgets, to compete globally as well as nationally with long-established major players.

It's an amazing opportunity for companies bold enough to seize it.

Introduction

Imagine that you were an astronomer who charted the Sales & Marketing cosmos. Early in the 20th century the sun could still have orbited the earth, as far as the systematic understanding and implementation of formal marketing and sales was concerned. From the middle of the 20th century, as theory and practice evolved - - as your instruments for peering out into the darkness and accurately rendering your charts improved - - your representations would have become increasingly accurate. Throughout the 2nd half of the century several theories would be advanced that would dramatically alter the prevailing view of the sales & marketing cosmos – and each would eventually be replaced by another. Inevitably the collective ingenuity of capitalism would have revealed a brilliant array of approaches and tools creating the three dimensional and limitless universe of sales and marketing. It was an invigorating time - and the sense that hypothesis had been proven to be inviolable would have imbued you and your colleagues with a heady sense of omniscience.

It was a grand time. Everything made sense and was arranged as you knew it should be.

But sometime in the early or mid 90s, when you occasionally peered back out into the cosmos nostalgically remembering the days of uncertainty and fervent research, you might have noticed occasional and almost insignificant perturbations in the orbits of certain bodies. At first these were discounted as mere aberrations. Later, as more were noted, it was presumed simply that the initial measurements and charting were hurried and inaccurate. But a vague unease infected your more open minded colleagues as the magnitude and number of discrepancies were noted. And before the millennium it was clear that there was an enormous, dark and unknown force acting upon the universe of sales and marketing.

Most ignored your warnings though, for to accept your premise was to confront an uncertainty that was daunting -- a terrifying prospect of imminent catastrophe of unknown origins or proportions. Such an amorphous threat which could be neither countered nor avoided proved so difficult to envision that most simply ignored it.

Then in 2001 a variety of natural and man-made disasters resulted in huge volumes of obscuring dust which made ongoing observation difficult. There were hints, but little hard data captured at the time. Only in retrospect was it clear that the initial discrepancies had become significant wobbles in orbits -- a final overlooked warning of the cataclysm that was approaching.

And then it happened. “What” is still not clear. One widely accepted theory postulated a Chinese supernova, a Wal-Mart black hole or a mass of internet dark matter. Superficially things seemed little changed - everything looked eerily familiar but the sense of unease was palpable.

Disconcerting many, almost all that was known in business now seemed to no longer make sense. In time you’ll identify the event and cause, but for now the priority is to help those who are disoriented and deteriorating. While some seemed almost freed by these events, thriving as they created new infrastructure and associations, others seemed chronically discombobulated. Many, unable to fathom the magnitude of the catastrophe, tried to endure by mimicking the routines and behaviors which were familiar and once natural, but now essentially worthless. Essentially stupefied, listlessly awaiting a return to normal, they watch the new commerce pass them by.

But some understanding was necessary – so as the cosmic debris began to clear you set about to chart the new cosmos - to redefine the laws that govern natural behaviors and to map the new relationships seeking structure from chaos.

This whitepaper captures this research, briefly explores the theories of what caused the cataclysm, and brings order to the chaos with an assessment of how things exist now. Of course it's still a fluid situation. When it may stabilize is impossible to predict. But at least we hope that those who are wandering, persisting in traditional behaviors, will heed this call to recognize the new landscape.

And whom do we address? Who are these befuddled wanderers?

B2B & Industrial Marketers!

Part 1:
The Situation Today

Chapter



The Buying Process

Flat or round - it's one world

*>1/3 of the world's population is
on the internet*

– ICT Facts & Figures, 2011

*Almost 8 new people come onto the
internet every second*

– Internetworldstats.com 2012

*“Every 2 years we create as much
information as we did from the dawn of
civilization until 2003”*

– Eric Schmidt, CEO of Google at Techonomy 2010)¹

B2B buying and selling have been permanently disrupted. Obviously the top level causes of this disruption may surprise no one. While this brief overview may seem simplistic, it is critical to understand the current context in which B2B industrial marketers operate.

Internet

Communications

Globalization

Data is ubiquitous. It's cheap and widely available. Anyone can research any topic in a brief time and at nearly zero cost. Anything anyone wants to know can be quickly determined. Or can it? One of the consequences of the vast increases in data is the difficulty managing, navigating and leveraging the mass.

That challenge was the genesis of the search engine - originally conceived as a tool to list websites which purported to focus on a topic you searched. When the web was an information repository for research, and the volume of information minuscule, that was adequate. But enterprising marketers who intuitively sensed the commercial potential began to create internet infrastructure in support of their traditional sales effort. (Remember later, business marketing internet use, corporate websites and other online tools were originally “bolt-on” additional components that supplemented traditional marketing approaches.)

Early sites, while ‘sexy’ at the time, lacked functionality – they provided ‘gee whiz’ and pretty pictures. They began as branding tools and eventually evolved into shopping tools. But natural limitations meant that they were most appropriate for people who already knew what they wanted, and were thrilled to save time, expense and inconvenience.

And the snow ball began to roll downhill

Soon on-line shopping infrastructure became more robust, and coincidentally more and more commercial applications for the web were developed. Improved functionality, increased prevalence, and tools, including auctions, reversed auctions, structured negotiations, and point-click-buy became common. As rapidly as the technology advanced, however, it had inherent limitations. It was a one way channel, pushing information out. That meant it was suitable for consumer products in many cases, but not for complex B2B industrial solutions. Searching for “plasma TV” yielded numerous resources, and whether purchased for consumer use or as a B2B transaction, the consequences of a poor choice were limited to the money spent on the transaction. Ultimately, the risk of a poor selection was limited by the volume of information that was available.

As [Gary Vaynerchuk](#) colorfully notes “marketers eventually ruin everything.” That happened with the early web. Divining SEO

(search engine optimization) methods to “game” the search results, marketers increasingly manipulated search results and frequently updated their methods as search algorithms evolved. Internet users became disillusioned -- frustrated that searches yielded results that were inappropriate and wasted their time. Understanding that their credibility was at stake, Google² undertook an ongoing effort to simultaneously overcome ‘webspam’ and to deliver results that really satisfy the search intent.

Their efforts are working. Increasingly search yields results that are closely aligned with the search intent, and can even discern the intent when the syntax of the search is clumsy. In a positively reinforcing cycle, as users learn that search results are more accurate they search more carefully phrased terms, and increasingly search not just terms but phrases that describe their challenge, desired outcome or ask how to accomplish something. Google delivers with semantic search. (It’s important to note that the poor experience with search results persists with PPC - pay per click, and is reflected in a clear prejudice against those results as shown in the graph in figure 1). Users increasingly favor organic search results over PPC by a massive margin.

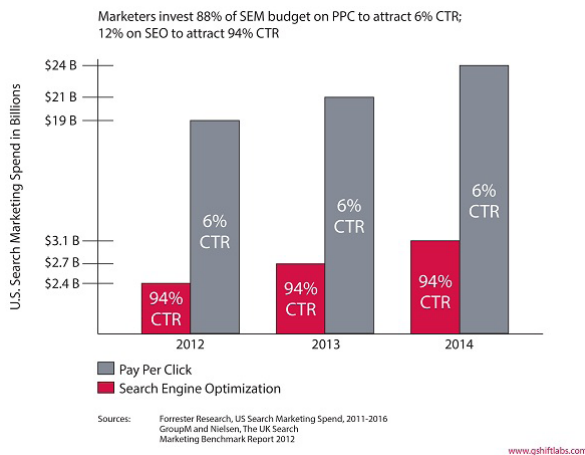


Figure 1. --www.gshiftlabs.com

Recent Google Algorithm Updates

‘Panda’ - Feb, ‘11 shifts emphasis to content - fresh, quality and relevance enhance rank and low value (certain spam/volume parameters) is penalized

‘Google+’ - June, ‘11 allows Google to more closely incorporate social media activity into rankings and to personalize results

‘Caffeine’ - Nov, ‘11 further emphasizes freshness, frequency and value of content - sharing becomes indicator of value

‘Penguin’ - April, ‘12 cracks down on nefarious (but quite common practices) of keyword stuffing

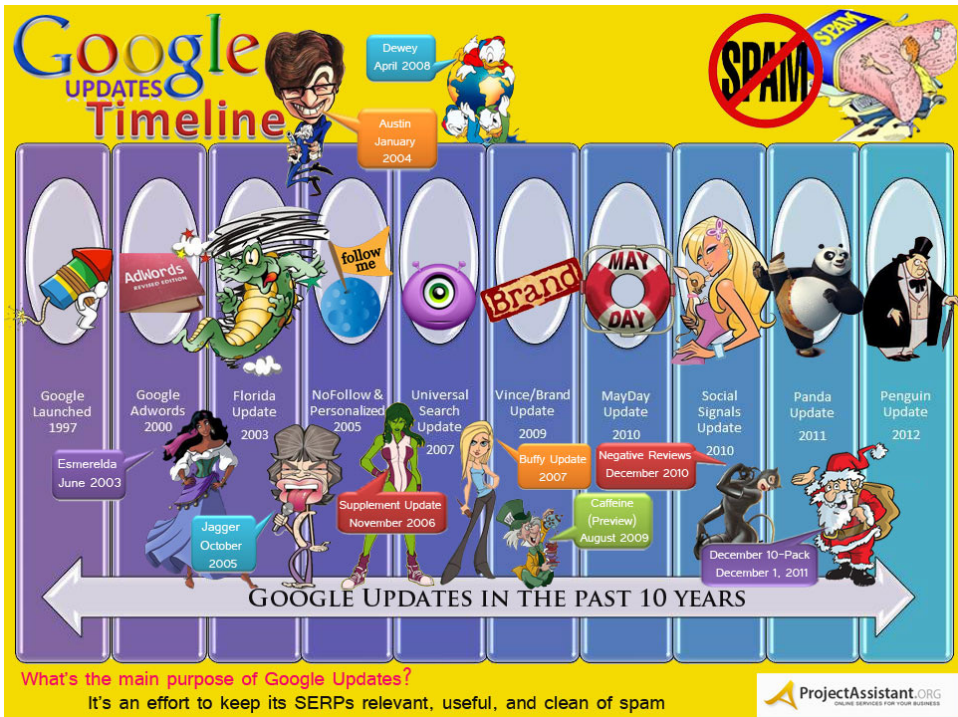


Figure 2. --Project Assistant.com

“We want people doing white hat search engine optimization (or even no search engine optimization at all) to be free to focus on creating amazing, compelling web sites. As always, we’ll keep our ears open for feedback on ways to iterate and improve our ranking algorithms toward that goal.”

— 24 April, ‘12 Matt Cutts,
Principal Engineer, Google

This, therefore, represents the shift that is critical to industrial companies. With the advent of “intelligent”, relevant or contextual search (put whatever name on it you prefer) suddenly the depth and nuance which characterize the dialog regarding a complex B2B solution can be largely replicated on-line. Buyers have discerned this critical shift, so **93% of B2B purchases now initiate with search.**³ With that come two powerful implications for industrial sales.

1. Your on-line strategies must shift from the secondary, adjunct role supporting your traditional sales & marketing, to now become your primary business development driver.
2. Your prospects will assume that their search results include any solution worthy of their consideration. In other words, **if you don't appear in their search, you will likely never have the opportunity to participate in their evaluation.** In addition, by corollary, your presence on-line will determine your success at positioning your solution remotely, and will be the largest factor in the opinion they form of your company and solution.

Here, suddenly, theory begins to impinge on reality.

It's More Different from what You Realize

But our sales people still sell

Sure they do...but how much?

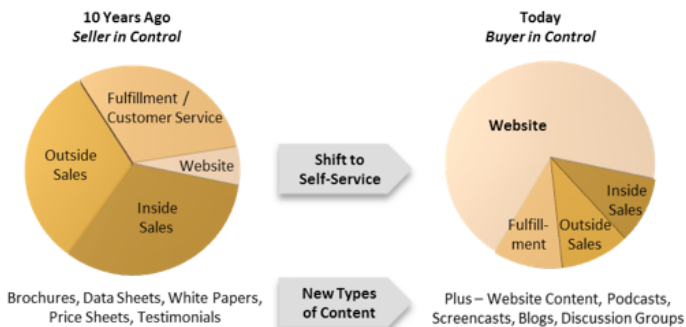


Figure 3. --“10 years ago” - Technoligence, LLC

In the traditional model you and your sales people controlled the information. In exchange for the critical data customers needed to evaluate and select solutions, they provided access to themselves, their facilities and their private thoughts -- at least to some degree. That meant that often your sales people were involved very early in the process, perhaps when it had advanced only 10-20% of the way, and with great salespeople probably even earlier since they often conceived and initiated projects.

Because the purchasing process was so labor intensive and interactive it was typically deliberate, scheduled and planned, and process oriented.

But the internet, specifically the advances in search functionality, has shifted the dynamic significantly. No longer is an acquisition/purchasing evaluation constrained by time and distance. Now, as if on a whim, a plant manager who notices something dismaying as (s)he walks the factory floor can easily search for both the problem scenario and the desired outcome in moments upon return to their office.

36,000 Google searches every second!

Comscore calculated as long ago as January, 2010 that there are 131 BILLION web searches/month. That is 4B/day, 175,000,000/hour and 2,900,000/minute.

Consider the implications:

1. There is no budget set.
2. They don't intend to entertain sales people to discuss the issue.
3. They will be distracted before they make any headway in really researching.

4. There is no timetable for making a decision. It's not even clear that a decision is to be made.
5. (S)he will probably forward a couple of links for someone to dig into (or maybe bookmark a site or print a page or two to return to later).

So...IF you happened to appear in the initial search...and IF by some chance they managed to complete your "Contact us" form on your site and you generated a 'web lead' that was passed to one of your sales people, how would this work. With No budget, No defined need, No timetable, it doesn't sound like the 'BANT' guidelines you've coached your sales people to work within. (Preview.... This is precisely why 'lead -scoring' is a critical component of the new marketing model

Forrester Research has surveyed the evolution of the B2B buying process extensively. Their findings are instructive.

- Complex B2B sales involve 5-7 prospective customer contacts throughout the buying cycle.
- 50% of B2B buyers require 6 or more touches JUST TO BECOME a qualified sales lead.
- It takes 3-6 months to nurture a lead to qualified status.
- The seller's job is to help buyers move through their buying process -- NOT to try to accelerate them through the seller's process.

In his article 'B2B Marketers have a blind spot' Forrester's Jeff Ernst concludes:

“I’ve written before about how B2B marketing is going through an essential transformation...This requires a whole new set of skills and activities across marketing and sales teams...and an absolute requirement of doing them well, is a deep understanding of your buyer journeys. Otherwise, you’re shooting in the dark.

You need to recognize that the B2B buying process is not one big decision; it is a series of micro-decisions. And the company that wins the business is the company that is there to answer those questions and provide fresh insights that influence how the buyers think about the problem so that the buyers can confidently advance their journey.

Take, for example, the very early stages of your customers’ problem-solving cycle, when they first realize they have a problem. They aren’t in a buying cycle yet. Instead, they are trying to understand their problem; determine how high a priority it is to fix, compared with everything else going on; who in the organization has to be brought in to change the status quo; how other companies have solved this problem; and if it’s worth solving at this time.

How well do you know what questions your customers are asking at this stage? What insights are they seeking? What state of turmoil are they in? Where are they going to get information? What motivates them to move to the next step? If you’re not confident that you have the answers, you’ve got a blind spot.”

So you're in an untenable position. On the one hand buyers no longer feel the need to involve you. They can materially advance the research and decision process for even complex products and services (now vastly more expensive than the plasma TV and carrying substantial implications for secondary costs) based on their internet research. The buying process no longer maps to the sales model you use, and your ability to influence the process is compromised.

This new dynamic is the source of the vague unease many industrial company execs feel. The decline in growth and diminished sales success, despite earnest and renewed efforts to more effectively employ traditionally successful methods, has an explanation after all.

There's a viable solution, but the solution is one unlikely to be palatable to many industrial companies where pride in tradition holds sway in conservative environments. Ongoing viability will depend on a strategic alignment of marketing & sales, and perhaps a dramatic inversion of resources between traditional sales and marketing roles.

4

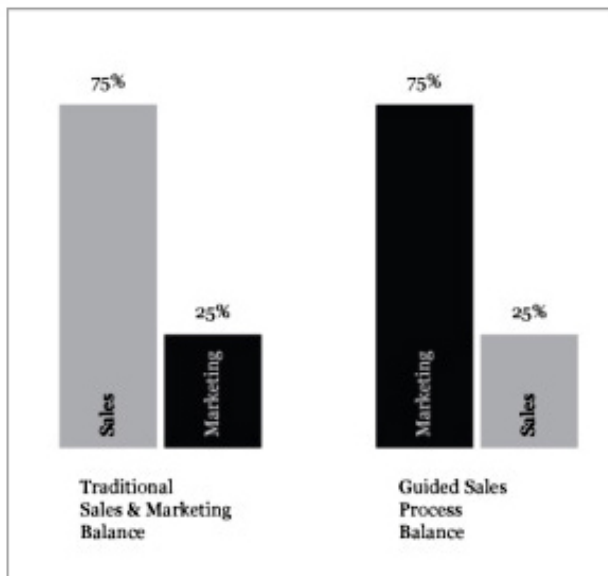


Figure 4. --Square2Marketing

Chapter 2

“Sales’ ” Role in Modern Industrial Business Development

Dinosaurs

The silo mentality that pervades many companies often contributes to a contentious relationship between marketing and sales groups -- even when they are both modestly sized and under common management. The inescapable fact (the market’s imposition of wildly different circumstances on the B2B industrial company) is that success will depend on an integration, realignment and collaboration that has heretofore been uncommon.

If the buying process is more than 2/3 complete before “sales” becomes involved, and most of the analysis and comparison is already complete, then the new reality substantially challenges the self-image as “rain maker” for many sales professionals.

Addressing and balancing this transition is critical to success and needs to be actively managed by senior executives whose overall business perspective trumps departmental prejudices and vestigial biases of specialties. Similarly, shifting mindsets to accept that “marketing” (often tossed about with derision in industrial manufacturing and sales organizations) will become a pervasive element of all company activities, requires determined and sustained management emphasis.

This transition challenges, and in many cases fractures the friendships and long-standing professional comradeship that have formed between founders/owners of many B2B manufacturers and their business development teams. It is critically important to recognize that the discomfort for one group (traditional sales) will be traded for the organization’s greater welfare. There is a temptation to leave this change to be effected during a generational transition of management.

“It is one thing to show a man that he is in an error, and another to put him in possession of the truth.”

— John Locke

While the impetus to avoid the intense personal discomfort of the transition and its impact on personal relationships is understandable, abdicating this leadership role to the next generation would be a major error for two reasons. First, the requirement to market effectively is pressing and immediate. Results take time to develop and companies must initiate this methodology ASAP. Second, marketing and sales are integral to every corporate function and executive leadership, by example, is required to navigate the evolution and undertake the work required. Leaving this responsibility to the nexgen leaders creates the impression of a faddish response, and by appearance discount the significance and contrast to traditional approaches.

View from an Ivory Tower

The July-August 2012 edition of Harvard Business Review caused quite a stir among “sales professionals.” The various articles prompted much blog activity and evoked strong emotions. This is indicative of the very challenge in establishing the new role for sales. Emotion more than metrics grounds many of the strongly held opinions from each perspective in this debate. But clearly the function has changed (if now customers conduct up to 70% of their buying process without engaging a sales rep) so the design of the model must be updated.

Industrial sales professionals are perhaps even more strongly attached to a traditional model than those in other industries. Therefore the difficulty in overcoming emotion is even more challenging. Let's review some notable passages from the HBR articles which simultaneously challenged much of the accepted 'wisdom' of sales and reinforced some truisms.

"39% of B2B buyers select a vendor according to the skills of the salesperson rather than price, quality, or service features."⁵

On the role of social media, and Twitter specifically, "The shift from a "push" to a "pull" world of commercial messaging has been thoroughly documented by now. It's not just that buyers start the sales process without you; research has shown that today they typically complete most of the purchase journey before having any contact with sales. And by that point they are far more informed about your business than you are about theirs."⁶

In considering the critical sales skills and compensation models "transactional aspects of sales are disappearing. When routine functions can be automated, and when customers and prospects often have as much data as the saleswoman herself, the skills that matter most are heuristic: Curating and interpreting information instead of merely dispensing it. Identifying new problems along with solving established ones. Selling insights rather than items."⁷



Other insights from HBR:

“Nearly 60% of a typical purchasing decision-- researching solutions, ranking options, setting requirements, benchmarking pricing, and so on--before even having a conversation with a supplier. In this world the celebrated “solution sales rep” can be more of an annoyance than an asset. Customers in an array of industries, from IT to insurance to business process outsourcing, are often way ahead of the salespeople who are “helping” them.

But the news is not all bad. Although traditional reps are at a distinct disadvantage in this environment, a select group of high performers are flourishing. These superior reps have abandoned much of the conventional wisdom taught in sales organizations. They:

- evaluate prospects according to criteria different from those used by other reps, targeting agile organizations in a state of flux rather than ones with a clear understanding of their needs
- seek out a very different set of stakeholders, preferring skeptical change agents over friendly informants
- coach those change agents on how to buy, instead of quizzing them about their company's purchasing process

These sales professionals don't just sell more effectively--they sell differently. This means that boosting the performance of average salespeople isn't a matter of improving how they currently sell; it involves altogether changing how they sell.”⁸

The B2B/Industrial Reality

If you're reading this, and own or have built an industrial B2B company, you are probably dubious of academics who purport to understand your world -- that's probably justified. However, just as they may not empathize with your perspective, you may be similarly myopic. This isn't a slam - it's merely reality. Most owners and execs of industrial B2B companies tend to assume others see the world as they do -- often quite process focused, right vs. wrong & absent shades of gray.

*"Computers are useless. They can only
give you answers."*

– Pablo Picasso

As younger generations assume leadership roles they bring new perspectives to some extent, and in B2B professional services there is a broader spectrum. But understanding the challenges facing companies requires a recognition that tectonic changes are occurring. It's up to individuals to understand the implications to their businesses and devise strategies.

Traditional practitioners of sales and marketing face a darkening horizon. While the martini swilling and plaid clad stereotypes have long faded, the 10 handicap and 'throw enough \$^1# on the wall and see what sticks' approaches remain prevalent. But they are fantastically ill-suited to the reality of the current business environment. While the ability to forge relationships that can be mined for referrals from satisfied customers remains important, relationships are now built on value rather than the facility with which a sales person can 'turn a phrase' or ask a probing question. The new skills are the ability to craft a story, to create compelling and creative content, to intuit how buyers buy given solutions, to mine metrics like a BI (business intelligence) veteran, and to create processes tailored to reality. VPs

of Sales and/or Marketing who cannot make this transition should be terrified. It’s going to be a rough ride.

“Best in Class are twice as likely as Laggards to collaboratively define what constitutes a ‘sales-ready’ lead between sales & marketing.”⁹

It’s happening around you

Among the aforementioned perturbations in the sales & marketing cosmos in the late 90’s, Wal-Mart announced to suppliers that it would entertain sales calls from only company owners or senior execs, and would expect that the savings in commissions realized by self-selecting as ‘house accounts’ should be reflected directly as reductions in cost. In nearly every case they succeeded. It’s clear that customers on a broader scale are dictating similar changes today. They are the ones responsible for the success or failure of your products and brand, and through social media actually control your messaging both positively and negatively. But they haven’t sent you a letter of notification. Have you noticed?

Most have noticed, but many have not acknowledged. With acceptance of the need to change, executives and owners open tremendously exciting vistas for new degrees of growth and enhanced viability. In contrast to the bleak outlook for traditional practitioners, the outlook for executives with the daring and determination to evolve their marketing and sales is bright indeed.

Chapter 3

The Industrial Marketing Landscape

The new role of marketing — and what's broken

Traditionally the marketing function has been the kid brother of sales in industrial companies. The heavy lifting was done by the sales group, and marketing's role was corporate communications, PR and sales support, developing collateral and placing ads, direct mail and other traditional communication channel support. In sophisticated companies 'product marketing' played a more integral role, often influencing R&D decisions and overseeing the product road-map and life-cycle. Generally, however, it's been relegated to a role in support of sales.

How do these new realities impact that supporting role, particularly if the inversion of focus reflected in figure 3 is correct? This is the existential question at the core of the new industrial marketing and sales paradigm.

To answer this question first requires a review of traditional marketing methods and an evaluation of their suitability for today's market realities.

It's not an encouraging perspective:

- 2/3rd of US citizens are on the "Do not call list"¹⁰
- 86% of people skip TV ads¹¹

- 44% of direct mail is never opened¹²
- 91% report unsubscribing from emails they previously “opted in” to

In short, Interruption Marketing is dying. At the same time the high cost and diminished effectiveness of other “outbound” marketing techniques is further challenging traditional approaches. For example 39% of respondents to a recent HubSpot survey indicated that trade shows have become less important to their business over the last six months.

None of this should surprise anyone who refers to caller ID when their phone rings or deletes email they don’t quickly recognize. But industrial marketers oddly persist in marketing ‘investments’ in methods that they may ignore themselves, and that demonstrate decreasing effectiveness.

Mapping What Works in Today’s Markets

Aligning prospect expectations with marketing activities

The challenge industrial marketers face is developing a strategy to fit incompatible buying behaviors into a system they must construct, in the unfamiliar territory of a web centric marketing and sales model. Daunting for sure, but eminently feasible and remarkably economical.

The solution is a model called **“inbound marketing.”**

“Inbound Marketing is the opposite of traditional outbound marketing (advertising, direct mail/phone, tradeshow, etc.) where you interrupt your way into people’s lives. Instead of interrupting, Inbound Marketing pulls prospects into and down through your sales

funnel in a natural way based on how they search for information and make purchase decisions today.”

— Brian Halligan, Inbound Marketing Guru

We’ve established that customers use the internet to identify solutions and sources. They will complete much of their evaluation without ever involving one of your employees and the purchasing process will involve a number of folks and following a meandering path at an unpredictable pace.

Now let’s build the model that will position you for success -- remotely. Since Matt Cutts of Google already coached us on how to succeed, it’s easy to map our process, which will be built on a core of valuable content. Building the content in all its variations, volume and quality is hard work, but identifying the critical steps is straightforward.

Getting found -- 61% of global internet users research products online¹³, 90% of B2B buying purchases start with content engagement and as noted earlier, 93% of B2B purchases begin with search. Your first priority is to appear on the radar when someone searches for what you make or do. That requires, generically, SEO. Traditionally SEO meant keywords on your website. But based on Google changes (remember it’s about relevant, quality content now based on semantic search) that’s only a small piece. Noted SEO expert Adam Torkildson was quoted recently as saying “Google is in the process of making the SEO industry obsolete, SEO will be dead in 2 years.”¹⁴

“more than 90% of B2B buying purchases start with content engagement”¹⁵

“Getting found” relies on a new formulation of SEO -- one that permeates every bit of content you produce, and is predicated on long-

tail keywords that identify not only your solution but the problems you solve and the outcomes you create. Naturally those long-tail keywords will be integrated into your site (URL, page title, image alt tags, meta description and tags and page text) but if volume, relevance and freshness are the objectives, then relatively few and fairly static webpages aren't the answer. Creating volumes of quality content is.

Content must be optimized legitimately for your keywords, and be multi-channel. YouTube videos, infographics, SlideShare presentations, blogs, social media, whitepapers, eBooks and podcasts are all examples of types of content that support your objectives, and allow your prospects to consume and digest content according to their preferences. As the volume of really valuable info you publish grows, optimized for your important long-tail keywords and referencing back to your website, you'll start to see dramatic improvements in your traffic – not only volume but also quality.

Great content has another amazing impact on getting found -- one more powerful than anything you can create. Great content gets shared. You can't force this. You can only enable it...and maybe nudge it along (keep this in mind when our discussion turns to social media). But sharing is enormously important and powerful in several ways -- volume, freshness, buzz and inbound links.

- Inbound links -- instances when other sites link directly to your content -- are one of the most powerful elements of SEO. This is often referred to as “off-page SEO.” Here the need for quality is apparent. People are not naturally inclined to endorse mediocrity. Want to turbocharge your SEO? Make your content “shareworthy”!
- Buzz is not high on most industrial marketers' priority list, and was never previously even plausible. But today's tools change that. While your very topical blog articles and meaty whitepapers won't find much traction outside of your target audience,

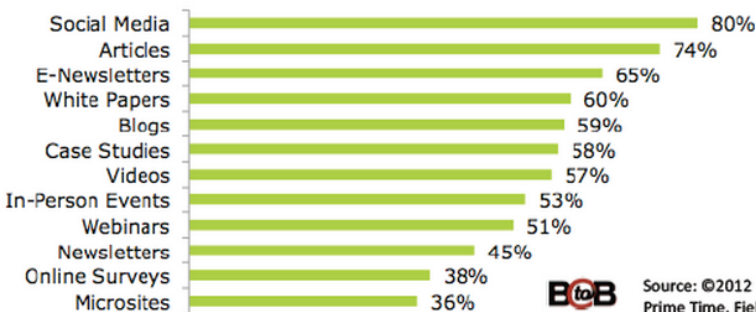
images of products made possible with yours or infographics that speak to every day implications of your solutions can easily gain widespread traction -- even on social media platforms that are considered primarily B2C.

- Freshness is a natural byproduct of continuous content creation.
- Volume has an often underappreciated impact.

Research finds that:

- Businesses with websites of 401-1000 pages get 6X more leads than those with 51-100 pages¹⁶
- Companies with more than 311 indexed web pages receive 236% more leads than those with less than 60 (median of 74 leads/month vs. 5)¹⁷
- Blogging daily (remember each blog post is another indexed page!) nearly doubles the likelihood of customer acquisition through the blog (78% vs. 43% for companies that blog less than monthly)¹⁸
- Companies that blog have 55% more website visitors¹⁹ and B2B companies that blog generally generate 67% more leads/month than companies that don't²⁰

Chart: What content methods are you using (most-used methods)?



Source: ©2012 BtoB's Content Marketing: Ready for Prime Time. Fielded April/May 2012, N=440

Figure 5. --BtoB Marketing

It's likely that companies that blog often and create more optimized pages are more internet marketing savvy. Therefore the association between volume of webpage content and traffic/leads may require more analysis to determine the direct correlation. But clearly there is one.

Bottom line - the preponderance of the traffic you drive with these targeted methods will be visitors looking for specifically your solution/product -- not someone sort of, kind of, not really like you.

“Google and the other search engines have broken the world into little tiny bits. No one visits a website’s home page anymore...they walk in the back door, to the page Google sent them to.”

- Seth Godin, Meatball Sundae,
Is Your Marketing Out of Sync?²¹

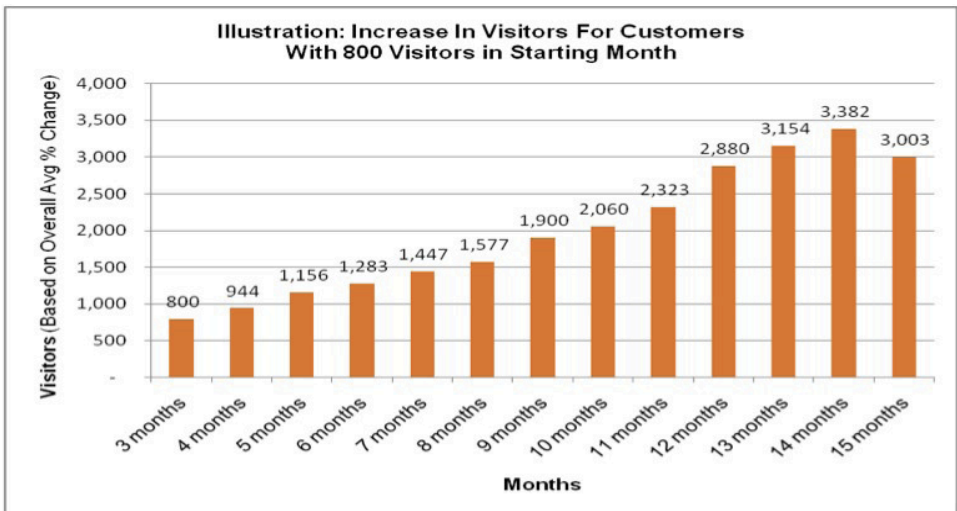


Figure 6. --Desrosiers/Paiser; "return on Marketing Investment from Inbound Marketing through Implementing HubSpot Software"

Conversion - Without conversion, traffic is a useless metric!

If content is the bedrock of the inbound model, conversion is the foundation that anchors your marketing infrastructure to your content. Often overlooked, conversion is the link between your success driving traffic and your potential success establishing a connection with prospects. That connection becomes the channel by which you will nurture them through their buying process to become qualified leads and eventually customers. In simple terms this is achieved through registration (often simple name and email address) in exchange for some of your valuable content.

Certainly there's art and science to optimizing this process (see more detail in the following section on metrics) but in its basic form, compelling Calls to Action (graphic/text statements of a pain point which invite visitors to download valuable content) link to landing pages (more optimized pages for Google to index!) which reiterate the value of your content and captures registration information.

Here you discover the next two benefits of your content. Not only does it enhance your ability to "be found" but it provides the 'consideration' by which you exchange helpful expertise for a visitor's contact details. Further, if it really is valuable, it substantially establishes credibility for your company and your product. In fact, more than 40% of B2B buyers had their first contact with a solution provider after downloading content from their site.²² (Note: Content that just sells your product is of limited value in this way. Solid, valuable content instructs the buyer and supports their research. Obviously there are attributes of a solution which you think are particularly important. That's why you've designed them into your solution. It is appropriate to generically establish why those should be considerations, but if you shill for your solution you'll have little success.) Build credibility here! Substantially inform the buyers' research (even help to coach them on how they should evaluate and decide) and you have created the perfect base for nurturing and deepening your virtual dialog.

Many sites have “contact us” forms, and many offer material for download such as spec sheets and sales brochures. But those aren’t conversion. Conversion is capturing enough information from a visitor so that you can begin to establish virtual rapport and a dialog. Technically a “contact us” form qualifies, but in reality it is rarely completed (particularly if assessed as a percentage of traffic). Content available for download without an exchange of information doesn’t count, and content like spec sheets which are inwardly directed (as opposed to educational and helpful to a buyer) isn’t doesn’t support worthwhile conversions.

Nurturing - “Not every prospect is ready to buy now. In fact, according to Sirius Decisions “of the 20% of leads that sales reps follow up on, 70% are disqualified. But it’s a mistake to ignore those leads. After all, 80% of prospects that don’t make the grade today will go on to buy from you or a competitor within the next 24 months. When they do, you want your company at the top of their short list.”²³

Because research is so easy (with improved search engine technology, now solution, problem inquiry and ideal outcomes can all be searched instantaneously), as we’ve already seen many more potential purchase inquiries are made. Not only will many be “on a whim” but the majority will occur much earlier than traditionally. In fact they often occur well in advance of any formal “buying process.” So freshly germinated contemplations of purchase are both inappropriate for intense sales follow up, and inadvisably ignored. The solution lies in the use of automation to nurture those prospects -- to deliver a stream of relevant content which both coaches the prospect on how to evaluate solutions like yours (eases their job and positions them for success) and to help move them through the sales funnel while building a virtual rapport - to “incubate leads not yet ready to buy”²⁴.

‘Ticklers’ and ‘follow-up’ are nothing new. But ‘touching base’ calls and emails antagonize early stage buyers, and archaic systems

for ‘staying in touch’ are inappropriate for today’s hyperkinetic pace and communications overload.

Key to success is a platform that facilitates conversions and nurturing, enabling small staffs to progressively nurture huge numbers of prospects until they become leads, and subsequently leads until they are ready to make a final purchase decision and become customers. Various platforms are available including (alphabetically) Aprimo, Eloqua, HubSpot, Marketo & Pardot & Omniture.

Metrics - Industrial companies tend to deal in specifics. Thousandths of an inch, watts, and Six Sigma are all concrete characteristics or processes -- right brain dominant activities. Yet traditional marketing has been built on imagery, design and broad concepts -- left brain dominant activities. Any wonder then that B2B and particularly industrial marketing has held such strong traditional biases against investment in marketing that reassured one that making the investment and waiting patiently would yield grand results. This argument never had much traction with traditional-minded executives.

*“When it comes to generating results...
the name of the game is quality over quantity.
Lead-management technology can help identify
prospects with a higher propensity to purchase
based on unique behavior that is pre-defined in
(lead) scoring methodologies.”²⁵*

Inbound marketing by this measure represents the arrival of marketing made for industrial manufacturers. All of the platforms mentioned above incorporate robust metrics and analytics into their platforms. Information is available nearly real-time to monitor keyword results, success of individual and groups of content (campaigns), A/B variable testing of CTAs and landing pages, intelligent content (tailored to important visitor attributes— i.e. industry), lead scoring²⁶ and effectiveness of individual webpages.

Suddenly the business person has marketing that can be managed as precisely and empirically as their very own manufacturing. Marketing ROI should be measurable, manageable and accountable. Now with “closed loop” methodologies it can be, even to the satisfaction of the most data driven executives.

Social Media - Industrial executives are not favorably pre-disposed to social media. Busy, driven and often possessing ‘black and white’ perspectives they find social media to be inane or even fundamentally wasteful. So what!? Many B2B customers buy using a completely different methodology that of traditional manufacturers. Applying one’s biases and inclinations to the sales process is an approach likely to fail.

But rather than dabble in theoreticals, let’s look at metrics. Experience tells us that many readers will scoff, asserting that these simply cannot be accurate. Cavalierly discounting the facts may alleviate momentary angst but ignores fundamental realities of selling in today’s markets.

*“While social media is not the silver bullet
that some pundits claim it to be, it is an
extremely important and relatively low cost
touch point that has a direct impact
on sales”*

— Josh Mendelsohn, VP, Chadwick Martin Bailey

Various B2B Social Media Metrics

- The top 20% of B2B marketers in social media lead generation have increased revenue by 20% in 2011.²⁷
- % of B2B companies that have acquired customers through social media²⁸
 - LinkedIn - 65%
 - Company Blog - 55%
 - Facebook - 43% (note - this is not just for B2C!)
 - Twitter - 40%
- Pinterest (have industrial marketers even heard of this....?) drives more referral traffic than Google+, LinkedIn & YouTube combined.
- 51% of B2B marketers say that Facebook is an effective marketing tool.
- Twitter users are younger, more educated, have higher incomes and a much higher propensity to be early adopters than other demographics.
- 42% of B2B buyers use Twitter to learn about products/services.²⁹
- Companies that use Twitter as a marketing tool average 2X more leads/month than those that don't.³⁰
- 50 & 68% of manufacturing and professional services consulting companies have acquired customers/clients through Facebook respectively.

So social media (at least certain channels) can actually directly impact B2B sales. But the larger benefits for industrial marketers lie in other consequences of social media use. Social media will help any business get found through a number of searchable interactions, through the impact of inbound links created through sharing, and by reaching new audiences that use different tools and search for information differently. A 2010 survey by B2B Magazine found that social media is valued by B2B marketers for its ability to drive inbound links (48%), increase page rank (45%) and influence organic SEO (40%).³¹

From the executive's perspective it doesn't have to work for you personally, but it will surely work for you professionally!

Mobile - "54% of iOS web traffic is devoted to search vs. the 36% internet average"³²

With the advent of the internet and business intelligence technologies such as predictive analytics, an enormous surge in mobile applications, and a better understanding of local markets, the web has come to bring the world closer together and, in turn, give companies anywhere in the world opportunities global in size.

Today with over 320 million mobile subscriptions in the U.S. alone, the metrics of huge growth in mobile data is unsurprising. According to Microsoft Tag, mobile internet usage will overtake desktop internet usage by 2014. Google says that 40% of mobile queries are related to location and 70% of smartphone users use their device while shopping in-store. But that makes sense for B2C. What about B2B? A University of Dayton study found that as long ago as Q1 '11, "59% B2B purchase decision makers and influencers had used a smartphone to gather purchase information."³³ Also as clearly illustrated in figure 7, "C Suite" execs are embracing mobile tools at an accelerated pace.

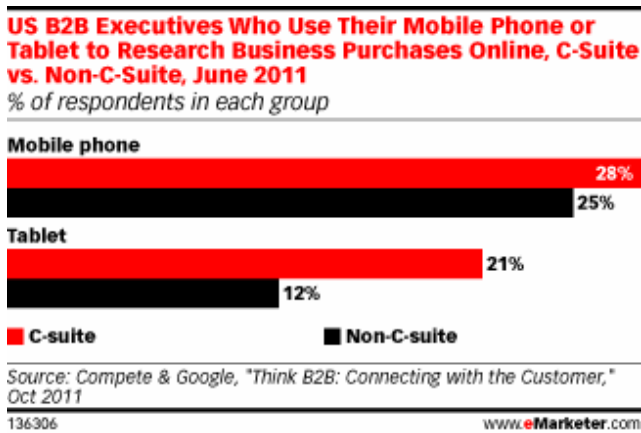


Figure 7. --eMarketer

Content is shared on mobile devices, and is a mainstream form of communications and content consumption especially if your business strategy is global.

Consumers worldwide already downloaded billions of apps (figure 8) and that number is expected to roughly double in 2012. Adoption is occurring quite rapidly. In January 2011, over half (55%) of the app sessions tracked across iOS and Android devices came from the United States. 28% came from the next nine most prominent countries in terms of usage, and the rest of the world was responsible for just 17% of app sessions.

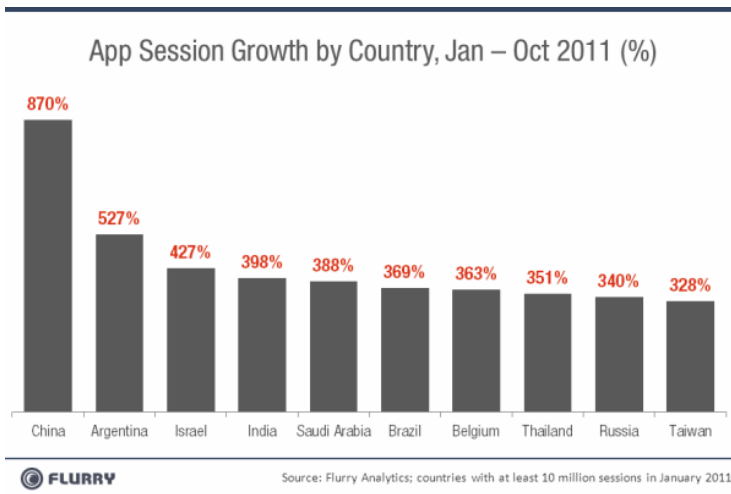


Figure 8. -- Flurry Analytics

These metrics substantially demonstrate the exploding impact of mobile on B2B sales and marketing. New tools, such as this one, to tag content to physical locations further accelerates the value, and therefore the adoption of mobile technologies.

ROI — Cost and Performance of Inbound Marketing

Success & Cost

Any business makes its investment decisions on some sort of ROI basis. Expected return levels and periods vary, but fundamentally all expenditures are trade-offs -- disbursements in exchange for some anticipated value to be realized.

So how does inbound marketing compare to other marketing approaches in results and in cost?

Outcome

Let's start by looking at **results**.

We've established the baseline success of inbound marketing methodology in creating more SEO leads through optimized content and conversions. But are SEO leads worthwhile? Indeed if they were substantially less efficacious than direct mail, for instance, or other outbound methods, then there would be little net benefit.

Chart: Which criteria do you use to measure content marketing success?

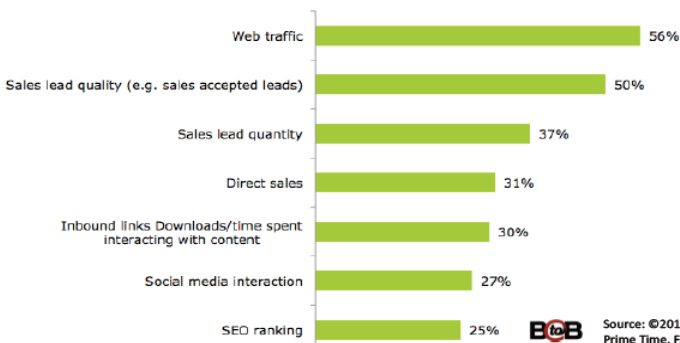


Figure 9. --B2B



Source: ©2012 BtoB's Content Marketing: Ready for Prime Time. Fielded April/May 2012, N=440

Customer Conversion Rates (close) by lead origin ³⁴

Lead Origin	Conversion Rate (leads to customer)	Comparative Effectiveness to Outbound Leads
SEO	15%	650%
Referrals (inbound links)	9%	350%
PPC	7%	250%
Social Media	4%	100%
Outbound Marketing	2%	N/A

As shown in the above chart, statistics show that leads generated through inbound marketing methods are 350-650% more likely than outbound leads to translate to revenue. Additionally inbound methodology, which gathers momentum as content becomes mutually reinforcing, creates increasing numbers of these super desirable leads.

Investment

*“Inbound marketing is about
applying more brains, not more budget,
to drive revenue”* ³⁵

Business experience naturally tells us that anything that delivers such demonstrably superior results must carry a comparably higher cost. Experience would be wrong in this case. Year after year extensive studies have found that the average cost of leads generated through inbound marketing is 60% less expensive than the average cost of leads which originate from outbound activities.³⁶

Value - ROI

Inbound leads are as much as 8 times more valuable -- and they cost less than half of what outbound leads cost. For executives seeking growth and facing budget constraints both statistics are compelling.

Two Views of Average CPL Cost per Lead



Figure 10. --HubSpot - 2 Views



But there's a certain feel of fantasy about them. If this was really such a no brainer why wouldn't everyone do it? Fair question - remember it's a lot of work; it takes time; and requires patience and creativity. But a recent study on the ROI of Inbound Marketing prepared by Desrosiers (MIT Sloan School) and Paisner (Babson F.W. Olin School)³⁷ provides a worthwhile set of data to further evaluate the value of the methodology.

As figure 6-pg 36 illustrates, traffic growth is substantial. In fact, for companies that had been using Inbound marketing for at least 12 months, traffic growth statistics include:

- 88% reported increased traffic.
- 25% reported that traffic more than doubled.
- On average, traffic increased by 13% month-month.

Lead results paralleled traffic. Statistics included:

- 83% reported an increase in leads.
- Of those, 67% saw an increase in less than 4 months.
- Increases in month over month lead volumes ranged from 30% for companies already generating large volumes of leads to as much as 41X for companies beginning from low levels of activity.

Sales results reflected similar growth with 64% indicating an increase in sales directly resulting from their inbound marketing efforts -- more than half in as little as 5 months.

Perhaps most importantly, 85% would recommend the approach and 77% said inbound marketing had helped them better meet their overall marketing goals.

In sum, Inbound Marketing offers the following value proposition for marketers:

- Much more valuable leads
- Substantially lower cost/lead
- Satisfaction and success

“As marketers begin to take more of a lead-

to-revenue management (L2RM) approach and think beyond lead origination, we are seeing lead nurturing beginning to get the attention it deserves and a larger share of the demand management spend.”

— Forrester Research, Inc., 2011 Demand Management
Budget Trends

Implementing Inbound Marketing in Your Company

For a more complete action plan please refer part 2 “13 Steps to B2B Marketing Success”.

Strategy

A marketing evolution effort must begin with strategy. This is distinct from a formal marketing plan which is typically obsolete as it is published. In contrast, strategy involves formally researching and codifying core elements of the sales & marketing model. Traditionally, for example, ideal customer attributes have been established by gut feeling. In their April, 2011 report “B2B Marketers Must Better Prepare for Marketing Automation” Forrester Research³⁸ argues that companies must “identify the personas within the segments they want to target and map the buyer journeys that each persona takes.”

Website

Perhaps the most fundamental change required is in the approach to a company’s website. The traditional industrial marketing site (home page, about us which has company history, products - with specs and details, and contact us) is understandable from the perspective of the company itself. The site was created several years ago (there’s almost always an upgrade being contemplated) and is quite static. It’s all about the company and its products (with an occasional nod to ‘industries served’), and was created as an obligatory add-on to

the traditional marketing effort, often with the vague goal of credibility. It was never intended to be a lead generating engine (that's what a sales force was for!), and is possibly not even keyword optimized. More advanced companies may offer an option to download some data sheets, probably a contact us form, and maybe even a 'blog' with article added every month or so.

This has to change. Companies must create functional sites (aesthetically appealing but not design obsessed) which are easy to navigate, optimized for search, content focused lead conversion engines.

“Businesses are transforming their marketing efforts to focus more on inbound programs...89% of companies which use inbound marketing are maintaining or increasing their inbound marketing budget. Of the 47% increasing their inbound marketing budgets, the most commonly cited reason was the success they had with inbound”

— HubSpot, the 2012 State of Inbound Marketing

Content

As already noted, the core of your effort will be content, and a solid content strategy will include, but not by way of limitation, the following variety of types:

- Video
- Whitepapers
- Blog
- EBooks

- Images (A survey from AYTM Market Research found that more than 65 percent of consumers enjoy interacting with visual content on the web).³⁹
- Infographics
- SlideShare presentations
- Podcasts
- Webinars
- Case studies

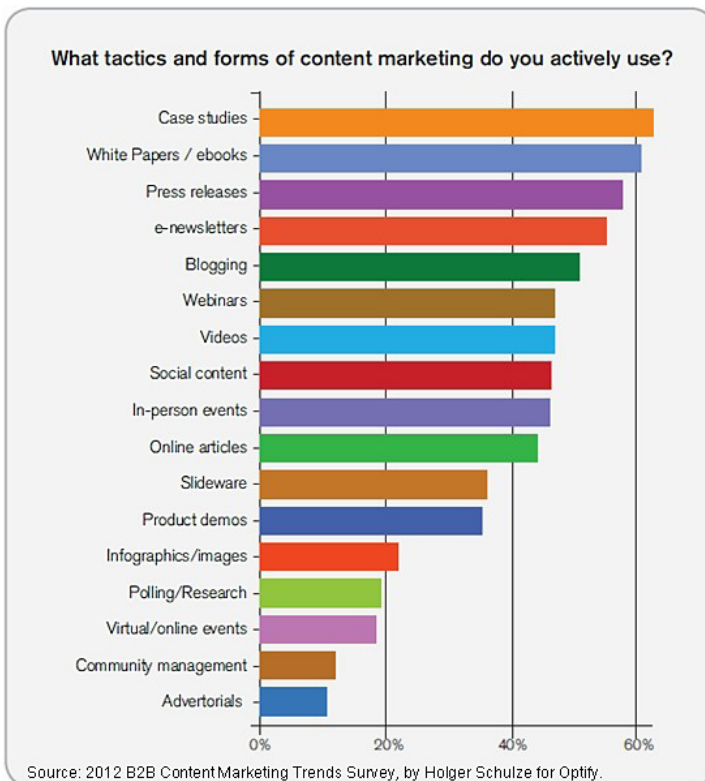


Figure 11. --B2B Content Marketing

Lead Management (marketing automation) - a general term that encompasses lead-generation, nurturing, scoring and assignment/follow-up lead management - is a category of functions through which companies interpret and respond to the “digital body language”⁴¹ of visitors, prospects and leads.

*“The simple fact of the matter is that it’s
just not possible
to manually engage with each prospect at just
the right time,
with just the right information. Never before
has there been a greater need to automate the
complexities of engaging with
prospects and customers.”*⁴²

The role for sales - “Inbound marketing doesn’t drive people to action...While it’s generally a good idea to let the buyer control momentum, there are times when...people need a push, not a pull.”⁴³

Mobile - Not sure how mobile fits into your marketing? -- especially industrial marketing? The statistics speak for themselves:

- The global trend is clear - Arica has 1B people who carry 500M mobile devices.
- Of the 7B inhabitants of earth, 3.5B regularly use a toothbrush, but 4B use mobile phones.⁴⁴
- 54% of iOS web traffic is devoted to search vs. the 36% internet average.

Public relations – Keyword optimized press releases are awesome content with all sorts of ancillary benefits. Great content drives interest. The media has and always will play an integral role in disseminating and distributing content, especially when it’s relevant

to their readers, who are many times your customers and prospects. Establishing relationships through industry editors, bloggers, and thought leaders will ultimately assist your firm in building brand equity and often times lead to opportunities that you otherwise would not have. Byline articles, interviews, contributing trade events, and panel discussions all contribute as sources of content for your company and brand.

Chapter 4

Where's the growth?

5%

Just as many B2B companies have continued to embrace decreasingly effective and traditional sales and marketing models, many have also resisted the recommendation to pursue the enormous global opportunities that are available.

95% of the world's consumers are outside the US⁴⁵ and only 5% of American companies export.⁴⁶ In both cases breaking out from the 5% substantially increases a company's growth opportunity.

Companies that have hesitated face a big task for sure. But there are abundant resources available to support their global initiatives, and compelling reasons why they should begin. As they endeavor to regain growth momentum with more effective domestic approaches (inbound marketing) they can concurrently begin to explore the prospects that global expansion affords.

The metrics are incontrovertible and overwhelming. Incremental growth will be primarily found in foreign markets. Certainly companies with innovative products and strong competitive positioning can create domestic growth, but that growth will be extracted from a nearly "zero sum" environment. In other words domestic growth will come at the expense of competitors. In contrast foreign markets offer absolute growth AND opportunity for early advantage.

Global GDP Contribution in PPP Terms: 2000-2020

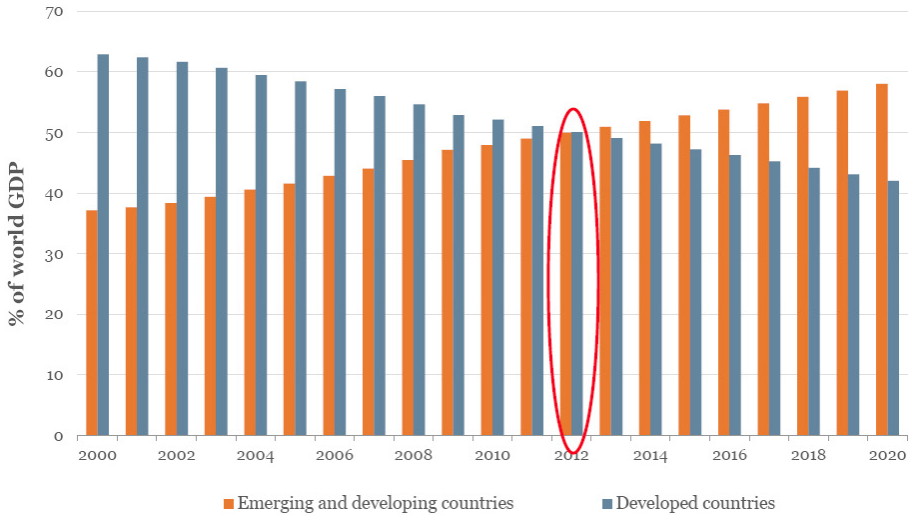
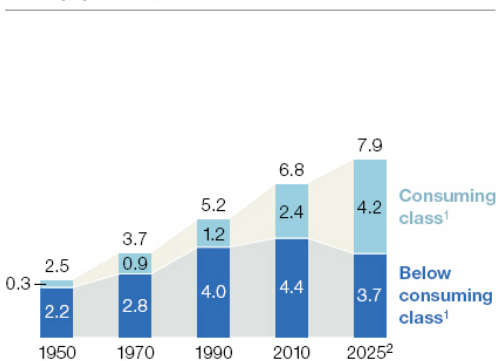


Figure 12. --Euromonitor International

As seen in figure 11 above, 2012 is the watershed year. Euro-monitor International predicts that global GDP growth in coming years will originate in emerging and developing markets rather than traditional ones.

By 2025, the consuming class will swell to 4.2 billion people. Consumption in emerging markets will account for \$30 trillion—nearly half of the global total.

World population, billions



World consumption, \$ trillion

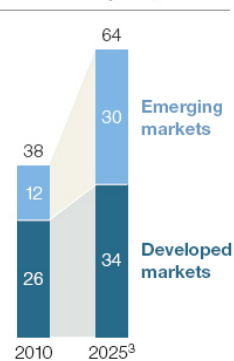


Figure 13. --McKinsey & Company

Looking further out, the trends in consumption are compelling. Growth in consumption between 2010 and 2025 will be substantially concentrated in emerging markets as seen in figure 12.⁴⁷

How does this fit with the topic of sales and marketing?

Companies focused on growth need to consider parallel paths of evolutionary marketing and new markets. Although emphasis and resource allocation will vary, it is important to recognize that these two approaches represent parallel and viable avenues to growth.

More specifically, however, the same inbound marketing methodology that we suggest will power increased domestic sales will simultaneously generate intriguing international prospects. Even companies that focus their content effort in American English and optimization on a .com TLD (top level domain) website with American English keywords will find a large number of international leads. Many will be low quality. However a meaningful percentage will be real and substantial.

Some simple data mining will elucidate where pockets of potentially profitable demand lie, and focused strategies can be developed to target those leads. This domestic initiative can then be internationalized with TLDs for targeted markets, localized keywords and appropriate content, and automation (drip emails / texts) localized for language and culture.

In practice this means that the same fundamentally economical lead-generation methods that work domestically can be economically applied on a global scale. This creates huge opportunities for global lead generation driven from a domestic office with a modest staff...and opportunity companies would be foolish to ignore regardless of how intimidating they find export at first blush.

Chapter 5

Part 1: Conclusion & Summary

B2B sales and marketing efforts are at a crossroads. Traditional approaches clearly generate decreasing results. There is a vague awareness that things are different, yet in many cases not yet a crisis in revenue to prompt a dramatic change.

This creates an opportunity for senior executives to respond before businesses are too distressed to recover. But the response must be appropriate to the different environment rather than simply tweaks of existing models.

Ample research substantiates the evolution of marketing methods to satisfy new buying models. Tools and models are inexpensive and readily available, and the increased effectiveness and demonstrable value of inbound marketing methodologies make implementation even for small companies feasible. But the clock is ticking. 83.5% of B2B marketers are increasing their use of content – many ‘significantly’.⁴⁸ Delay will result in a marketing deficit.

Rarely is a fundamental shift in business as clear in real-time as this change in the nature of the sales & purchasing processes. Executives committed to the viability of their companies have a huge opportunity to identify and adopt best practices.

PART 2:

The Fix

Chapter 6

A 13 Step Process

Marketing, American Manufacturing & the Growth Imperative

B2B and industrial marketing and sales are changing – rather they have changed. Business owners and executives intuitively sense the change but many hesitate to confront it. Reasons for the hesitation vary, just as do individual perspectives and companies. Generally though, the reticence or inaction are grounded in uncertainty around exactly what's changed, why, and how to respond.

Executives may turn to their professional advisors or peers for some insight. Of course the advice from peers facing the same disquieting shifts may be comforting but likely isn't innovative, and while accountants and lawyers are masters of their craft, they can often hardly market their own services. Then too, for companies with engaged marketing assistance the advice is often simply more of the same, with a dollop of social media -- considering their revenue is predicated on more of the same traditional work.

Regardless of motivation, companies face a stark choice of growth or stagnation. The latter isn't immediate; but the gradual decline of companies that fail to grow is inexorable.

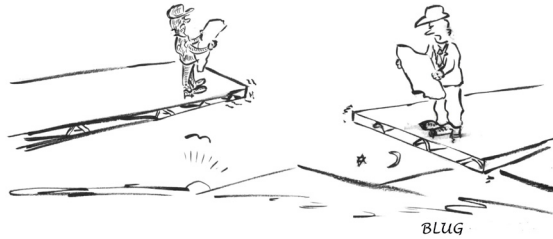
Yet the growth imperative remains. Regardless of motivation, companies face a stark choice of growth or stagnation. The latter isn't immediate; but the gradual decline of companies that fail to grow is inexorable.

We're about proactive action – and we know that most American entrepreneurs share the same predisposition to action. We've spoken with too many frustrated and discouraged business people over the last several years – and we know that in most cases the growing desperation is unnecessary. There is a solution. While it isn't complicated, it isn't easy. But we are excited to share this system with determined entrepreneurs whose will and energy thrive but have simply lacked the framework around which to build successful change.

Perhaps most alarming is the number of companies with whom we speak who have stumbled into portions of this process by chance. Unfortunately this is one field where a 70% solution isn't better than none. Without all the elements applied using a comprehensive methodology, results are elusive, and understandably, in the absence of results the hard work is abandoned. Those companies were so close, but end up further away. That's a tragedy for them and American manufacturing in general that we are no longer willing to overlook.

This section is free of “geek speak.” It outlines the 13 steps required to achieve industrial marketing success, and provides key takeaways and links to additional resources. Are you going to be an inbound marketing wizard 20 minutes from now? Probably not, but you'll understand the fundamental components and have a clear path forward.

*“Frank and public acknowledgement that
change is required will be important.
And make sure this happens before an
irreversible, cataclysmic event!”*



Phase 1 - Strategy

Step I — Accept that your company has a problem.

Define or describe it as you wish. Attribute it to whatever causes you please. But if you aren't adding enough new customers to grow despite inevitable attrition, that's a problem. This is going to be a process. With sincere management commitment and consistent effort you won't move the revenue needle for about a year. You'll see encouraging and exciting results much sooner, but the process takes time. With anything that's hard your commitment will wane. Frank and public acknowledgement that change is required will be important. And make sure this happens before an irreversible, cataclysmic event!

Action steps:

- Acknowledge a problem exists – publically, not just privately as you sit in traffic during your commute
- Use this tool to establish some planning benchmarks for what will be required to overcome the problem ([access worksheet #1 pg 93](#)) The key point here? The ultimate metric is customer conversions. Other metrics along the way are merely data points – worth tracking, and important, but just building blocks.
- Clarify the outcomes of both success as well as failure of your initiative

Step 2 — Study industrial marketing and sales.

The landscape has changed since you started your company and/or established your successful track record. Successful adaptation will require both a firm grasp of “the way it used to be” and a keen understanding of “how it is now.” The reality is that any solution predicated on casual observation, gut feeling or fanciful projections will in all probability fail. Then when you have to bear down through the hard work, you must be resolute that the situation requires no less than the solution to which you have committed.

Action steps:

- Read our whitepaper “The Current State of Industrial Marketing: How it has evolved, why owners and “C” level execs should be pumped and why VPs of Sales & Marketing should be terrified!”
- Subscribe to at least 10 relevant blogs
- Create a twitter handle for yourself and one for your company and each brand. Seriously. Today. Do it.
- Start a topics list. ([access worksheet #2 pg 93](#)) In step #7 we’ll start to map these against types of content including blogs, whitepapers, eBooks, videos and infographics. This may well not make a lot of sense now, but as you learn about the importance of relevant content you’ll understand better and will reach a point in the process where you have to start to create content. You’ll be glad you have a list!
- Routinely ask any customers/clients or prospects for email addresses and twitter handles (you may think it’s crazy, but you’ll want this info later – start now).

Step 3 — Acknowledge that not everyone buys the same way.

You don't have to change the way you buy. But you do have to recognize that you will compromise your success if you have a particularly deliberative process and assume that others must as well. (Not everyone does, and some grow impatient trying to buy as a cumbersome process thwarts them.) Further you must empathize with others who want to buy your products in what may seem an illogical way to you. Your sales structure must accommodate them.

Action steps:

- Identify different sell cycles and buying approaches that you encounter. Seek input and brainstorming from others. Remember that you probably hire in your own image so the feedback from your sales team may be skewed to your expectation. Step outside your group for a better perspective.
- If you aren't personally engaged on LinkedIn, undertake to become active. Develop a profile or improve one you have. Identify groups that are information for you (industry perspective) and start to follow some of the conversations.

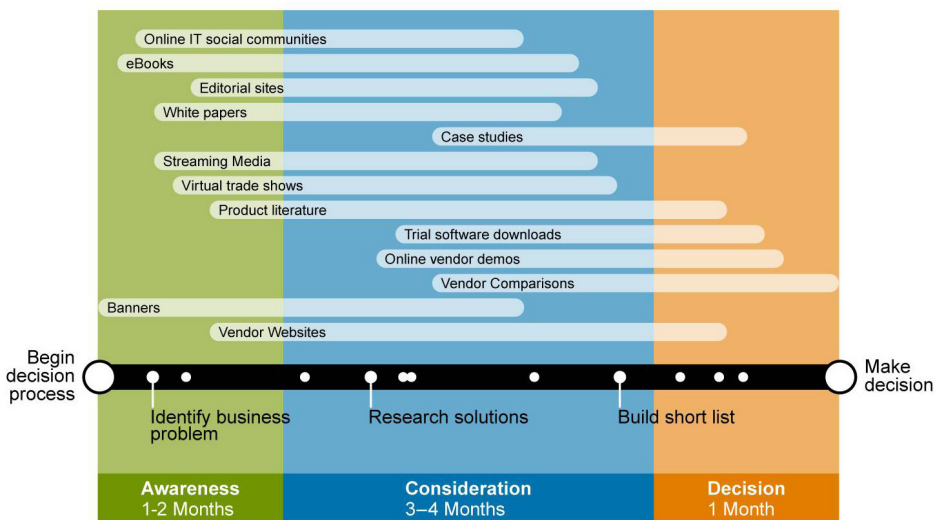


Figure 14. --TechTarget

Step 4 — Get cerebral

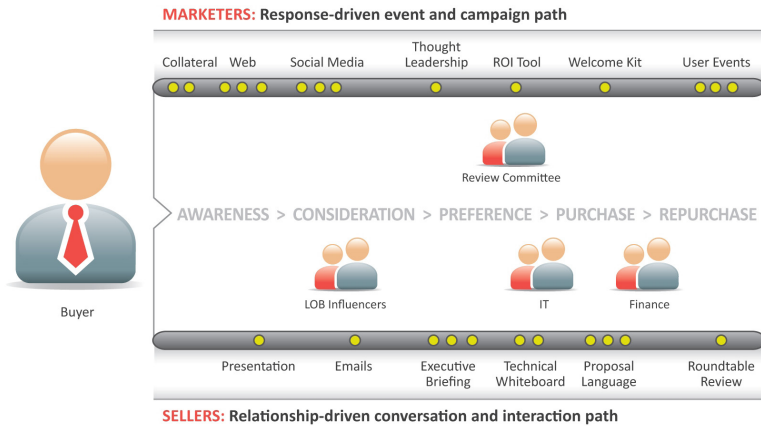
To whom you sell, not just who writes the checks or PO's but who are the influencers, and what categories of buying objectives you must satisfy.

In marketing parlance we'll call these 'personas.' As with buying style (yours vs. others) you will naturally assume that the persona with which you are most comfortable is the most prevalent or profitable. That could be, but similarly it could be quite different from your assumption. This requires a detailed, well-researched (open minded) analysis.

Action steps:

- Begin by identifying customer account types (e.g. direct, OEM, channel), then...
- Determine the target revenue/employee range for each type of account as well as other pertinent account profile attributes (length of time in business, location, their customer profile, etc.), next...
- Identify the key roles that will buy (or influence, suggest, research) your product. These will vary by account type and other profiles, but could include design engineer, maintenance manager, purchasing agent, Chief Sustainability Officer, owner, sales rep, etc.) You want this to be granular enough to allow you to target groups effectively, but not so detailed that your messaging becomes convoluted. These will be the bases for the personas you will build. You will probably have between 3-15 depending on your product and target markets.
- Understand that buying process (step 3) may map reasonably accurately to different personas. Consider that carefully as you build the personas.

Figure 15. --Launch Content



- As social media behaviors become clearer, begin to join LinkedIn groups that are popular among key personas. Observe the discussions.
- Complete this persona profile tool ([access worksheet #3 pg 93](#)) for each persona.
- Revisit your content ideas list, and begin to map topics against personas and add new ones which this audience insight raises.

Step 5 —Map your value proposition against the personas.

Based on how you conceived/designed/manufacture your products and certain buying biases, you almost certainly have articulated certain value propositions that you have assumed to be most compelling. But here you must step back and empathetically assess the value your product represents for each persona. For instance, the HP in a motor may be of paramount importance to an engineer, but irrelevant to a company president. While sealed bearings could be meaningless to a purchasing manager but critically important to the maintenance manager in a 'lean' manufacturing environment, who struggles keeping up with PM schedules.

Action steps:

- For each persona/product (or major group or category of products) cross on a matrix complete this form, which captures your product and sales/support processes value(s) relevant to that persona, your weaknesses, and your competitors strengths & weaknesses as potentially perceived by that group. Basically you are creating a brief SWOT analysis based not on a monolithic 'market' but adapted to each persona's perspective ([access worksheet #4 pg 93](#)).
- Revisit your content idea list, refine topics based on this perspective and add new ones that this new value insight suggests
- Join Quora and begin to follow certain topics
- Prep for the next step - Read "The Beginner's Guide to SEO" online (or [download and print a .pdf if you prefer from pg 93](#)...and that means you, too, even if you already know all about SEO!

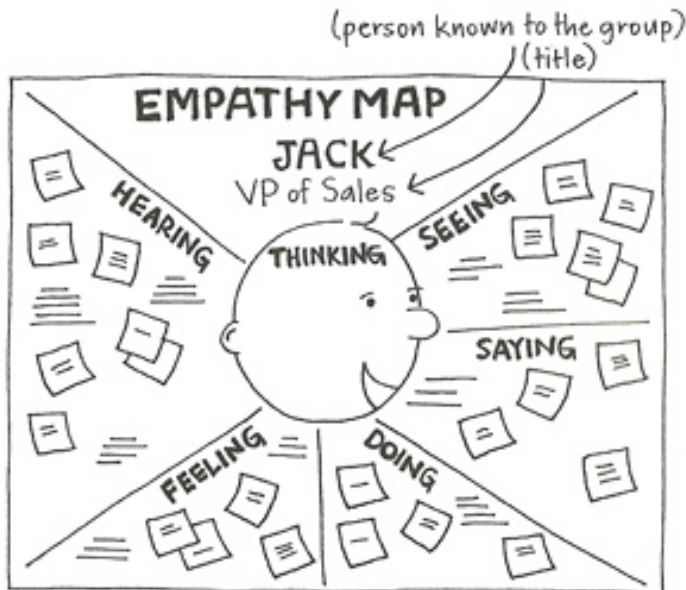


Figure 16. --MindMapping

Step 6 — SEO...on steroids — Keywords, specifically ‘long tail keywords’, are the key here.

You and your team need to brainstorm tirelessly – in focused sessions and by maintaining contemporaneous lists, capture not only the easy words (industry lingo, generic product names, etc.) but more specific phrases (e.g. not just “automation” but “software to optimize automation workflows”) and various forms. As we outlined in our whitepaper (see step 2 above), as search engines advance the syntax has evolved for how people search. You might find “I want to source a new compressor” or “How can I keep the compressed air dry in my factory” or “changing air filters and traps too often” or “nexgen compressor with built in dryer” or even #compressorairdryer (remember that sourcing searches are done using tools besides Google!) If you are a regional business then make sure that your long tail keywords include appropriate geographical limiters too. Include certain strategic misspellings as well as common errors (for instance terms with specific industry significance which may be used differently by a buyer without knowledge of industry lexicon. Finally, remember that different regions, countries, languages use some colloquial terms for certain words. Localize your keywords appropriately.

Action steps:

- Forget everything you think you now about SEO. This is far different from the “SEO” as your friend from church, marketing associate, “SEO” expert or “Google” expert explained it to you. This is no longer about meta-tags, but rather a discipline that will permeate all others throughout this process
- Create a list. Let it age, add to it, accumulate suggestions – then rub your chin, grab another cup of coffee, and think of some more. This is an ongoing process – probably over two weeks
- Analyze the list for search volume. You probably want to focus on long tail keywords with search volumes >100/month

- Analyze key word competitiveness – this is trickier. There are some tools that do this automatically. Others are proponents of proxy indicators or complex methods that require data manipulation. The bottom line is that there's no point in chasing terms where you are unlikely to move the needle. So determine that in advance.
- Once you've narrowed down your list to those with at least modest volumes and moderate competitiveness then map those back against the personas you created. Now you know what you're going to talk about with those folks
- Start to map keywords against your content topics list
- Working with your current website, plan what pages might map most closely against the highest priority 10-20 keywords
- Join Google+

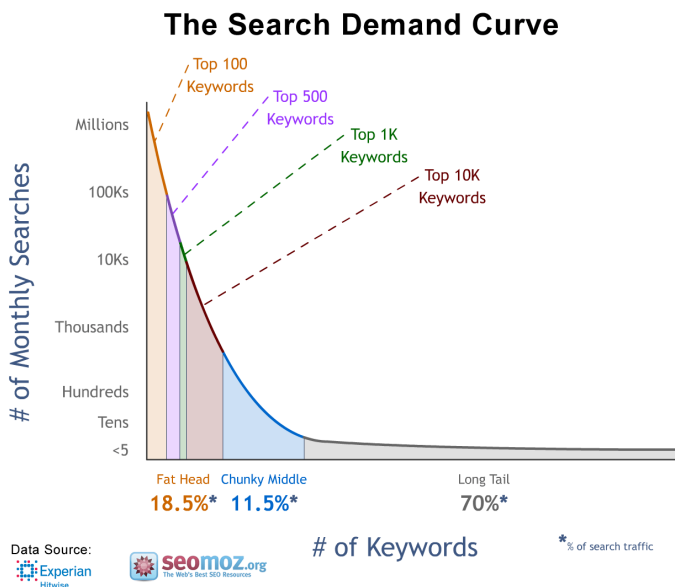


Figure 17. --SEOMOZ

- Prep for the next step - Read Ann Hadley's book [Content Rules](#)
- You one of those folks that wants to know the nuts and bolts of a topic? Then commit time to take the [Google course on Adwords](#) (yes, this is putatively about PPC (pay per click) ads which you're not going to mess with – but the foundation for success there is applicable to organic search too) and [analytics](#). This goes into the weeds and is rife with “geek speak” – but amazing info.
- Remember those blogs you subscribed to in step 2? Start to periodically comment and join conversations
- Create [Google Alerts](#) for the keywords you select

Phase 2 - Preparation

Step 7 — Develop your content plan.

Content is the heart of this program and is discussed in detail in our whitepaper. You need to understand why it is important before you start creating. It needs to be high quality, original and multi-channel. It must account for different personas in different stages of the sales funnel. In other words a technical buyer at the top of the funnel and a financial buyer at the bottom of the funnel will have different information requirements to satisfy open concerns. Elements of the content plan will include:

1. Target persona
2. Keywords for which a piece will be optimized
3. Multiple channels/types including video, blog, webinar, whitepaper, podcast, slideshare presentations, eBook & infographic
4. Consistent, confidence building brand “look & feel”

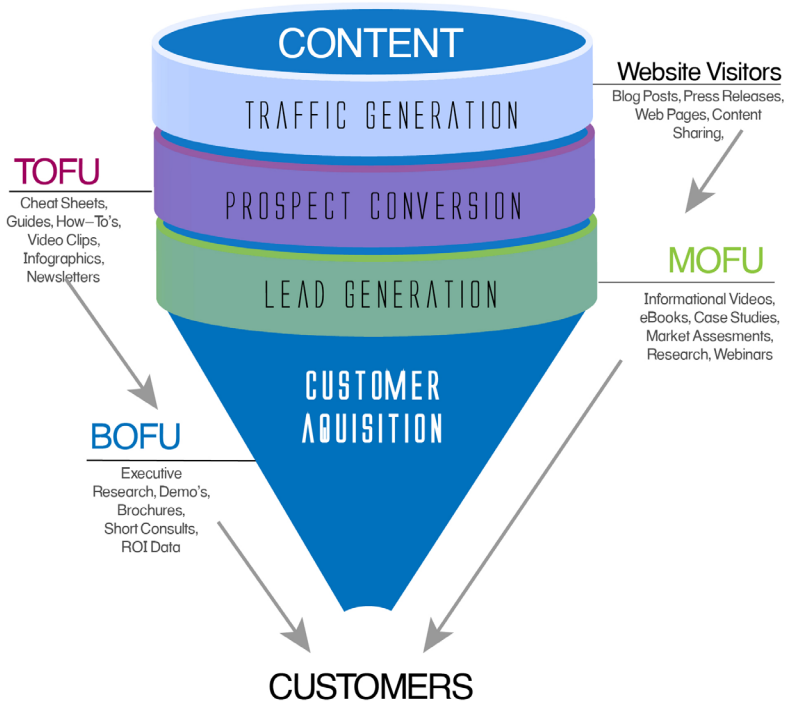
5. Engaging – it's got to have value to the target, be substantive and high quality, and ideally educate AND entertain
6. Combination of “offer” items (those which are valuable enough to induce prospects to identify themselves and share an email) vs. “informational” or content which assists with being found, enhances credibility and is easy to “share” but more routine.

Creating content takes time. Creating high quality, relevant content takes more time, and time is the most valuable commodity for most business people. So start to build a buffer! At this stage you know what (value) you're discussing with whom (personas), what search terms (SEO keywords) are likely to initiate that discussion, and the flow of that relationship from its initial information stage to more advanced and detailed phases. That's all the information you need to begin to turn your list of topic ideas into actual content. Don't worry about design yet (Remember, marketing used to be about making things look sexy. Now that's the domain of starving graphic artists scrounging for jobs on eLance.), but tackle the hard work of conceiving, outlining and writing materials.

Action steps:

- Transfer your updated topics list to this content plan/editorial calendar ([access worksheet #5 pg 93](#))
- Identify two campaigns that will be prepared in advance of formally launching your new program (select based on optimal personas – NOT the most comfortable)
- Begin to develop the TOFU, MOFU & BOFU offer content for both campaigns
- Begin to develop the information content that will support these (2-3 minute videos, blog topics, infographics – the easily shared, keyword rich and optimized content that will start to

Figure 18. --Consilium Global Business Advisors



draw traffic to your offers.) You'll probably need 10-15 informational items associated with each "campaign." The good news is that each optimized page adds incrementally to your search relevance from Google's perspective. A blog post will yield an organic result, your collection of blog posts on a topic will make you more authoritative so each individual result will rank higher, and traffic finding content that matches their interest will assign you greater credibility. Talk about win-win!

- Address your "writing" choke point. You'll discover it pretty quickly. Whether it's a function of aptitude (how easily you/your key staff can write) or available time (don't accept excuses on this count – part of the reason you'll have topics listed in advance) you'll find that this will be your toughest battle. Various options are available including forms of outsourcing. But

working against a buffer instead of deadlines is often the best approach.

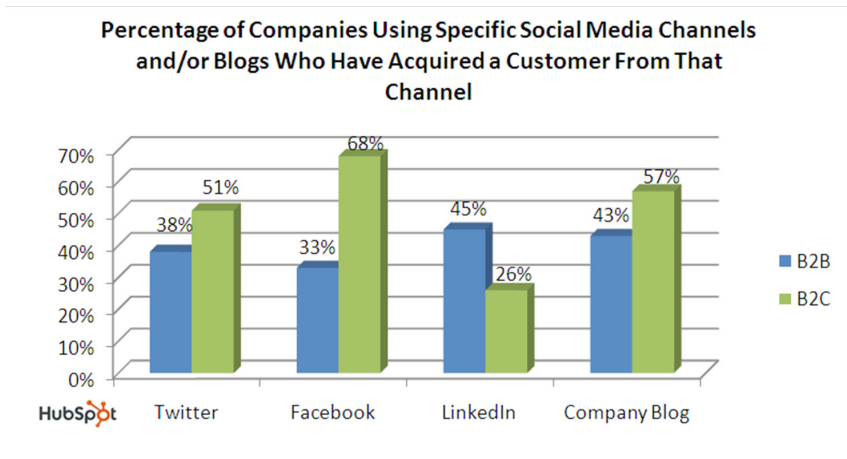
- Ensure that your content spans interests. Sure you need meaty, data laden material for technical buyers deep in the funnel. But you also need to have some “mass appeal” for ‘off-page SEO’. In other words soccer moms, biker dudes, tweens and old codgers who happen to see your infographic that shows “Cool products that couldn’t be made without ours”, for instance, might all be inclined to like it, share it, forward it, pin it, tweet it and comment on it. Guess what that means...not only might you become an internet celebrity of sorts, you will accrue massive benefit through the value of all those links pointing to your content. That activity, believe it or not, will contribute substantially to your efforts to get found by your perfect buyer.
- Don’t forget PR! Press releases (optimized for keywords, personas and value – and targeted at appropriate industry press) with anchor text keywords are critical

Step 8 — Social Media. Seriously.

Now before we go further, let’s quickly refer back to steps 1, 2 & 3. Remember you acknowledged that things have to change; you learned some about how buying processes have changed; and you accepted that not everyone has a buying cycle that parallels yours (don’t backslide here – just because it’s not something you’re comfortable with doesn’t mean it’s wrong!)

Frankly it doesn’t matter whether you think Twitter is inane, Pinterest is a fad, Facebook is a bad investment, LinkedIn is just for job seekers or Quora is a waste of time. Last time I checked you weren’t going to grow your business by buying all your own products! That may work for the US government with its bonds, but it’s not a sound revenue growth strategy. So, repeat after me...”I must embrace

social media in ways that will support my inbound marketing efforts and help sell my products/services.”



Source: State of Inbound Marketing Report - <http://bit.ly/aewfHr>

Figure 19. --HubSpot

There's no doubt that B2B and B2C marketers will have different emphasis here. But if you believe that as a B2B company this section is irrelevant then perhaps (actually, most likely) this simply isn't going to be a satisfactory approach for your business. Not interested in embracing them personally but committed to leveraging the power of social media to support your business objectives? Then what's next?



All his suicide note says is that he is rethinking his whole social media strategy.

Different social media tools have different audiences and your participation will have different objectives. Some will build your personal authority, others your company/brand authority, yet others will be about creating some buzz (yes, that even applies to you!). Consistent activity across all networks can require a full time employee, so it's important to be realistic about how active you will be and on which networks – and remember that outsourcing can be an effective approach to balance this.

Social Media Platforms	Personal Account (Minimum)	Corporate Account
LinkedIn	✓	✓
Twitter	✓	✓
Quora	✓	
Google+	✓	✓
Facebook		✓
Pinterest	✓	✓
YouTube		✓

Action steps:

- Create accounts that you don't yet have.
- Become facile in posting, updating, sharing, commenting, tweeting, etc.
- Use the Google alerts you created in step 6 as a source for frequent Tweets (use hashtags!) on relevant topics..
- Follow / add to favorites (this is Social Media speak)
- Use the accounts! Don't let them lie fallow for more than a day or two.

- Let your personal “brand” develop in parallel. Maybe you love sailing, wine, crosswords, travel, etc. In your personal accounts make sure you establish a multi-dimensional on-line personality.

Step 9 — See your website as a means to an end.

Remember when the internet was cool? Having a website was an objective unto itself. The site was going to get you business. Creating a site took months, lots of teeth gnashing, multiple internal reviews and of course an “expert”, thousands of dollars and “sexy design.” Well things have changed, but has your website? By change we don’t mean an “It’s been 2 or 3 years and we are ready to get bids on a redesign” kind of update – rather it needs to be a lead generation engine.



After taking a comprehensive look at dozens of B2B websites, these are the three layout ideas we've come up with.

© 2012 LeadFormix Inc.

Ask yourself the following questions to assess your current state and begin to visualize where you need to take it.

1. If I want a new page on the site today. Can I do it myself?
In-house? Quickly?
2. Do I have an easy way to consistently add fresh content through an integrated blog?

3. Are visitors encouraged to spontaneously convert with CTAs that speak to the content they would find valuable? Is the conversion quick and easy and non-threatening?
4. Is it appealing and functional?
5. Will various personas visiting find content that speaks to them?
6. Would members of the press refer to your site for authoritative content on issues from your industry?
7. Is duration of visit increasing and bounce rate decreasing?

If you can't answer yes to all these questions then it's past time to fix your site. Not only is it not helping your business, it's probably hurting it...regardless of whatever traffic metrics someone shows you.

Action steps:

- Find someone that understands inbound marketing. Website designers and builders are of limited value today – analogous to a mechanic who has substantial expertise in setting the gap on a spark plug but no idea about how to adjust the parameters of fuel injection. You need a portal that integrates all the function in an integrated, optimized way.
- Demand that the CMS platform used will be one that is widely used and supported – and easy for your people to manage in house. Wordpress is an example of a foundation that is solid, secure, allows easy addition of content, and is widely supported. Don't settle for something that requires outside assistance for every change/addition, nor something that is proprietary requiring you to work with one provider.

- Map out your planned site (navigation and content) to accommodate the personas, value and long tail keywords.
- Don't build it yourself. Page titles, URLs, images and text all must be carefully and integrally optimized. Assure that any success you have had thus far should not be squandered. Adding to it later is encouraged, even required. But give yourself every advantage out of the gate.

Step 10 — Select a marketing automation system.

With substantial effort invested in crafting your strategy, and lots of work in creating content, you're definitely going to want to ensure that you have the required tools to actually convert traffic easily on your site (that requires calls to action and registration/landing pages customized to each offer). You will want to automatically synchronize the marketing platform with your CRM system and include key word planning throughout all elements of your effort. You will need to integrate email marketing, both broadly, to regularly foster your segmented prospect relationships, and in very specific targeted ways that help to automatically nurture prospects into qualified leads by feeding them additional information to help them progress through the funnel.

Remember the discussion of changing buy cycles in our white-paper, and the late stage in the buying process when sales contact is expected? This becomes your tool to progressively forge the relationship with your prospect, build credibility and remain engaged during that protracted buy cycle. Obviously this puts a burden on you (one of the primary reasons many companies outsource large parts of their inbound marketing) to create content. You need TOFU, MOFU & BOFU offers appropriately tailored to your personas. You need to develop landing pages and offer emails that speak to the pain points and value expectations of those personas, and build all this on a platform that lets you efficiently manage the effort and tweak it relentlessly to improve results. (see step 11!)

You essentially have three choices.

1. You can do most of this “halfway” with various “plugins”, special forms, and homegrown coding (remember Step #9? – NO!), and get results befitting a mediocre effort.
2. You can use standalone applications designed for many of these functions (for instance there are numerous email tools available), sacrifice integration, and juggle them independently.
3. You can select one of the integrated on-line marketing platforms available in the market. But select carefully, based on not only comprehensive tools but also consider reasonable ease of use in house and difficulty of implementation. (Here’s a hint: We’ve chosen to use alternative #1 or #2 on a considerable number of previous occasions, and will never use any approach but #3 in the future. We are fans of the HubSpot tool, and believe that it is a no brainer investment for any company serious about growing and committed to doing so.)

Action steps:

- Identify the reasonable requirements for your application, Maybe you don’t need automatically populating pages based on different personas (one set of images and text on a webpage if someone indicates they are from a particular industry, but a different set of content for a different industry) but you probably do want to be able to A/B test different calls to action to see what works best.
- Research options for stand-alone applications and integrated platforms to satisfy the requirements you identify. Concentrate on cloud based SaaS (software as a service) solutions that don’t require you to have any infrastructure or expertise in house to manage.

- Be sure you match your outsource partner to the platform, if you are considering outsourcing part of his function, prior to finalizing either!

Step #11 — Measure it and manage it — or become a data maven.

For executives that have grown cynical and skeptical about traditional marketing investments this offers an enticing new model. Once your initial content is created and your site configured to function as a lead generation engine, your on-line marketing platform should provide a wealth of real-time, actionable metrics.

Visitor origin, pages that work vs. those that don't, conversion optimization, key words, email and social media are examples of the myriad of areas that can be measured and managed.

Sometimes you'll get lucky and your first attempt will be your best -- but often not. Realistically, even if you don't optimize anything you will be leagues ahead of your competitors and most industrial companies just by following the other steps in the process. But you don't try to produce just an OK product, do you? Of course not, or you wouldn't even have considered reading about steps to industrial marketing success. Your mindset is one of continuous improvement, experimentation, R&D and fiddling. Go ahead and fiddle.

With this system you can empirically evaluate and adjust almost every element, and can see very promptly how well it works. Find that with any other marketing program....at any price!

Action step:

- This one's easy. Complete the Google Analytics course mentioned in step 6 and take the certification test. Will you use all that in your management? Probably not. Especially if you have a single platform that you select. But understanding that mate-

rial will give you a great foundation for the data driven analysis that will let you hone your effectiveness.

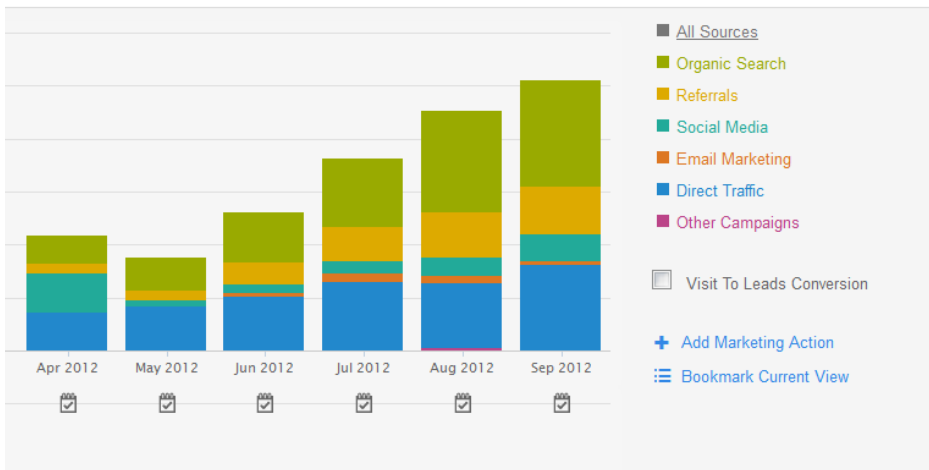


Figure 20. --Consilium Global Business Advisors

Step #12 – Are you really ready to ramp up?

Once you start you must be ready. Is lead management defined? Are your sales people capable of selling to the other personas that will help grow your business but are different from their historical norm? Can you scale production to satisfy a substantial increase in volume? If some of your time is spent creating content (you probably know it better than anyone else) can your core work be delegated? If not, what will slip? What are the consequences? These aren't rhetorical questions. Do this as we outline and your volume will grow. If you can't handle that then either plan now to add capacity in constrained areas or skip the inbound initiative.

Now it's time for another gut check....how do you feel about global business? One of the amazing results of inbound marketing is the enormous international opportunities that quickly identify themselves. That happens just with sites and content optimized for American personas. Companies that internationalize themselves with

microsites on foreign TLDs with keywords and content “localized” find amazing penetration and lead generation.

We are huge fans of export growth. It’s a substantial portion of our business and we help companies through strategy, implementation and execution of global business development plans. But we recognized that it’s an intimidating prospect for some, and really unfamiliar for others.

Inbound offers a painless way (you’re doing it for the domestic benefit anyway) to test the international waters. You’ll be able to sense those that are legitimate inquiries, with substantial assistance available to support you through the process. After some months you’ll find pockets of focused opportunity, and can begin to concentrate on those markets and probably even define an appropriate persona or two to match. Stick with it and you’ll soon know exactly what market you should enter first with an agent, distributor, etc., and you’ll begin with a crop of qualified leads to rapidly establish your activity there. Talk about awesome!

Action steps:

- Imagine you are spending 4 hours / week on this. Identify tasks that would go undone. Decide if that’s acceptable.
- Project 20% growth in 18 months. (This can’t be a guarantee, but it is realistic planning number.) Identify areas in your operation that will constrain your ability to satisfy this growth. Can they be overcome?
- Have a serious conversation with yourself about global expansion. You don’t want an “accidental export” or ad hoc series of international forays to compromise your core domestic business. Similarly, a deliberate global expansion can dramatically strengthen your company, increase enterprise value and make your business more resilient and profitable.

Step #13 – Establish a support infrastructure.

Who's going to push you on the dark days when you simply don't have the time to create the content by deadline and still satisfy customer obligations? You will need a peer who embraces the approach as well to serve this role for you. This is also part of the motivation for considering engaging an outsource provider for part or the entire inbound program. Is there a cost for that? Of course. But orchestrating leverages your particular knowledge – implementing detracts from the core areas of your business where you are critical.

Phase 3 – Ongoing execution

This book doesn't intend to take you through execution, and can't possibly anticipate the various situations that each marketer will encounter.

If you're well prepared (if you've followed our plan you will be) then you'll do fine. Simply too busy satisfying the increased demand your marketing has created? Then give us a ring. We can take the burden of this effort off your plate freeing you up to concentrate in the areas where you bring specific value.

Whatever you do – don't take your foot off the gas. In 6-12 months you'll be rolling in ways you never imagined possible, generating qualified leads that you couldn't have imagined. Leverage that and grow your business!

Conclusion

You must grow your company. Stagnation leads inexorably to decay. Yet more and more companies are stagnating despite optimistic investments in new twists on traditional business development approaches.

It's time for something that works – and this inbound marketing system does. Nearly every company can adopt this method with great results – but as the volume of content increases, the benefits will accrue to the early movers that establish their content presence online and then stoke the furnace with volumes of targeted, optimized, kick-ass content.

The advantages of this approach can be distilled into 4 main themes

1. It is simple. Companies can manage most of the work on their own.
2. It is relatively inexpensive. Research shows that inbound leads typically cost 1/3 as much as traditional leads.
3. It is amazingly effective.
4. It's eminently manageable. You can and should be data driven in managing and tweaking this effort. You don't have to wait and hope.

But, success requires realistic commitment.

- It's not a quick fix. Determined gradual effort ultimately trumps bursts.

- Time management and content creation will be an ongoing struggle.
- Your sales methods (and possibly personnel) will need to change – but may be very resistant.
- You'll have lots of people inside and outside your company tell you it's the wrong strategy. Advice or comments along the lines of "But you're in the B2B (or industrial, or machine, or technical, etc.) area." or "That's great for consumer products but it's never going to work for you." are common. Don't fret. You're on the right track!

If you commit, and follow this process, it will work for you. But you've waited long enough.

Get Moving!

Inbound marketing glossary:

Anchor text keywords – an important point often misunderstood.

As you write text for web pages and blogs it is important to incorporate your long tail keywords into the text in a natural but deliberate way. Google evaluates the relevance of a page based on various factors including, substantially, how closely the text actually matches the other indications you give of what that page addresses. This creates a huge opportunity to build authority. In your press releases, in guest blog posts, in your own blog posts (basically anywhere appropriate) use those keywords and link that long tail term to a page on your primary site that is optimized for that term.

Blog – originally conceived as a “web log” or an easy way for people to add “web pages” with thoughts on various topics, blogs have now evolved into a common tool for individual expression and corporate content sharing. You wouldn’t put a new page on your website for every day of the year, right? But it’s entirely appropriate (in fact encouraged) to add a blog posting every day. Those posts or articles give you the opportunity to talk about industry topics, your company (but not in a promotional sort of way) and areas of interest to your target personas. Here’s a caveat...having a “blog” link in your site navigation makes you look silly if there isn’t consistently fresh and worthwhile content. This isn’t your “news” section, nor is it your “new products” or PR announcements.

Blog article – 3-500 word daily essays about topics relevant to your target personas. They should be optimized with keywords, images and title/URL to help drive traffic, and they should always include a CTA for some TOFU content.

Bottom of Funnel (BOFU) offers – substantive content that helps to further pull prospects through the process, supporting their independent research and helping them self qualify. It should be delivered

automatically as part of lead nurturing and help to substantially make the value case for purchase of your product.

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Call to action (CTA) – a device (normally an arresting image/text that speaks to a pain point/business problem) that sits on a web page and invites visitors to click for more information on the challenge they face and how to tackle it. CTA's ideally have tracking code and metrics collection behind them, and should link to “landing pages” that are customized specifically to the offer that the CTA makes.

Campaign – can and does mean many things to many people. In our system we mean a coordinated group of content and activities that focus on a persona/value topic. It is built around specific long tail keywords and consists of a variety of related content. 1-2 blogs/week (of a minimum 3 and ideal 5) help to introduce this for a couple weeks and then reinforce it for a couple more. A TOFU offer is created and publicized on those blog pages (and directly through social media) as well as on primary site pages that are optimized for traffic focused on that topic. Automatic lead nurturing is built to deliver the MOFU and BOFU content that target the audience, and help pull them through your sales funnel and build virtual rapport and credibility with buyers researching privately according to the new purchasing paradigm.

Content – the beating heart at the center of your inbound effort. Good content is a minimum. Great creative content will enhance your results. But it is work - every day. It takes time and requires writing and creativity. Once you start you have to keep adding fresh content continuously or squander all you have achieved.

Content management systems (CMS) – basically the software that websites are built on now. Originally sites were built using tools that allowed developers to visualize the results of their work and then upload them to the internet. Changes and additions required the developer, and the software, to affect. Now sites are built on platforms (still quite complex in the bowels – but quite manageable for everyday use) that allow non-technical users with moderate computer familiarity to add and edit pages and to post blogs and other content. Some CMSs accommodate multiple languages and most offer various user roles so that blog posts, for instance, can be delegated to an assistant without concern for inadvertent changes to the site.

CRM system – customer relationship management software. This is the nerve center of your customer, prospect & lead relationship tracking, as well as project/opportunity and case/ticket management. Generally these are delivered through a SaaS (software as a service – or cloud based as it's commonly described) subscription model which means information is available remotely and there's no need to keep servers in house or worry about upgrades and maintenance.

eBook – similar to a whitepaper but a lighter presentation

Google+ – Google's social media platform that leverages tangential associations more flexibly and intuitively than other social media platforms.

Hashtag – the method that Twitter uses to categorize material (user driven rather than automatic).

Infographic – an awesome, fun, easy way to create content around your products, that is accessible to visual consumers (vs. auditory & kinesthetic) and that is also likely to be shared by folks who aren't even part of your target market. (That may feel irrelevant, but it's important to help build authority through various inbound links.)

Keywords – terms that are used in search engines (e.g. ‘marketing’)

Landing page – the simple page that is set up to present an offer of content. It should be simple, without distracting links to distract visitors. A simple and compelling description of your content, what points it covers and why it would be beneficial to a reader. A simple form collecting certain visitor data (name, email, phone and a variety of other info appropriate to the stage in the funnel) allows you to leverage your content and begin to build relationships with buyers who would otherwise remain anonymous and never enter into the dialog that is critical (nurturing) as they pursue their buying process independently. (Hint – if you can’t create one in less than ½ hour or have to ‘call the expert’ you don’t have the right solution!)

Lead nurturing – the process through which relationships with prospective buyers. Remember our whitepaper outlined the shift in purchasing process which now results in conclusions and decisions often in advance of ever engaging directly) can be casually, automatically and remotely forged through a dialog built on progressively more targeted and substantial content. The buying process will proceed – the question is whether you want to participate or simply whine later that you never had a chance.

LinkedIn – sort of like the Facebook for business, it is a predominantly professional social media platform that allows business people to manage their virtual network of connections and to participate in group discussions around common themes and topics. Additionally it is increasingly used by SMB executives to research purchasing decisions, and supports ads as well as company profile information.

Long tail keywords – phrases that focus the search results into more manageable and relevant results (e.g. ‘content marketing for industrial products’)

Middle of Funnel (MOFU) offers – i.e. content, used to help auto-

matically nurture prospects and move them through the funnel. This is specifically envisioned and created to address the common issues and questions that arise as the prospect matures through the research process. It is more specific and substantial than the TOFU content. This is ideally delivered automatically through a lead nurturing process.

Off page SEO – largely ‘inbound links’ or links from other sites to yours. Ideally these will originate in anchor text matching your keyword and linking to a page optimized for that function. Inbound links are one of the largest determinants of authority, as Google presumes that people will link to valuable relevant info.

On page SEO – elements specific to the page (URL, title, image alt tags, text, meta description) that help Google gauge relevance

Organic – search results that occur naturally (just below the highlighted box with paid search results). This is achieved over time, with optimization and a careful content strategy.

Pay per click – the search engine model that allows you to bid to establish preeminence in search results. Great idea but...it’s very expensive and research shows that only 6-7% of clicks are on paid ads. Users have learned the relevance is much lower.

Persona – detailed profile of key buyer segment that incorporates different elements depending on the product and market. It could include title, education, company size, industry, gender, age, journals regularly read, social media preferences, communication style, buying motivations, internet usage profile, length of time in industry and other details.

Pinterest – the fastest growing social media platform in 2012, it’s essentially a platform to share pictures, and to comment on them. Although tending to initially attract B2C companies, it has tremendous

potential for B2B businesses that can think creatively about how to use it. The model allows you to create “boards” or categories. Even industrial companies could have a board of candid photos of key employees (building personal brand and maybe linking back to profile pages on the website – inbound links), a board of artistic pictures of cool, or even everyday products that couldn’t be made without theirs, etc.

Quora – a virtual Q&A site, it offers a platform to follow topics, pose questions and demonstrate authority by answering questions raised by others.

Sales funnel – the visualization of the volume of sales activity as it reduces as the sales process progresses. In this case traffic and prospects are at the wide top of the funnel. Through nurturing and self selection the progression toward the narrowing middle reduces the number actively interested and finally at the bottom only a small number of qualified and interested leads remain. This is the group from which you harvest customers

SEO – search engine optimization, the discipline of identifying target keywords and optimizing websites to appear in searches. This was “practiced” by SEO specialists when the internet was still quite immature and search results could be gamed by “stuffing” keywords and other methods. As Google has refined its algorithms the effectiveness of traditional SEO has declined dramatically (Google says content is the key to search results) and the nefarious methods actually damage results.

Top of Funnel (TOFU) offers – the content that you will use to convert site traffic to prospects. It needs to be substantial enough to warrant someone providing a name and email address, but general enough to attract a broad audience.

Twitter – a polarizing social media tool, essentially an IM to the world (maximum 140 characters), it is viewed by many as incredibly inane. That impression was fostered and reinforced by the prevalence of posts on personal activity (“Eating an ice cream cone now”) but has evolved into a legitimate business tool. It is now used to share/curate relevant information and can be searched using hashtags – or key-words that are identified in twitter with a # prefix.

Whitepaper – a common form of content used for conversion offers. It tends to be fairly meaty with research references and technically focused at a specific persona and value.

Need Help?

Links to Download Forms and Help Materials:

- Part 2: Worksheets- INCLUDES: Content Planning, Content Development Ideas, Persona Development, Persona Workbook, Lead Nurturing, Lead Conversion Calculator - - <http://strategy.consiliumglobalbusinessadvisors.com/small-business-marketing-tactics-strategies-worksheets/>
- Content Rules: <https://kindle.amazon.com/work/content-rules-podcasts-customers-ebook/B003N9FUWS/B004CFB030>
- Google AdWords: <http://www.google.com/adwords/professionals/individual.html>
- Google Analytics: <http://www.google.com/analytics/iq.html>
- Google Alerts: <http://www.google.com/alerts>
- The Beginners Guide to SEO: <http://www.seomoz.org/beginners-guide-to-seo>
- Need Help? <http://consiliumglobalbusinessadvisors.com/engage-us/>

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ED MARSH



Earlier in Ed's life it was jumping from planes as a paratrooper. Then for some time his adventures came often and unexpectedly as the dad of three adolescent sons. These days the

rush comes from time on his HD Road King Classic....and from watching SMBs explode into new markets.

Each day, and in each engagement, Ed draws on both his extensive global business experience and his B2B sales & marketing expertise. Fluent in both strategy and tactics, and committed to consistently demonstrate thought leadership by example, he approaches challenges with pragmatism and credibility.

Having identified the synergy between evolutionary marketing and new market growth opportunities for SMBs, Ed evangelizes on the amazing opportunities today's markets offer – for companies willing to adapt.

DAVE KAUPP



They said he was nuts... and he agrees, maybe he was. After 7 years growing his traditional agency from scratch to 25 employees Dave Kaupp sold it when he

realized in 1999 that marketing was entering a new epoch.

He wasn't crazy. He was early.

As Director of Global Marketing for one of the early Vertical Net "dot com" on-line successes, and VP of Marketing for Harte Hanks, a publically traded global marketing services firm, Dave has consistently positioned himself on the ragged edge. With leading roles in the simultaneous trends of digital B2B marketing and consolidating global markets, he has helped define global marketing.

A thought leader in the B2B marketing space, Dave is a New Englander by birth and lifestyle, although he smiles much more than most, and the proud dad of a couple of strapping sons.



About Consilium Global Business Advisors

Consilium Global Business Advisors provides THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SOLUTION for American SMBs. Challenged with dramatically slowing growth and rapidly changing global market conditions, SMBs embrace Consilium's straightforward, economical & effective solutions. Unlike a traditional silo approach to marketing or market development, Consilium's unique method is built on a synthesis of domestic and international inbound marketing based on a culturally localized methodology; with an integrated suite of international growth services. Collectively these comprise a comprehensive solution that enable US SMBs to engage customers as they expect to be engaged; and to do so profitably across huge, fast growing global markets supporting substantial sales growth.

To learn more, please visit us online at www.ConsiliumGlobalBusinessAdvisors.com or follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/consiliumglbadv>

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