



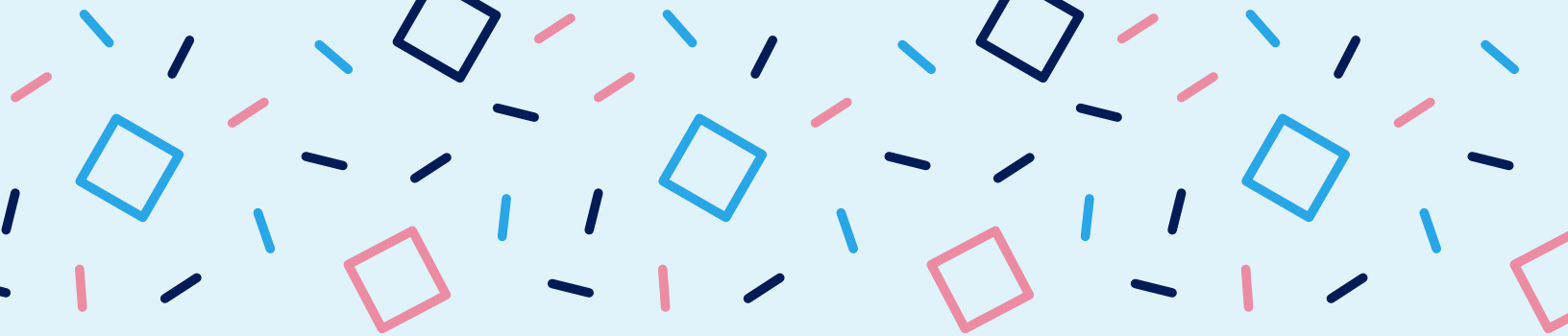
BuySellAds

Demand Generation **Strategy Playbook**

Do you want to create need for a product and pass on qualified leads to your sales team?

Of course you do. But you'll need a demand generation strategy to do it right.





We put together this guide to help you do just that. You'll get the resources and tips you need to identify audiences, set up a demand gen funnel, and optimize it for further growth.

Throughout the guide, we'll be using an example company called Remote Retreats. It's an event planning agency that coordinates corporate retreats in North America, putting the messiness of travel and logistics into the hands of experts.

**Let's start
strategizing.**

Chapters

What is Demand Generation Marketing?

Step 1: Define Your Audience

Step 2: Make Goals and Create Your Funnel

Step 3: Set Up the Tools You Need

Step 4: Experiment with Paid Channels

Step 5: Measure Your Successes



INTRO

What is demand generation marketing?





A simple definition of demand generation:

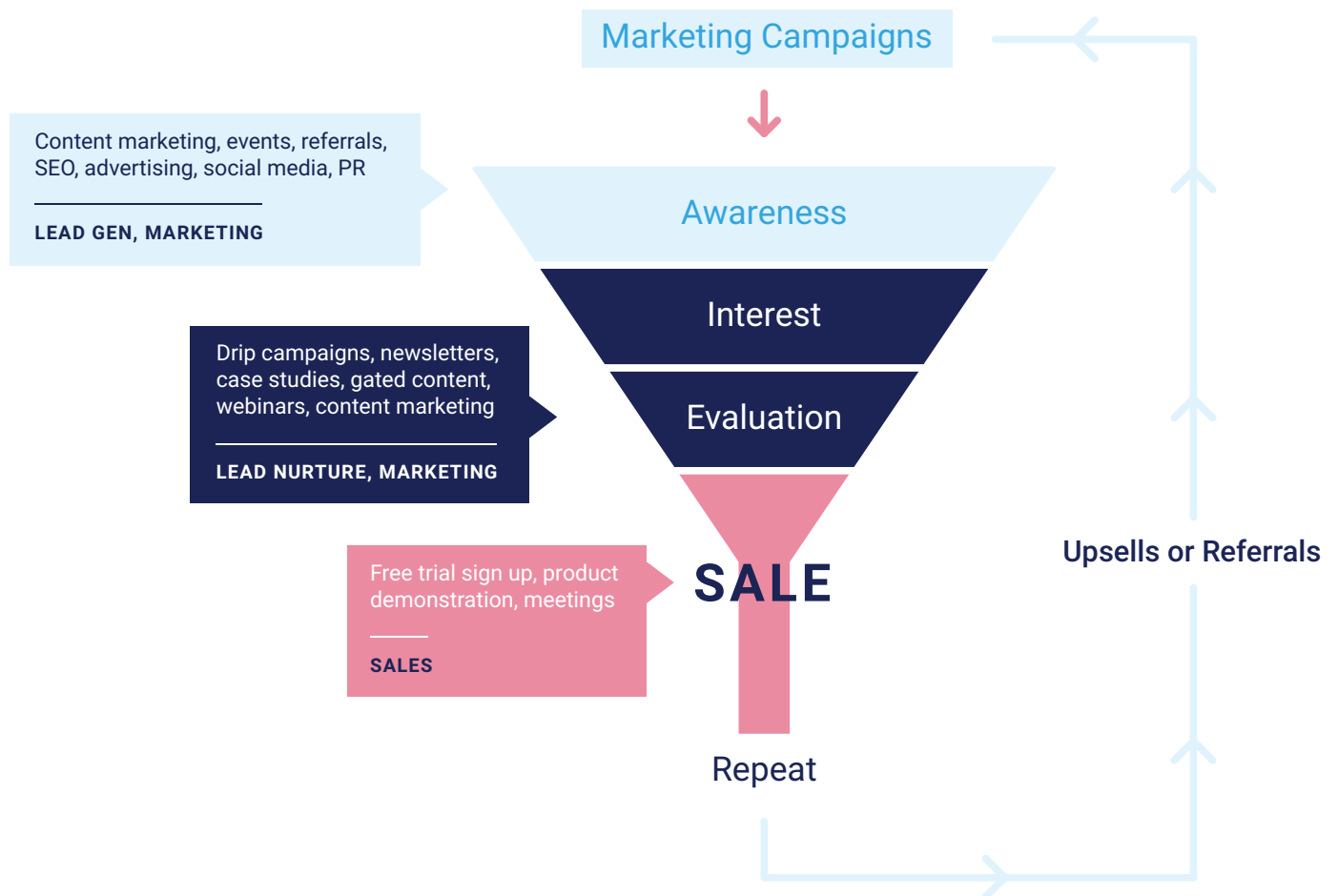
Demand generation marketing creates need for a product or service with the goal of passing qualified leads to the sales team.

What sets demand generation apart

Marketing and sales funnels are connected

Demand generation covers the entire marketing process from awareness to sale. It's a holistic, usually lengthy approach made up of different touch points and tactics.

Most demand generation marketers use the trusted [marketing or conversion funnel](#) to visualize strategies. This shows how demand generation covers *the entire funnel* from top to bottom, including how marketers plan on re-engaging past customers to make more sales.



A good demand generation funnel explains which channels are used at different parts of the strategy, what steps a lead has to complete before being passed on to sales, and how unqualified people are churned out along the way.

Relationship with sales

Demand generation links marketing activities to sales successes by attaching the end of the marketing strategy to the top of the sales funnel.

Unlike other approaches, demand generation marketers are explicitly focused on sending only the most qualified, valuable leads to sales. This is done by refining the funnel to attract more qualified leads at the top and churn out unqualified ones in the middle.

Demand generation isn't about creating the biggest pipeline in the world—it's about creating a sustainable flow of qualified leads for your sales team.

Marketing automation

Demand generation strategies tend to have several steps spanning different channels and timelines. As a result, marketers lean on automation to move people through the funnel and scale efforts.

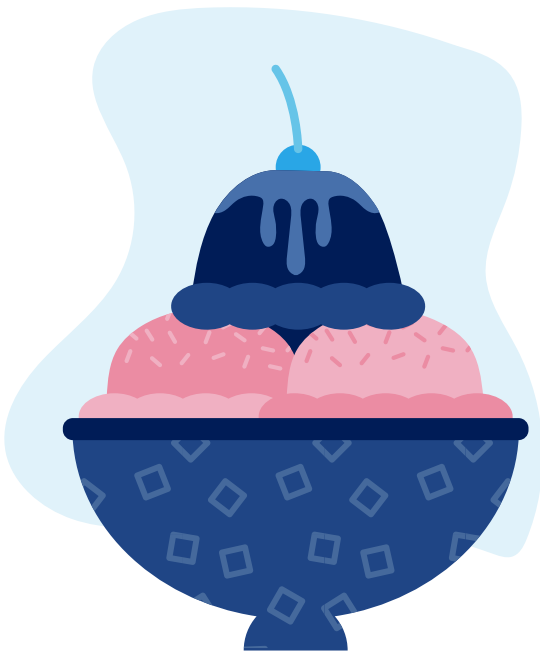
This is called lead nurturing, and email marketing and targeted content shine here. Knowing where leads are in the funnel, what information is relevant to them at a certain moment, and how likely they are to buy based on activity is best done with marketing automation.

Comparing demand generation to other frameworks

Demand generation vs lead generation

Demand generation and lead generation might seem similar at first glance. Both want to raise awareness of a product or service, and both want to drive new leads into the sales pipeline.

But there are actually important differences between the two approaches:



Lead generation ends once information is exchanged. Demand generation goes the extra mile by informing and qualifying the lead.

Lead generation is one part of a demand generation strategy, serving as a top-funnel goal. However, keep in mind that demand generation spans the entire marketing funnel including the steps needed to inform and nurture leads.

Demand generation strategies tend to be more obsessed with lead quality.

Lead generation means different things to different campaigns —often times it's a numbers goal or it can have an end purpose other than sales. With demand generation, there's more of an emphasis on getting the best leads at the top of the funnel as it means more users will go on to be customers.

Demand generation vs inbound marketing

Marketers often confuse the relationship between demand generation and inbound marketing.

Again, inbound marketing is usually part of a demand generation strategy. Most companies use [inbound and outbound marketing](#) to create demand for their product or service: inbound is about attracting leads through content, while outbound is normally advertising.

In this way, inbound can be seen as a referral path or set of tactics that contribute to goals but don't represent the entirety of the demand generation strategy.

STEP 1:

Define your audience



Knowing exactly who you want to talk to is the first challenge for demand gen marketers.

To start, you need to narrow in on the target audience and understand their needs and goals. With this information, it's easy to write a strategy that creates long-term demand for your product or service.

Identifying your current audience

If your business has been around for awhile, chances are you already have some sort of following or customer database. It's key that you understand who this audience is and whether they align with growth goals before diving into the demand generation strategy.

Past Customers and Sales

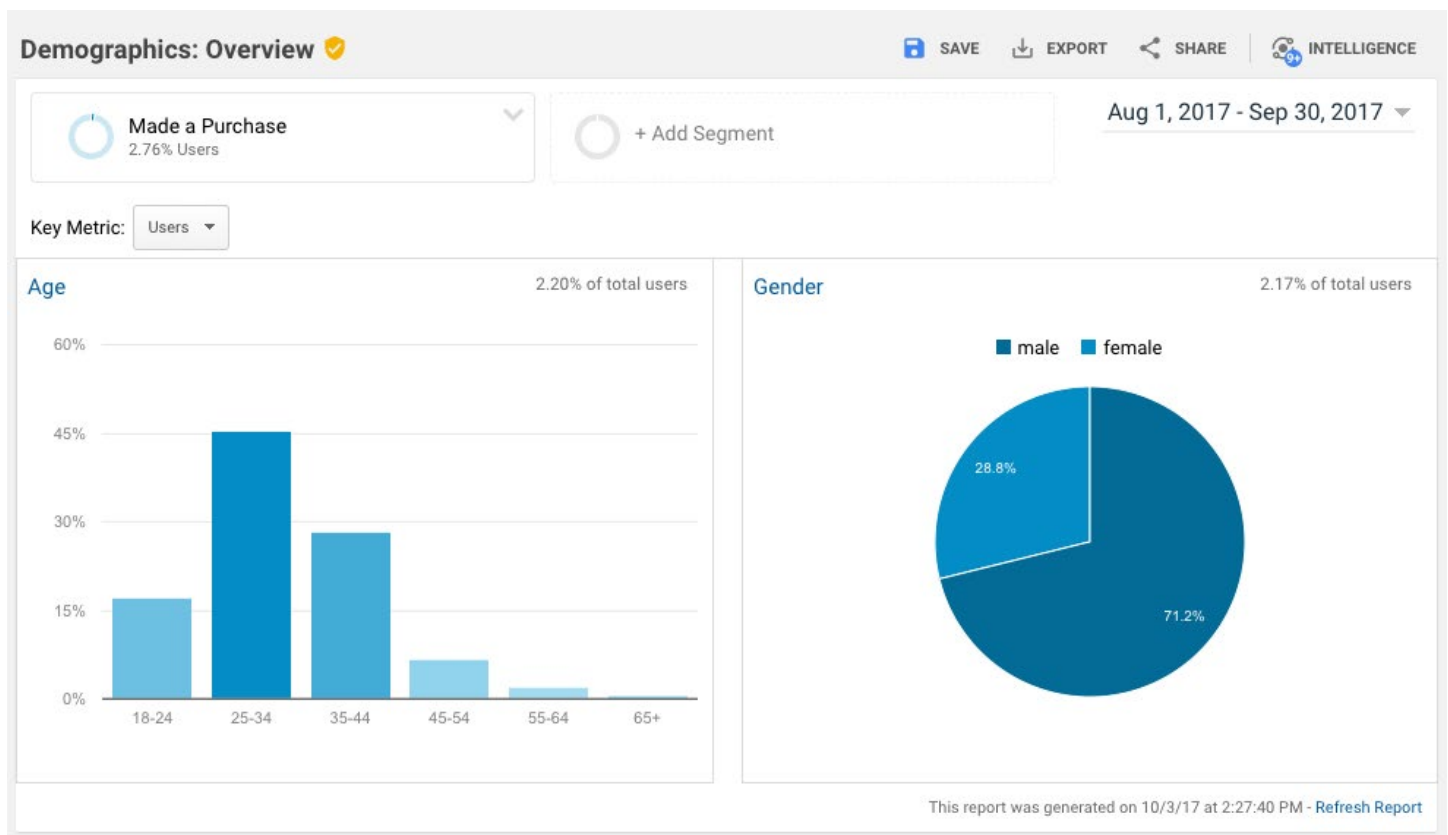
Who has bought from you in the past, and what do they have in common? Your sales team probably has the answers, and they should be looped into demand generation discussions on day one.

Talk to them to learn more about your current customers and why they chose your product—or why they chose to leave it for a competitor.

Google Analytics

Google Analytics is a gold mine for marketers unsure about current audiences or looking for growth opportunities.

Demographics and interests reports: Show the ages, genders, and interests of people who visit your website. If you have goals set up, segment by users who completed a goal and see if the reports change drastically.



Location report: Find new markets and see how your website performs with people in specific cities. For example, the report below shows a website with a majority of traffic from New York and Silicon Valley. Growing into other tech hubs such as Austin might be worth exploring.

City ?	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions Goal 1: Purchase Completed	
	Users ? ↓	New Users ?	Sessions ?	Bounce Rate ?	Pages / Session ?	Avg. Session Duration ?	Purchase Completed (Goal 1 Conversion Rate) ?	Purchase Completed (Goal 1 Completions) ?
Made a Purchase	3,829 % of Total: 2.66% (144,162)	2,960 % of Total: 2.14% (138,329)	11,352 % of Total: 6.09% (186,476)	11.73% Avg for View: 52.94% (-77.83%)	13.22 Avg for View: 3.96 (233.89%)	00:09:00 Avg for View: 00:02:23 (278.70%)	37.64% Avg for View: 2.46% (1,429.22%)	4,273 % of Total: 93.09% (4,590)
1. Mountain View	852 (16.93%)	481 (16.25%)	2,069 (18.23%)	12.86%	11.30	00:07:46	31.32%	648 (15.16%)
2. Sunnyvale	434 (8.62%)	238 (8.04%)	1,007 (8.87%)	12.91%	11.33	00:07:33	34.16%	344 (8.05%)
3. New York	395 (7.85%)	272 (9.19%)	975 (8.59%)	11.69%	14.19	00:09:57	40.82%	398 (9.31%)
4. San Francisco	369 (7.33%)	230 (7.77%)	765 (6.74%)	9.80%	13.80	00:08:57	42.48%	325 (7.61%)
5. San Jose	206 (4.09%)	104 (3.51%)	404 (3.56%)	9.65%	15.35	00:10:38	47.03%	190 (4.45%)
6. Palo Alto	167 (3.32%)	104 (3.51%)	386 (3.40%)	11.66%	10.79	00:07:02	37.82%	146 (3.42%)
7. Chicago	119 (2.36%)	79 (2.67%)	319 (2.81%)	14.11%	12.86	00:08:16	36.36%	116 (2.71%)
8. Los Angeles	109 (2.17%)	63 (2.13%)	223 (1.96%)	9.87%	14.29	00:08:43	42.60%	95 (2.22%)
9. Seattle	90 (1.79%)	54 (1.82%)	216 (1.90%)	13.89%	12.57	00:08:39	38.89%	84 (1.97%)
10. Santa Clara	80 (1.59%)	40 (1.35%)	157 (1.38%)	11.46%	14.11	00:09:33	37.58%	59 (1.38%)

Referrals report: Are there any particular sources that stand out and give you a hint at where people are coming from? These are good places to start with earned content opportunities at the top of the funnel.

Facebook

Despite its name, Facebook Insights has limited information on your page followers. Go to Insights > People to see where followers are located and what languages they speak.

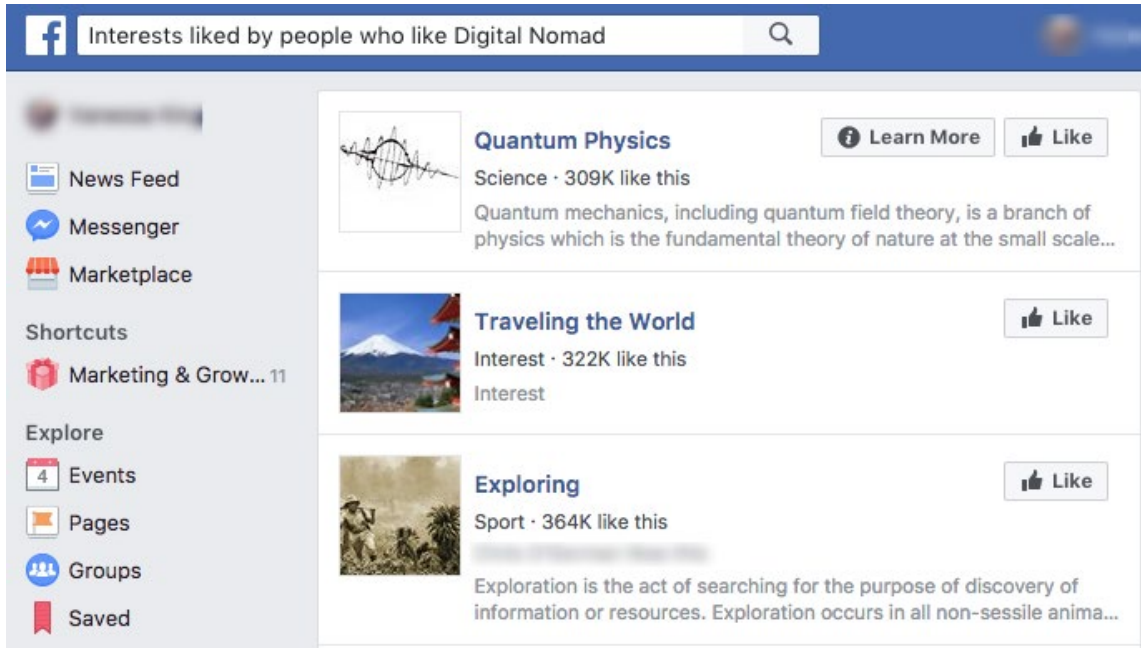
If you want more advanced information on your audience, head over to the search bar.

“Pages liked by people who like [X]” shows pages often liked by a given audience. Take it a step further with searches like “Pages liked by programmers who like [X]” or “Pages liked by people who like [X] and [Y]”.

The screenshot shows a Facebook search interface with the following elements:

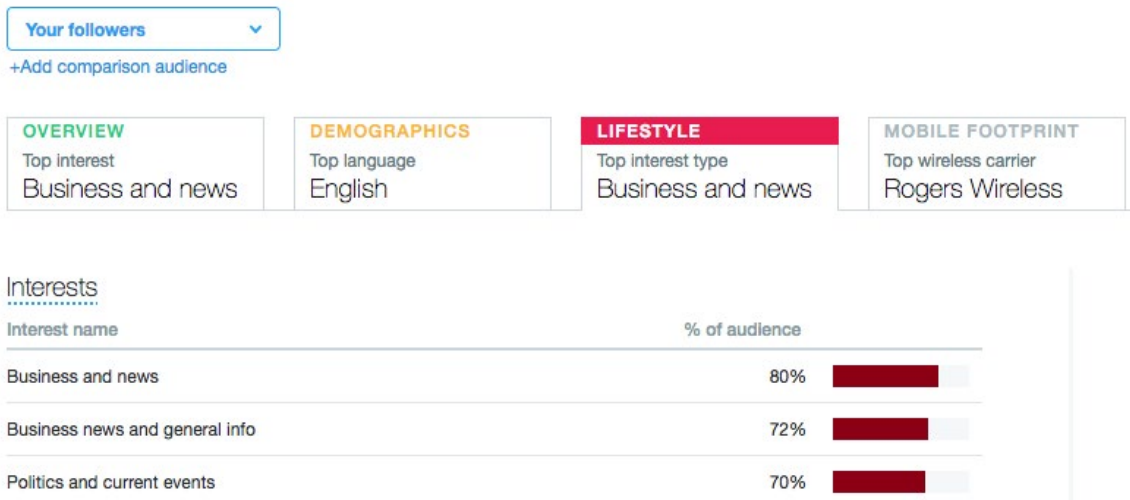
- Search Bar:** Contains the text "Pages liked by people who like Remote.co" and a search icon.
- Left Sidebar (Navigation Menu):**
 - News Feed
 - Messenger
 - Marketplace
 - Shortcuts
 - Marketing & Grow... 11
 - Explore
 - Events (4)
 - Pages
 - Groups
 - Saved
 - Friend Lists
 - Insights
 - On This Day (6)
 - Ads Manager
- Main Content Area (Search Results):**
 - LG USA Mobile** (verified): Product/Service · 2.4M like this. Description: "Like LG USA Mobile to keep up on the latest news and information about our innovative smart phone technology and mobile devices...." Action: Like.
 - Refinery29** (verified): News & Media Website · 5.3M like this. Description: "Refinery29 is a lifestyle destination that delivers nonstop inspiration to live a more creative life." Actions: Sign Up, Like.
 - Amazon.com** (verified): Retail Company · 27M like this. Description: "Official Facebook page of www.amazon.com" Actions: Shop Now, Like.
 - Cheddar** (verified): Media/News Company · 1.3M like this. Description: "Business. Technology. Media. Finance. News. Cheddar is a live news network focused on covering the most innovative products,..." Actions: Sign Up, Like.

“Interests liked by people who like [X]” reports common interest categories of people who like a certain page. This is a good reality check and can also give you new content and outreach ideas.

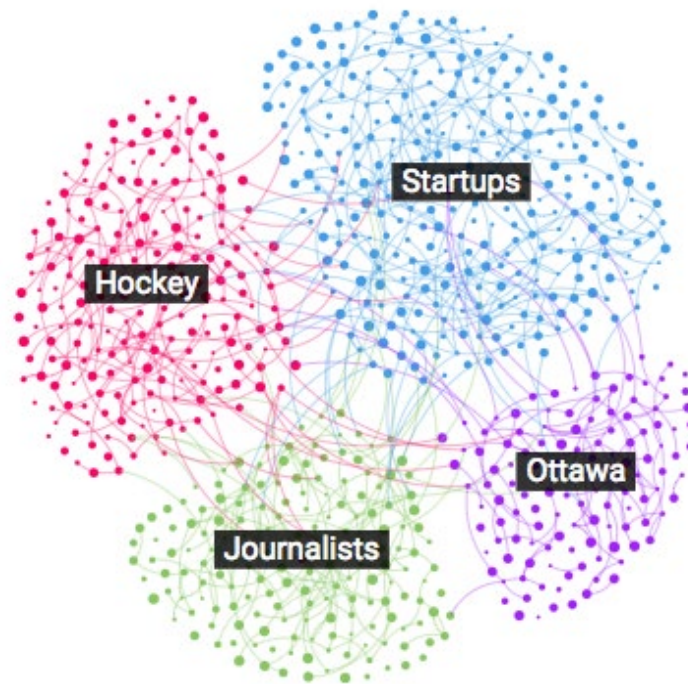


Twitter

Built-in analytics gives you some insight into account followers. Go to Twitter Analytics to see your audience’s top interests and locations.



If you have fewer than 10,000 followers, use [Affinio's free discovery tool](#) to see your followers segmented by interest category. Here's an example of what reports look like:



Creating a target audience

If your business is new or your audiences don't align with goals, you'll have to think of a new target audience.

Now is *not* the time to be broad. It's tempting to say your audience is "marketers" or "small business owners", but try to focus on more niche groups. At the beginning, it's easier to reach smaller audiences and to explain exactly how a product solves a particular problem for them.

For Remote Retreats, our goal might be to become the market leader for corporate retreat planning in the United States. But that's a huge end goal for our first demand gen strategy.



So for launch and immediate growth, our target audience will be remote tech companies headquartered in the United States with at least 15 employees. This narrows our audience considerably and lets us focus.

Finding their preferences

Once you know who your audience is, the next step is finding the products and services they trust. These can be news organizations, competitors, or industry influencers.

Information collected at this stage will be used when building out channels and content in the marketing funnel. Take your time and learn as much as you can.

Publishers

Knowing what news organizations, blogs, podcasts, and websites your audience follows is a great place to start understanding their needs and interests.

A simple Google search is your friend here. For our retreat planning company, we might search for “how to plan a corporate retreat”, “best remote working blogs”, “remote company retreats”, and so on. Business Insider, Nodesk.co, Best American Retreats, and Remote.co are obvious picks from those searches.

Then, read through the websites and find overarching themes and issues discussed. These keywords will help frame the copy and content throughout the demand generation funnel.



Pro tip:

When you do audience research, keep a list of websites and podcasts that people share or follow. Use these to create top-funnel demand as earned or paid opportunities.

Social Media

Look for individuals, competitors, and influencers on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Reddit, and other relevant platforms. Try to answer these questions:

- What kinds of content do they share?
- What questions do they have?
- Who do they engage with?
- Who do they follow?

Twitter advanced search, Facebook search, and Instagram hashtags can help you find these answers without a lot of digging. For longer-term research, build a Hootsuite dashboard so you can monitor engagement and trends.

Talking to Them

Reaching out to people can feel awkward, especially if you're not part of the audience you're marketing to. But first-hand information from target customers is the foundation to a great demand generation strategy.

Your sales team can put you in touch with past customers who might be willing to get personal about their pain points, interests, and media sources. Consultants in the industry you're trying to reach could also be helpful.

If you're sending a cold email, be clear that the interview isn't a sales call and provide a good explanation of your product and goals. Autopilot has a [simple breakdown](#) of how to make the most out of this touchpoint.

Still nervous? Relax—people love talking about themselves! Use this to your advantage to learn as much as possible about your target audience.

Building personas

Researching your target audience will probably uncover subgroups with different pain points, backgrounds, job titles, and marketing preferences.

These subsets of your target audience are personas. By creating imaginary people with names and aspirations, marketers narrow in on language and value propositions.

As we mentioned earlier, niche personas are a great place to start at the beginning of a demand generation strategy. Pick ones that will get the most out of your product and be most receptive to marketing. The more competitive or broad ones can be tackled once you've proven market fit.

The research you did earlier is vital in the persona stage. Knowing where a person goes for news, what they want out of products like yours, and the challenges they need your product to solve makes it easy to build a demand gen strategy that compels them to buy.

We won't go into the weeds of building personas in this guide. Instead, check out [Buffer's actionable guide](#).

STEPHEN

AGE: 35

WORK: FOUNDER OF TECH COMPANY

FAMILY: MARRIED WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

LOCATION: ATLANTA, GA

LOGICAL | BUSY | DEVELOPER

BRAND INFLUENCERS

Slack, Dribbble, GitHub, AWS

GOALS

Grow his company and set development plans for the future.

Acquire new customers to continue adding to team and be profitable

FRUSTRATIONS

As team grows, harder for him to have connections with employees and set strategies for the year.

No time to coordinate team building.

PREFERRED CHANNELS

Traditional ads

Online & Social Media

Referral

Guerrilla Efforts & PR

For Remote Retreats, we created the Stephen persona. He’s a 30-something founder of a SaaS company who’s finding it hard to define strategy as his team grows. Sounds like the perfect customer for our retreat planning company.

STEP 2:

Make goals and create your funnel



Set your goals

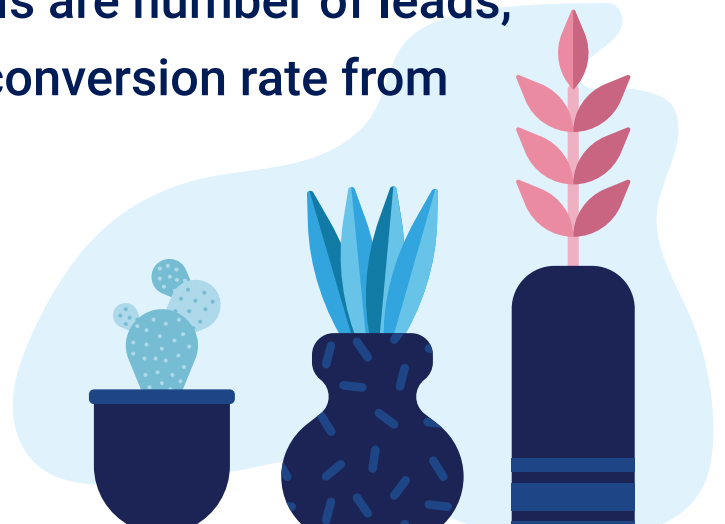
Before you get into the gritty details of strategy, it's important to set the goals and KPIs that you'll use to measure success. Are you trying to increase sales leads? Do you want to raise customer lifetime values? Are you focused on selling a specific product?

Once you know what you're trying to achieve, consider which indicators or metrics will prove success or failure. For example:

- Improve lead quality » SQL to customer conversion rate, improved accuracy of lead quality scores
- Grow company sales » Increased customer lifetime value, number of sales made
- Raise awareness of a product » Increased sales percentage, gain certain number of inbound sales inquiries

As with any marketing plan, demand generation goals should be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed.

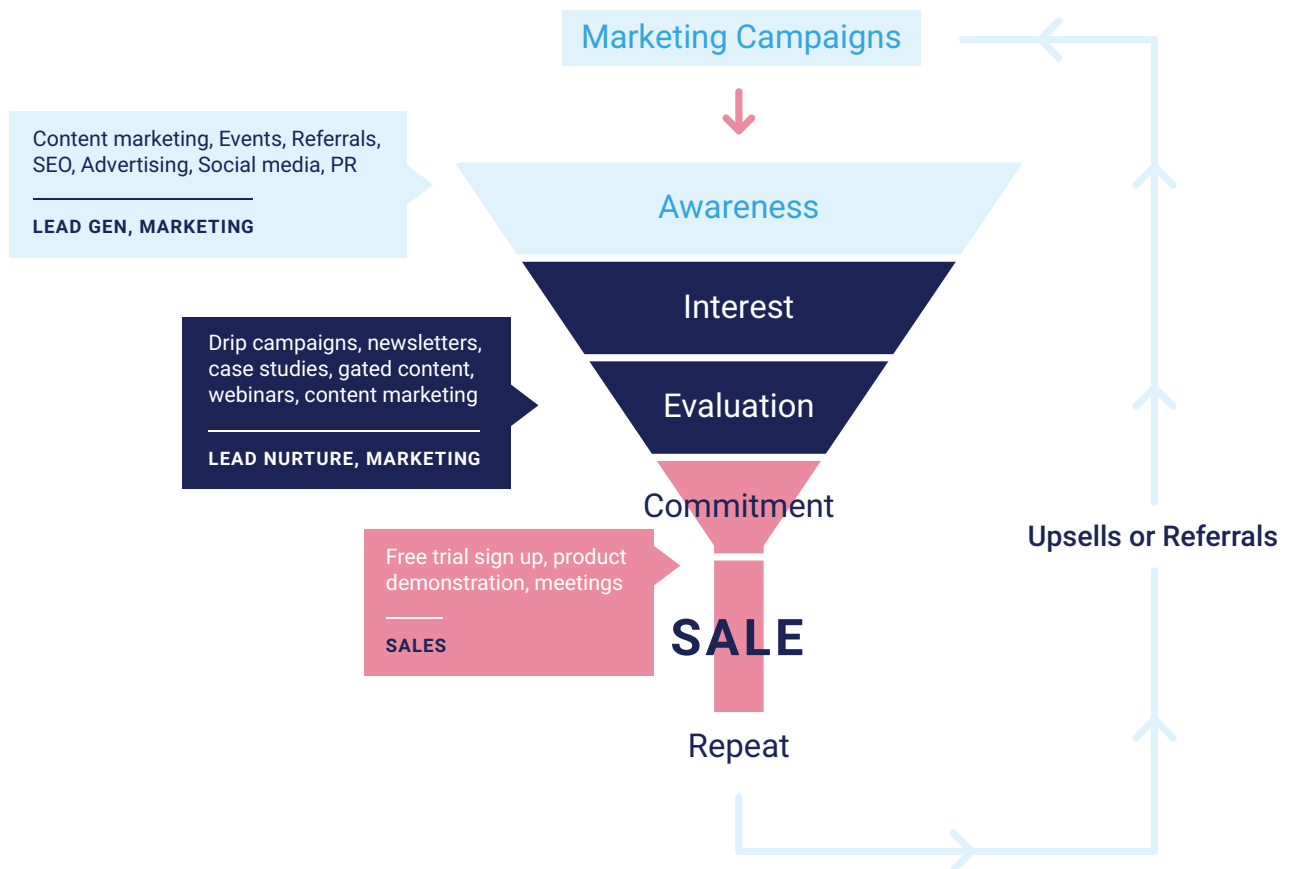
For Remote Retreats, our overarching goal might be to grow sales by 20% every quarter, beginning by referring 20 leads to sales in Q1. To measure this, our KPIs are number of leads, lead quality score, and conversion rate from SQL to customer.



Structuring the funnel

As we said before, demand generation covers the marketing and sales processes. This means your strategy should cover everything from the first impression to signing on the dotted line.

This diagram does a great job of visualizing the entire demand generation funnel. The top of the funnel represents lead generation activities that create awareness. In the middle, lead nurturing fuels interest and consideration. Finally, the sales team reaches out at the very end.



Note: Your marketing automation platform might label lead stages differently. In HubSpot, top funnel statuses are subscribers and leads, mid funnel are marketing qualified leads (MQL) and sales qualified leads (SQL), and bottom funnel are opportunities and customers.

Defining the stages

Next, you need to decide what qualifies someone to graduate through the funnel. For each stage, you should outline:

- What makes someone qualified for that lead status
- What actions graduate that person to the next stage of the funnel
- What actions remove someone from the funnel entirely
- Target conversion rate for each stage of the funnel

Lead Scoring

Demand generation aims to get the most qualified leads to the sales team, meaning contacts have to be scored based on likelihood to buy. This information should come from your company's goals as well as past sales (if possible).

Set up a lead scoring formula with the sales team before launching a strategy. This puts both teams on the same page and ensures your plan attracts the right kind of leads.

Lead scoring includes a [ton of different demographic and behavior components](#) such as job titles, industries, location, content downloads, website pages viewed, etc.

This formula is both art and science, requiring constant iterations to get just right. If you're just getting started, there are a [number of popular lead qualifying frameworks](#) each with their pros and cons.

The perfect formula won't materialize overnight, so remember to iterate along the way. Look at the best leads each month and analyze their path to purchase, and ask sales to reach out to a few MQLs that didn't make the jump to SQL. This could be a result of incorrect lead scoring or your funnel attracting the wrong types of people.

Resources for popular CRMs

- [HubSpot Manual Lead Scoring](#)
- [Salesforce Lead Scoring](#)
- [Marketo Lead Scoring Success Kit](#)

Planning the user journey

Once you know how leads will be scored, you can focus on which channels will be used to nurture leads towards a sale.

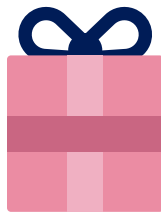
Channels and tactics should evolve as customers move through the funnel and needs change. For example, downloading a content piece might be key at the top of the funnel whereas reading case studies is a major indicator for SQLs.

Top funnel tactics

At the top of the funnel, your goal is to create demand for a product by explaining what problems it solves. A victory is getting contact information to begin lead nurturing. Channels might include:



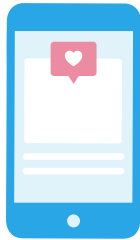
ADVERTISING



GIVEAWAYS



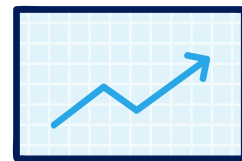
FREE ONLINE TOOLS



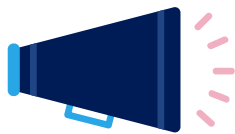
SOCIAL MEDIA



BLOG POSTS



**REPORTS AND
RESEARCH**



PRESS COVERAGE



WEBINARS

Mid funnel tactics

Now, it's time to educate leads with content that builds trust and makes sales' job easier at the end of the funnel. Channels used during this stage might include:



EMAIL CAMPAIGNS



NEWSLETTERS



BLOG POSTS



**LARGE CONTENT
PIECES**



CASE STUDIES

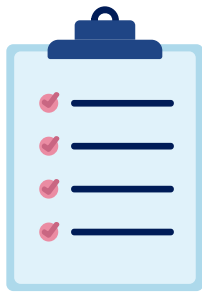


WEBINARS

When picking mid-funnel channels, think about how your audience likes to learn. Do they prefer short articles or are they more visual learners? Do they tend to like in-depth resources or short infographics? Having these answers will make lead nurturing more effective.

Bottom funnel tactics

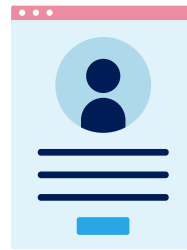
Sales is in charge at the bottom of the funnel, but that doesn't mean marketing is off the hook. Make sure the sales team has the resources they need and marketing is prepared to re-introduce leads into the funnel for future sales. Tactics could include:



SURVEYS



CASE STUDIES



**REFERRAL
PROGRAMS**

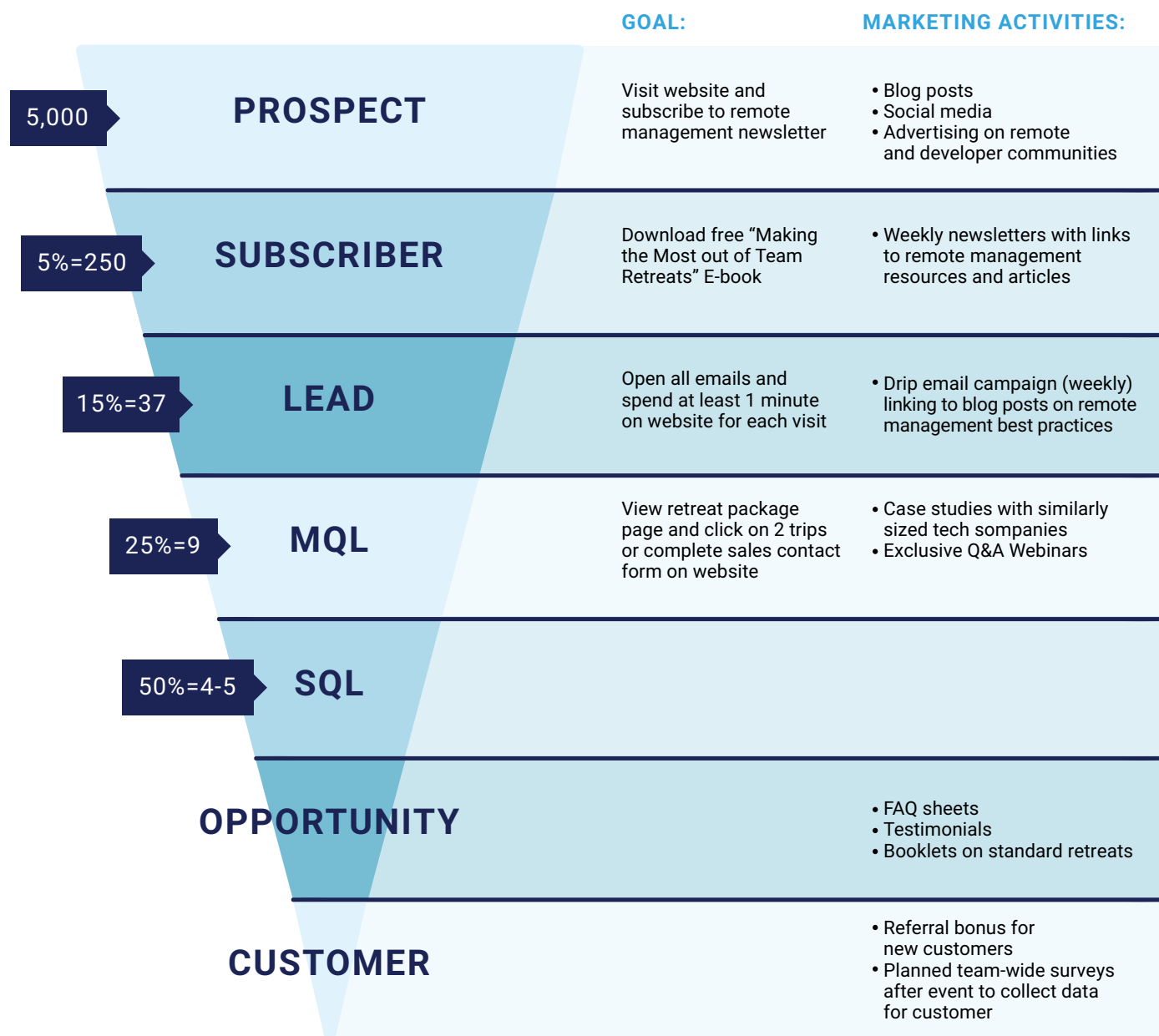
Building a Funnel for Remote Retreats

The demand generation funnel houses most of your strategy, so it's imperative to take the time to articulate goals and channels at each stage.

This funnel was created for Remote Retreats. It shows each stage of the funnel, the marketing activities included during each step, and the end goal needed for someone to progress.

Note the numbers on the left side of the funnel. That’s the anticipated conversion rate throughout the sales process. Setting benchmarks at the beginning is helpful for two reasons:

1. It gives the marketing team goals to measure against
2. It helps determine how much demand is needed at the top of the funnel to hit growth goals



STEP 3:

Set up the tools you need



Building a great demand gen stack gets expensive fast. Tracking, measuring, and optimizing the entire marketing process isn't cheap—and there are very few tools that can do all things well.

Thankfully, there are lots of free resources out there to help you boost demand and get the best leads to the sales team.

Top Funnel

Search engine optimization (SEO)

- Moz has several free tools that help marketers research keywords and understand link building opportunities. Install the [MozBar](#) as a Chrome extension to see backlink and domain authority metrics on sites you visit, use the [Keyword Explorer](#) to prioritize keywords for content and landing pages, and uncover competitor performance with the [Open Site Explorer](#).
- [WooRank](#) helps marketers optimize websites for search engines. The free version gives you a pretty thorough breakdown of factors that influence site rank including meta descriptions, keyword consistency, mobile friendliness, usability, and server technology.

Content creation

- [Answer the Public](#) is straightforward: put in any keyword and it will spit it back questions about it. It's not the most high-tech tool, but it can give you some easy long tail content ideas.

- Type in a keyword or phrase and the [LSI Keyword Generator](#) will give you long-tail keywords semantically linked to the search.
- [Google Trends](#) forecasts keyword potential based on queries from around the world. You can compare two keywords to see which is the better fit, and it provides related queries that might net you more traffic.
- [CoSchedule's Headline Analyzer](#) makes it easy to create headlines that beg to be clicked. Type in a draft headline for reports on balance, length, sentiment, and keywords.
- Internet Marketing Ninjas has a [free keyword analysis](#) tool to show how well content has been optimized for certain keywords. Enter any URL and it shows you meta descriptions and keyword density (including long tail).

Social listening

- [Hootsuite](#) is an understood leader in the world of social media management. You can create customized feeds based on profiles, search results, hashtags, and more.
- [Twitter advanced search](#) can fill the social media monitoring itch without the up-to-the-minute, constant feedback of Hootsuite.
- [RiteTag](#) is a Chrome extension and web app that tells you which hashtags to use to be seen now, which will help you be seen over time, and which ones to avoid.
- Use Instagram for brand awareness? [Focalmark](#) gives you a list of relevant hashtags by topic with formatting to elegantly hide them in the first comment of the post.

Landing page optimization

- [Hotjar](#) shows what visitors do once they land on a page by tracking mouse movement. It can give insight into whether people are confused by design, what parts of a page might be turning away users, and how marketers can optimize sites for more conversions.
- [Hello Bar](#) captures contact information on pages that aren't optimized as landing pages. Essentially, it creates interstitials that pop up at a customized point to collect information, promote a sale, or grow social followings.
- [FullStory](#) lets you play back user sessions and see every click, keypress, page transition, and more. Its frustration detection lets you isolate rage, error, and dead clicks to bring design problems to light.

Advertising

- Remarketing pixels from [Facebook](#) and [Google](#) help when advertising to people who visit a website but don't instantly become leads.
- [Facebook Lookalike Audiences](#) let marketers use information from high-value customers to create similar audiences for advertising campaigns. When creating these lookalike audiences, build lists based on customers with high lifetime values. The higher the CLV, the less you'll spend per lead.

- Like lookalike campaigns, [Twitter Tailored Audiences](#) let marketers upload existing customer information to target similar users.
- LinkedIn is a powerful platform for B2B marketers, proven by its [Matched Audiences](#) feature designed for account-based marketing campaigns.

Mid Funnel

CRM

- HubSpot offers a comprehensive paid plan that tracks everything a demand generation marketer needs—from attribution to lead status to sales. If you don't need something so in-depth, the [free marketing plan](#) provides the beginner blocks of understanding how people move through your funnel.

Website tracking

- Everyone already has Google Analytics, making this a super accessible way to track website movement without any additional elbow grease. The [Funnel Visualization](#) can be set up and tracked under Conversions > Goals > Funnel Visualization.

Drip campaigns

- [Jumplead](#) brings live chat, email marketing, and automated campaigns under one roof to help marketers better understand relationships between touch points and drop offs between them.

- [Autopilot](#) lets marketers create lead nurturing paths with simple drag-and-drop flows. You can create targeted emails, in-app messages, SMS, and more to reach customers as they move through the funnel. Pricing changes based on the number of contacts you have, but there is also a 30-day free trial.
- As its name suggests, [Drip](#) helps marketers plan and execute drip campaigns. Set up the customer journey, write emails triggered by behaviors, and use predictive lead scoring to know when someone is ready to be passed to sales.
- Chances are you're already familiar with [MailChimp](#), so onboarding isn't a problem. Even free plans come with drip email capability for demand generation campaigns.

Attribution

- Attribution modelling in Google Analytics helps break down where traffic comes from and which channels work together to create conversions. To access these reports, go to Conversions > Multi-Channel Funnels.

STEP 4:

Experiment with paid channels



Getting qualified leads to sales starts with traffic at the top of the funnel. Many companies rely on a combination of organic and paid channels to create this demand.

Let's dive into paid tactics and how to budget for them.

Search engine marketing

Search ads help you reach people who are seeking information related to your product or service. Chances are you're already running search ads on your company name and core product offering.

While search is a no-brainer platform for demand generation, costs skyrocket fast. Bidding on a cost-per-click basis can become unsustainable for new startups or ones trying to drive growth without large marketing budgets.

Some of this can be reduced with smart keyword strategies. While demand gen campaigns should obviously include brand names, product names, competitor terms, and product keywords, *don't be afraid to get creative and scoop up low-cost keywords related to audience pain points.*

For example, keywords for a writing and editing tool might include common grammar questions such as "their vs they're", "when to use a semicolon", or "differences between then and than". Those will have much lower bids than "grammar service" or "spell checking tool".

Audience communities

Demand gen marketers should also explore places audiences go for recommendations, news, and resources. These community-specific websites usually have set CPMs and placement costs with narrow targeting based on readership.

For Remote Retreats, we should explore online communities for founders and remote workers. These might include [Founderkit](#), [NoDesk](#), or [r/entrepreneur](#).

Publisher marketing

Similar to communities, publisher advertising is valuable at the top of the funnel when you're trying to reach a specific audience at scale.

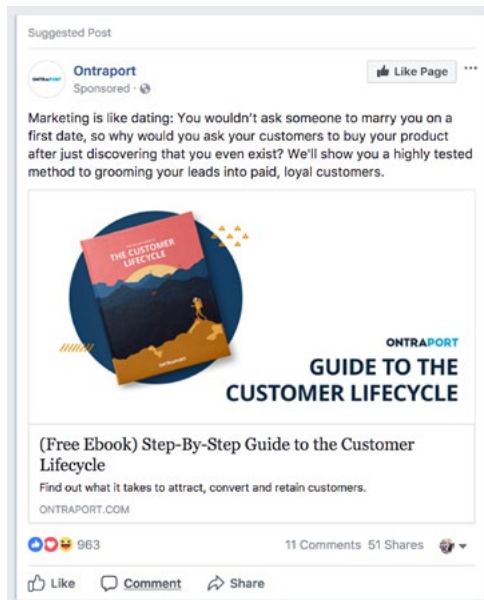
This channel takes different forms depending on how the publisher has structured its ad stack. Website advertisements might include display, native, and custom ads. The publisher might also have a newsletter that it sends to subscribers or a podcast with sponsorship opportunities.

Publisher advertisements offer brand safe placements alongside high-quality content. Plus, audiences are more likely to whitelist their favorite websites, meaning marketers can worry less about ad blockers.

To reach remote company founders, Remote Retreats might run ads on [Remote.co](#), [Hacker Noon](#), or [the business circle](#) on Carbon.

Social media

Social media is a popular channel for driving top-funnel demand. To find the right platforms for your audience, go back to your persona research and see which websites they use most. Then, work those platforms into your media plan.



You should take advantage of more advanced features such as [lookalike audiences on Facebook](#) and retargeting pixels to capture prospects who bounced before becoming leads. Remarketing campaigns are most successful at driving leads when they offer something of value such as a webinar, e-book, or free trial.

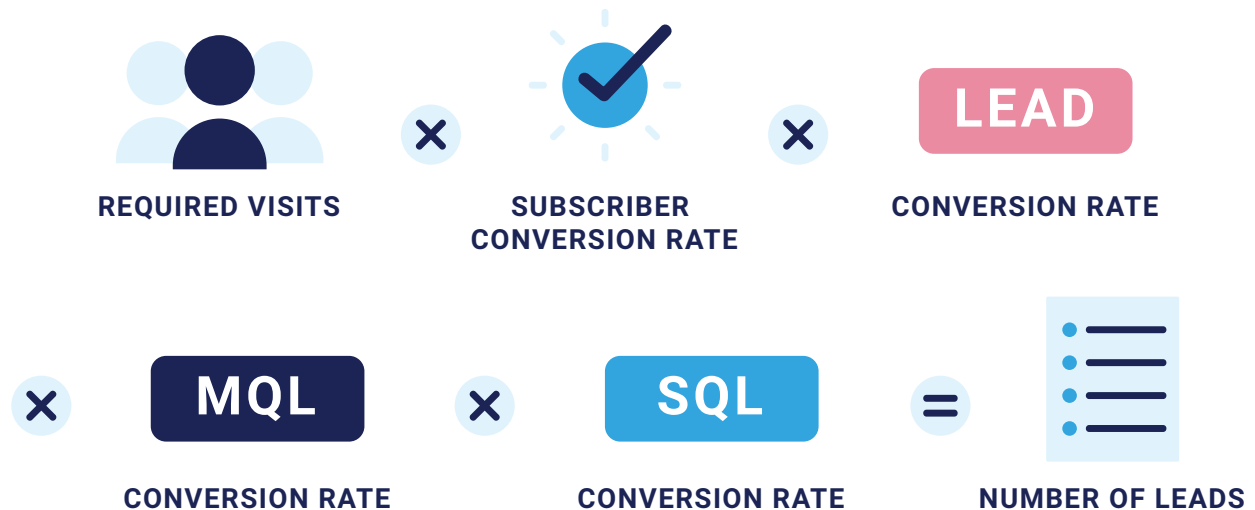
Social media advertising is sometimes used to retarget high-value contacts who are stuck in the middle of the funnel. If you run these campaigns, keep them minimal or risk annoying leads before they even consider buying.

Knowing how much to spend

Budgeting for paid channels can be difficult, especially if you have a blank check to experiment or are just creating a media plan.

Because many demand gen marketers have strict growth goals, it can be easiest to start with the ideal result and work backwards to calculate costs.

Let's say the Remote Retreats marketing team has to deliver 20 SQLs each quarter. In a previous chapter, we outlined the average conversion rate for each part of the funnel. Using these numbers, we can calculate how many visitors we need at the top of the funnel to deliver on lead goals.



Required visits x 0.05 x 0.15 x 0.25 x 0.5 = 20 leads

In this case, 20 leads will require at least 21,500 high-quality visitors at the top of the funnel. If those are all coming from paid channels and we expect a \$1.00 cost per click, that means our budget should be \$21,500 with an anticipated cost per SQL of \$1,075.

This cost works for our event planning business but might be unaffordable for startups or scrappy businesses. It's smart to do a reality check before running campaigns to avoid wasting money your company doesn't have.

Optimizing paid strategies

After your paid campaigns have run for a bit, segment by channel and look at dropoffs and conversions at each stage. Here are three quick ways to optimize paid strategies:



Improve landing pages

The landing page is do-or-die for paid campaigns: either the user acts or bounces.



This means it's usually the best place to start when optimizing campaigns. For Remote Retreats, improving the subscriber conversion rate by 2% would lead to 40% more leads per quarter. That's a significant amount, especially as we grow.

Take a look at landing page data to see if there are any particular things users stumbled on or that didn't resonate. Is the page missing something that would help the audience learn quicker, such as a video or testimonial?

If you're stuck, visit [Wishpond's list](#) of 45 tips and strategies to improve your landing page, and don't forget to test along the way.

Analyze conversion rate by placement

When testing new channels, start by setting goals. Think about the conversion rate, CPM, and CPC you need to make the placement worthwhile. Let new channels run for a few weeks before making tweaks or pulling spend. Then, compare results to reality.

More expensive placements might be worth it if the conversion rate outpaces other channels or if successful customers went on to buy more than the average person.

The case for customer lifetime values

Customer lifetime value derived from specific paid channels can tell you a lot about your growth strategy. Based on your current CLV, how much can you spend on marketing? And based on your growth goals, how many sales do you need to make per quarter?

Beware the tendency to set marketing cost-per-customer too low. It's hard to justify a channel that costs \$350 per acquisition if your product is \$100 per month, but if resulting customers stick around for 7 months and refer 2 others, it's clearly profitable in the long term.

Having the answers to these questions makes your job easier and simplifies marketing conversations with higher-ups.

Don't forget organic

Paid marketing is great at supplementing demand at the top of the funnel, but it's key to *remember that demand generation is about relationship building*. For that reason, organic should always be the go-to tactic used to people move through the funnel.

Not only will this boost trust with future customers, but you'll save money by using organic tactics after the first meeting.

STEP 5:

Measure your successes



Drilling into how a campaign performed can feel a lot like ripping off a bandage: it's painful and you're never totally sure what to expect.

However, a demand generation strategy is only as successful as its outcomes. Understanding what worked, what didn't, and where to improve is necessary to level-up demand gen over time.

Return to the original goals

Before you do anything else, return to the goals that you outlined at the beginning of the strategy. If these were reasonable and measurable, it shouldn't take long to figure out how the strategy performed.

Next, calculate how each channel contributed to your KPIs and how they impacted overall customer acquisition costs. This formula [will change based on your business model](#).

The first step is normalizing data between channels. If one platform charges by impressions (CPM) and the other charges by clicks (CPC), use the costs and work backwards to find the same metrics for each channel.

At this stage, it's also best to crown one platform as a "universal truth" for marketing results—this can be Google Analytics or another service. Ad platforms [can show different results from Google Analytics](#) for a variety of reasons, so it's helpful to have one source of performance when measuring impact.

Once you have that data, you can see which channels had the lowest cost per acquisition. Obviously, invest in ones that pull the average in the right direction and consider abandoning or re-examining those that did the opposite.

Also be sure to analyze platform performance based on [customer lifetime value](#)—a high CPA that leads to high LTV might be worth it. As Andrew Chen says on [his blog](#), the only difference between a good CPA and a bad CPA is whether it's above or below your customer LTV.

Finally, consider other metrics that changed over the course of the campaign. This spillover traffic can tell you a lot about your campaign. Did interest in a different product rise? Was there a spike in traffic to your FAQ page? These might be indicators that your messaging was off or promoting the wrong thing to your audience.

Look at lead scoring

Lead scoring should be a living formula that's reviewed every few weeks.

Once you've referred a number of leads to the sales team, review your formula and measure its accuracy. Your demographic scoring might not align with leads that your marketing activities attract, or you could be disqualifying buyers based on nonessential behavior such as not downloading a specific white paper.



Also, analyze leads that went on to become customers to see what they have in common. Perhaps a certain channel refers higher-quality leads or certain job titles have higher values. If any conditions make sense, work them into your lead scoring formula and make it smarter over time.

Finally, have a standing meeting with your sales manager to review SQLs that were disregarded along the way. Find out why they weren't followed up on and consider whether your marketing funnel should remove these types of leads automatically.

If you can, encourage sales to contact a certain number of disregarded MQLs each month and see if these contacts are actually unqualified or if biases are stopping them from reaching out.

Focus on efficiency

Smooth out the sales process

Using your funnel as a guide, see which parts of your strategy have the most drop-offs or highest bounce rates. Small optimizations such as less form fields on landing pages, setting superficial deadlines, or A/B testing calls to action can have huge effects on company growth and give you deeper inroads into niche audiences.

Look at landing pages

As noted before, the lowest hanging fruit in a demand generation funnel is usually the first landing page people encounter. Almost always, [these can be optimized](#) to make your product or service more relevant to future customers.

Use data from heat maps or a fresh set of eyes to find stumbling blocks. Crystalize benefits by finding any mentions of “we” or “us” and turning them into “you”. Cut down copy by 20% and see how much more refined your call to action becomes.

Examine lead nurturing

After landing pages, focus on [optimizing your lead nurturing campaign](#). Spam reports and unsubscribes can tell you a lot about reactions to specific parts of a drip campaign.

Experiment with the number of emails and the timing of them if you see specific patterns emerge. Try sending them in plain text instead of HTML. See what happens if you include names in the subject line. Near the end of your funnel, consider adding emoji to make emails stand out in inboxes.

If lead nurturing is underperforming expectations in general, consider whether your drip campaign [fits the customer’s needs](#) in the moment. For example, at the subscriber state, a welcome series that culminates in a larger content download might be more valuable than an immediate educational campaign.

Get feedback

Hearing directly from customers is the greatest gift for demand gen marketers. Customers are filled with honest insight into products and sales and an important part of improving marketing for future contacts.

But don't approach just any customer. Look for ones with high lifetime values or who fit into audiences you're struggling to reach. These contacts will give you the most valuable insight. Once you've identified who you want to speak to, make the ask appealing to them. Liston Witherill [gave fantastic advice](#) on this in the Everyone Hates Marketers podcast.

Interview Tips

- Ask open-ended questions that start with where, what, why, when, who, and how. These prompt original answers that aren't informed by your own biases. For example, instead of asking "Did you find our company through display ads?" opt for "How did you find us?"
- Listen instead of talking. It's normal to want to focus on your next question instead of the answer being given, but try to actively listen to what people are telling you.
- Don't stick to the script. Ask follow up questions that fill in blanks. Even simple nudges like "Could you tell me more about that?" or "How did that make you feel?" can give you deeper insight into the mind of a customer.



Keep improving over time

Demand generation is never really over. Each week, month, and quarter, goals change and audience demands shift. It's your job to match your marketing strategy to these pivots and keep sales happy along the way.

Don't be afraid to get creative with your experiments, and routinely ask high-value customers for feedback. Optimizing your demand generation machine will lead to major rewards down the line.

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The background is a dark blue field filled with a pattern of small, scattered squares and short line segments. The squares are outlined in white, light blue, and light red. The line segments are also in these colors, creating a festive, confetti-like appearance.

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