

The Hardworking Inbound Marketing Guide **for B2B** **Industrial Companies**

A business growth guide by

gorilla76



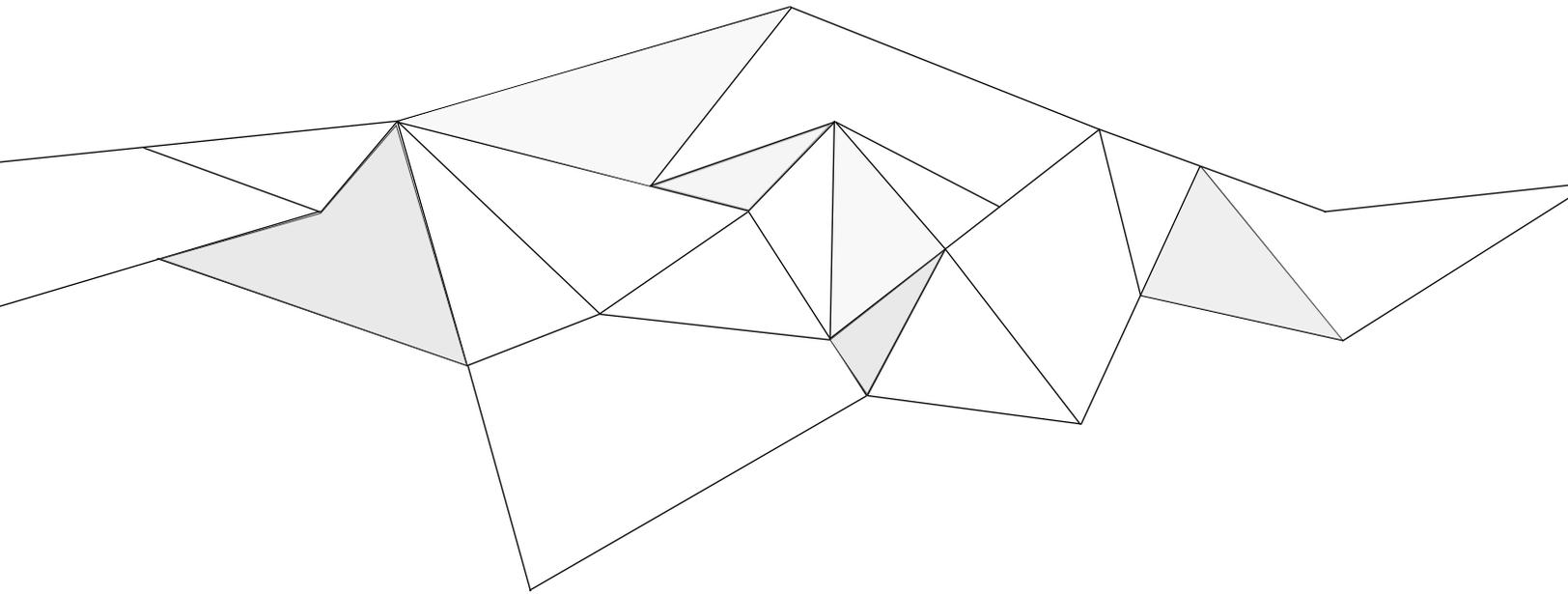


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About Gorilla 76

Introduction

Who this guide is for

This guide was written as a resource for industrial business-to-business companies who want to produce qualified leads and paying customers through their marketing efforts. We wrote this for innovators — people who are not scared of change. That means people who believe marketing should generate dollars rather than ad impressions, Facebook likes or other meaningless “results.” While this isn’t the most advanced guide in the world, it will require some brainpower and, most importantly, an open mind.

Inbound marketing: What is it and why do it?

Gorilla 76 partner Jon Franko hunts ducks (and most other living creatures) with a passion. He often uses an analogy that parallels duck hunting and the type of marketing we practice and preach. As a duck hunter, you put out a spread of decoys and sit back in your duck blind, waiting for the birds to descend from the sky and come to you. This is like inbound marketing, but instead of duck decoys, you have content decoys. You attract your audience through search engines and social media channels as they search for solutions to their problems. They discover your content and come to you, rather than you trekking out into the wild to hunt for them. For you business school-trained marketers, this is “pull” marketing as oppose to traditional “push” marketing.

Although this analogy works on many levels, one very important distinction must be made. When hunting ducks, they’re your prey and don’t fare so well in the end (as long as you’re a good shot). Your business prospects on the other hand, are rewarded by discovery of your content. Carefully-crafted, well-planned content creates value for your prospective customers. It helps address their business problems and establishes trust in your expertise. This discovery is the beginning of a new relationship when properly managed.



80%

of business decision makers prefer to acquire company information through a series of articles as oppose to an advertisement.

According to the Content Marketing Institute, 80% of business decision makers prefer to acquire company information through a series of articles as oppose to an advertisement. People are gathering information on their own today – researching online, identifying potential business partners and vendors and ignoring interruptive advertising messages along the way. Your company must respond accordingly so your prospects will discover and learn from you.

We designed this guide to help you understand the ins and outs of inbound marketing and most importantly – how to apply them to your business. The shift to inbound marketing may be intimidating, but each chapter includes action steps to get you moving. We're highly confident this guide will teach you something new and spark ideas to initiate positive change within your company.

1. Identify your company's core business challenges



Marketing exists to drive measurable outcomes that produce business. This means growth in targeted website traffic, qualified business leads, and ultimately, paying customers. But to achieve these outcomes, you need to identify and remain focused on solving the key business challenges your company faces. Every company is different, but there are common problems that effective marketing can and should solve.

We're lacking awareness among our audience

According to marketing software leader Hubspot, "61 percent of global Internet users research products online." And according to Google, "Business buyers do not contact suppliers directly until 57 percent of the purchase process is complete." So what does that mean about generating awareness for your business? People are ignoring the plethora of invasive marketing and sales messages in their daily lives and are instead seeking information on their own. The responsibility therefore falls on your shoulders to assure they find your products and services when they seek them online. Learn more about attracting your audience in Chapter 3.

A large, bold, orange graphic of the number 61% with a diagonal slash for the percent sign.

of global Internet users research products online

Our prospects keep buying from the other guy

Many, if not most, B2B buyers lack sufficient knowledge on what they're buying. But you're an expert on what you sell. The resulting scenario is the perfect opportunity for prospect education. Years of experience among salesmen, project managers and execs within your company provide more than ample opportunity not only to convince your prospects to buy, but to help them through that purchasing process. Education on your products,

services, and most importantly, benefits they deliver not only produces more sales, but creates trusting, loyal customers. Be the ultimate resource. Learn more about prospect education in Chapter 4.

We're not generating enough qualified leads

So many B2B companies limit their lead-generation programs to trade shows, golf outings, networking events, cold calls and more trade shows. Time for a wake up call. Salesmen can only be in one place at a time. Personal relationships matter – absolutely. This is especially true in the B2B world. But consider this: not every personal relationship has to BEGIN in person. Your company website has the incredibly powerful ability to set up conversations while you're conducting others. Just as you wouldn't leave a fresh trade show encounter with a quality prospect before grabbing his business card, your website must be equipped to collect that name and phone number from its visitors before they go away and disappear forever. Learn more about online lead generation in Chapter 5.

Your company website has the incredibly powerful ability to set up conversations while you're conducting others.

We're wasting time chasing the wrong leads

The information you'll find on a typical business card is enough to make a sales call possible. What if you also knew what product or service pages on your website a prospect has visited and how many times that person has returned to those particular pages? What if you knew how engaged he's been with your marketing emails? Even better, what if that person has already indicated the business problems he faces on a regular basis that your company specializes in solving? The smartest B2B marketers today arm themselves with lead intelligence

The smartest B2B marketers today arm themselves with lead intelligence collected through their websites.

collected through their websites. And they use this information to segment their leads not only by industry or demographics, but also by stage in the buying process and likelihood to close as a customer. The result? Better-prepped salesmen and more successful sales calls. Learn more about lead intelligence mining and audience segmentation in Chapter 6.

Our sales team is strapped for time

As lead volume grows (and believe us, it will as you implement your inbound marketing strategy), your available time for each individual prospect shrinks. In addition to prioritizing leads based on gathered intelligence, marketing automation software can carry some of the load for your sales team. While your salesmen heat up the warm leads, automated email campaigns warm up the cool ones. Learn more about marketing automation in Chapter 7.

We're not closing enough leads as customers

Prospects don't crave recurring sales pitches. But they do crave fresh resources that help them overcome challenges and do their jobs better. So instead of repeatedly trying to sell your audience what they're not yet ready to buy, stay top-of-mind by helping address their business challenges.

According to Demand Gen Report, "Nurtured leads produce, on average, a 20 percent increase in sales opportunities versus non-nurtured leads."

Email is your venue for nurturing leads with consistent, automated touch points based upon who they are and what needs they have. Rather than pushing sales messages, promote your resourceful content to drive leads back to your website. While your sales team is selling, these automated campaigns operate in the background.

20% Nurtured leads produce, on average, a 20 percent increase in sales opportunities versus non-nurtured leads

Our cost per lead is too high

B2B companies will sink \$15,000 into a trade show one month and \$5,000 into a print ad the next without blinking. Traditional marketing channels certainly have their place in the mix – they target a niche audience after all. But our experience has shown that the cost per each lead acquired through traditional channels can be two to three times as high as those acquired through an online inbound marketing initiative. Learn more about measuring marketing ROI in chapter 8.

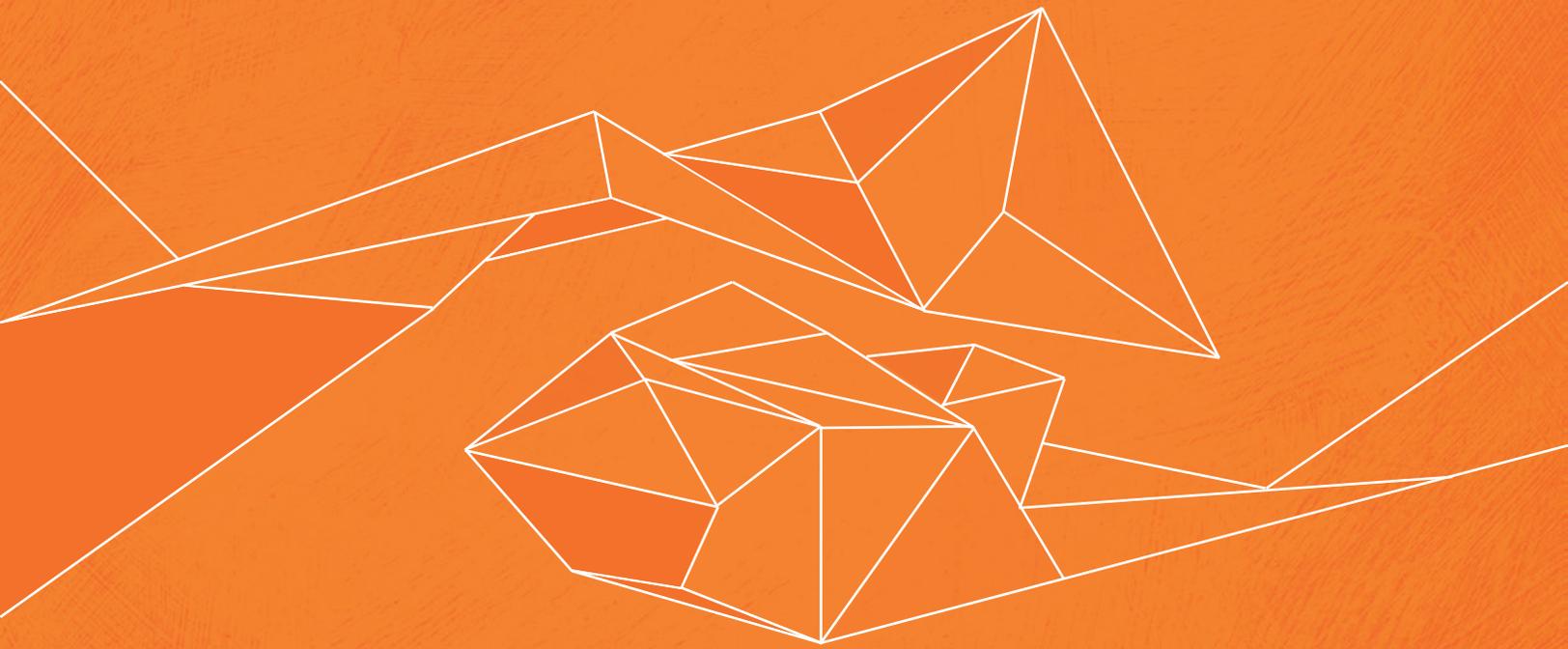
We don't know how to measure our marketing success

Ad impressions and Twitter Followers don't count as results in our book. But business growth does. Measure awareness through improved search engine rankings for important keywords and growth in website traffic. Measure lead generation through new contacts generated by your website, where they originated and what content engaged them. And measure customer acquisition through response to lead nurturing campaigns that helped convert leads into paying customers. Learn more about measuring results in Chapter 8.

ACTION STEPS

1. Which of the business challenges described in this chapter resonate most with your company? Make a list and prioritize them.

2. Know your buyers and their needs



You know the industries you target. And you know the types of companies that buy from you. But have you truly identified the individuals within those companies who discover you and gather information from you? And what about the individuals who ultimately make the buying decisions? Where do these people go for information? What do they value about a partner like your company? How much influence do they have in the buying process? Your customers are human beings – not companies. Each is different. Just as you talk differently to your best friend vs. your grandmother vs. your boss, you must talk differently to each member of your audience.

Identify your buyers

We can't develop a marketing plan to target every single business prospect individually, but we can develop profiles that group together audience members who share common characteristics. These profiles are called buyer personas, and they allow us to cater our marketing approach to each group differently.

We can develop profiles that group together audience members who share common characteristics.

Identify your ideal audience members. Who are the types of individuals your business development team consistently pursues? Who are the individuals at their companies that are tasked with choosing vendors? Which individuals become advocates for hiring you within their companies? Which individuals push back and play Devil's advocate? Who screens vendors, conducts extensive research and collects technical details? Who just wants the facts and

intends to make a fast buying decision? Develop a list of these audience members that matter in the buying process. Then narrow it down to the three or four most important groups. Your persona list, for example, could look something like this:

The young innovator

The data-driven engineer

The purchasing agent

The CEO/ decision maker

These groups become your target audiences. Moving forward, your website, blog posts, white papers, case studies, video content, email newsletters, marketing automation campaigns and other marketing activities will now have human beings in mind as your team creates them. Better targeting means better results.

How to Create Buyer Personas for Your Business | Hubspot:

This PowerPoint template goes into a bit more detail on developing buyer personas. It also includes some worksheets that you can use to help develop your own. <http://offers.hubspot.com/free-template-creating-buyer-personas>

Develop buyer persona profiles

After identifying the personas you'll target, you'll need a profile for each. The key members of your business development team – marketing and sales – should collaborate to develop these profiles. Once created, every individual involved in business development initiatives should become ultra-familiar with these profiles. The following list of questions will help you build out your personas. Answer the following questions in writing about each individual persona group.

What are common job titles for this persona?

What is this person's level of authority or decision making power within the company?

Who are a few examples of existing clients that fit this persona?

What are the types of problems this particular person needs solved?

What kind of buying experience is he looking for? Detail driven? Fast and easy?

What does this person value the most about your company?

How much does he already know about your products/services?

Is a lot or a little bit of education needed to get him up to speed?

Where does he go to collect information? Online? Coworkers? Industry peers? Trade organizations?

How does this person usually discover you? Referral? If so, from who? Past work? Google searches? If online, what is he likely searching for?

In instances when you're NOT hired by this person's company, what do you think this individual's objections to hiring you may have been?

Once complete, edit your persona profiles down, clean them up and get them into the hands of your entire business development team.

ACTION STEPS

1. With the help of your business development team, make a list of the types of individuals within your audience that play a role in the buying process. Narrow that list down to the most important three or four groups. These are your buyer personas.
2. Answer the questions listed in this chapter about each of your newly established buyer personas. Make sure the finished profiles are in everyone's hands.

3. Generate targeted awareness



Back in chapter 1, we used a duck hunting analogy to introduce the concept of inbound marketing. We illustrated the idea of attracting your specific audience to you, rather than going out to hunt for them. And we identified your company's content as the "decoys" that will attract that audience through search engines and social media channels as they seek out solutions to their business challenges. So how do you develop the resourceful, value-packed content your audience will seek, love and return for? Read on.

Content strategy

Shortly, you'll read about search engine optimization, but we put this subsection about content strategy first for one primary reason: great content is key to your success. The best search engine optimizers in the world might drive you to the top of Google's search results for all the most important keywords related to your business. But if visitors arrive on your website and your content fails to engage and provide utility, they're gone in a flash and on to your competitor's site.

Attracting your audience begins with a sound content strategy. In the last chapter, you learned the importance of segmenting your audiences with buyer personas. When you're able to zero in on specific target audiences, developing content that satisfies their needs becomes much easier to do.

Business blogging

The word “blog” gets a bad rap. Somehow this word has come to connote moms writing about their cute babies and technology dorks reviewing the latest computer operating systems. Take a moment to reposition the word “blog” in your mind. In the context of your business, a blog post is nothing other than an educational article. Blog posts can (and probably should) form the foundation of your content strategy.

Consider the questions you receive on sales calls and the things you consistently explain to prospects. These topics form perfect ideas for blog content. Why? If prospects ask you questions in person to help them understand what they might buy, others most likely ask the same questions to Google. When your website has the answers, Google will direct those searchers to you. Any given company’s blogging strategy and volume of blog articles may be different. But among our clients, we typically recommend at least one unique blog post every week. If you focus your blog content on answering common questions and helping solve problems for your prospective customers, you’ll create an engaged audience and prompt more sales conversations.

When your website has the answers, Google will direct those searchers to you

Search engine optimization (SEO)

Boiling SEO down to a few paragraphs is no simple task, but we’ll try anyway. SEO is about optimizing your website so Google (and other search engines like Bing and Yahoo) list your website pages in their results when someone searches for keywords related to your business.

If you’re a company that builds chairs, you want to show up in Google searches for “chair manufacturer” and any other relevant keywords and phrases for your business. So how do you make sure this happens? The concept is actually pretty simple. Google competes against Yahoo and

Bing. Google wants you to conduct your searches on its search engine – not theirs. So in order to keep you coming back, Google needs to consistently feed you search results that help you find what you’re looking for quickly. Otherwise, you’ll get fed up and try Yahoo to see if they do a better job.

All of these search engines constantly refine their algorithms to help them identify the best possible content related to any conceivable keyword or phrase someone might search.

So how does this relate to your business? As your website grows into a fantastic resource that educates on all facets of your products, services and industry, Google, Yahoo and Bing reward you by serving up your pages to searchers.

The Beginner’s Guide to SEO | Moz

The best SEO resource out there, written by the best SEO guys out there. <http://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo>

Google AdWords Keyword Planner | Google

A free tool that shows you how often any given keyword is searched in Google and how tough it will be to rank for that word/phrase in a Google search. <https://adwords.google.com/KeywordPlanner>

Without taking a deep dive into SEO, your take-away should be this:

Fill your website with descriptive, keyword-focused product and services pages, case studies and blog content that answer questions and solve problems. Google, Yahoo and Bing will reward you with exposure to your target audience.

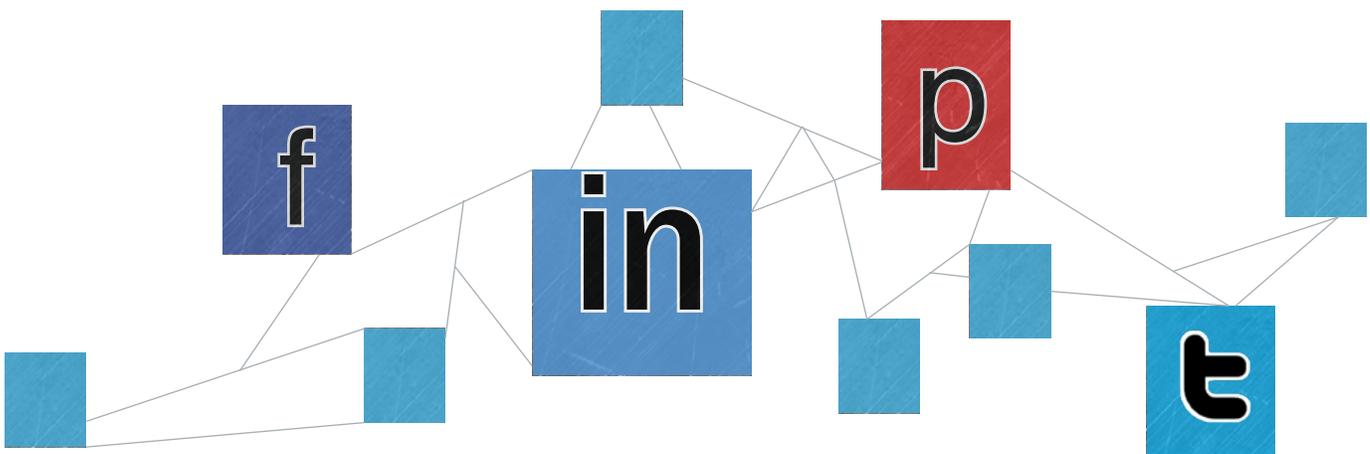
Social media

The newfangled social media universe of 5-10 years ago is no longer so newfangled. By now, your mom and maybe even your grandpa have Facebook accounts (mine do!), half the world is on Twitter and thousands of niche social media websites have popped up for just about any imaginable interest.

So as a marketer, how can you capitalize on the constantly growing volume of social media participants and get your company in front of the ones that matter?

The most important first step is learning where your audience actually participates online. For the clients Gorilla services – B2B industrial companies – we tend to focus our time and energy on LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a big, business-minded social media network. And because of that business mindset, marketing messages may be less intrusive and slightly more relevant than they might be within Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest or other social media networks.

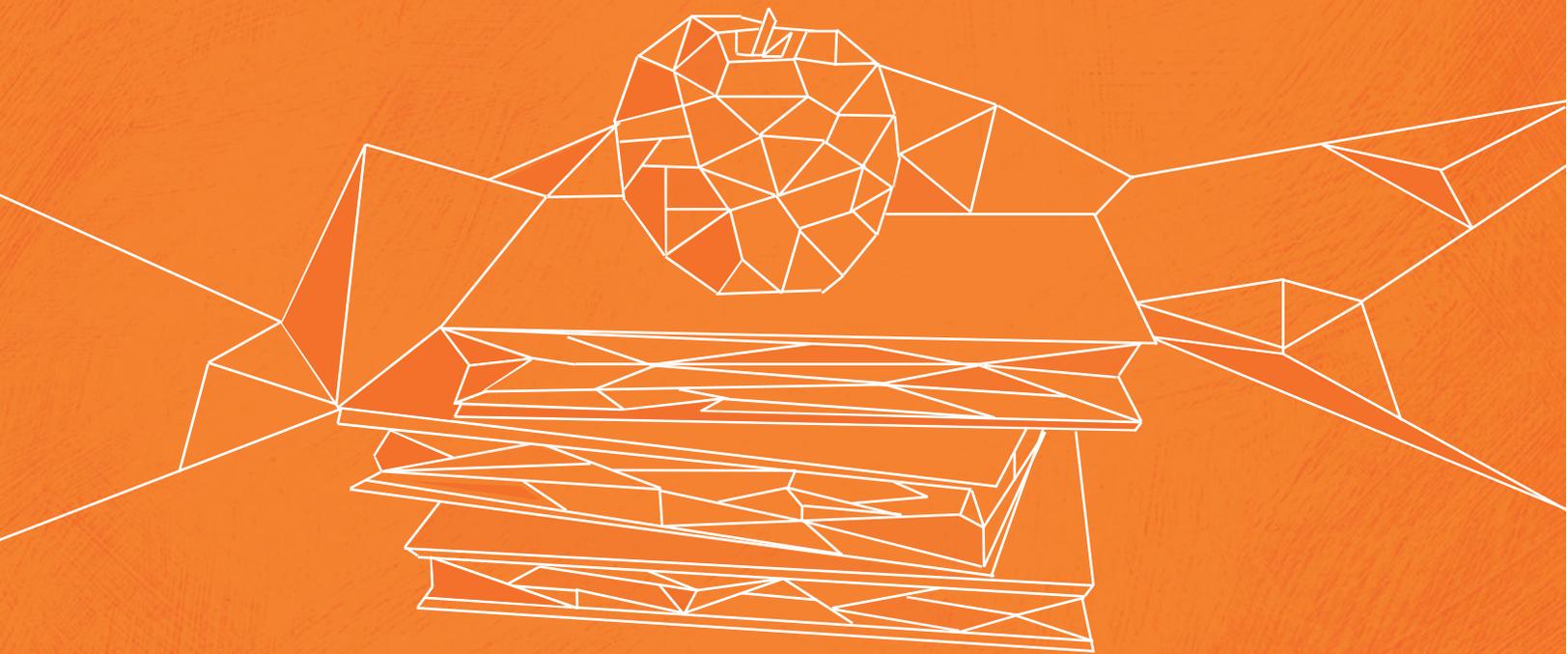
Use LinkedIn (and/or other social networks) to build a community of relevant connections. As you connect with business colleagues, journalists, members of trade organizations and prospective customers, you widen your reach among a relevant audience. You can then use these networks to post links to your blog posts and other helpful content, which creates opportunity for more qualified traffic.



ACTION STEPS

1. Create a list of 10-20 keywords or phrases that you would love your company to show up for in a Google search. Put yourself in the shoes of your audience. How would they look for solutions to their problems that overlap with your company's expertise?
2. If you don't have a LinkedIn account, create one. Then conduct searches within LinkedIn for companies that you're already targeting as potential customers. Conduct more searches for the trade publications in your industry. Connect with relevant people at these organizations. This can be your starting point if social media is new to you.

4. Educate your audience



Rule #1: Educate, don't promote

If this is true, why do so many companies constantly scream

“BUY FROM ME NOW!”?

96%

of website visitors are not ready to buy

-Study by KISS Metrics

If you're not interested in buying something, the last thing you want is a salesman pushing you to buy it. Respect the sales cycle. Every member of your audience moves through her buying process at her own pace. You can help her along the way and add a ton of value, as long as you do so carefully and tactfully to earn her attention and trust. (See Chapter 7 for more on nurturing leads).

For now, recognize that the bigger the purchase, the more research your prospect will likely conduct. Your prospect wants to self-educate in order to make an informed buying decision. This is your opportunity to teach – not your time to sell.

More on business blogging

During a buyer's research stage, your business blog serves as your #1 educational tool. Craft every individual blog post to answer a question or address an issue that helps your prospects and customers. You don't need to give away your company's secret sauce to pique interest. Instead, give away a taste of that sauce and you'll capture their attention. Need a hand generating blog post ideas? Inbound marketing specialist Marcus Sheridan of The Sales Lion talks often about “The Big Five” blog post categories that drive success. These include:

Cost/price articles

“Best of” articles

Review-based articles

Problem articles

Vs./comparison articles

Business Blogging for the Industrial B2B Marketer | Gorilla 76

Our ebook about the benefits of blogging, creating a lead-generating B2B blogging strategy and writing exceptional blog posts.

<http://offers.gorilla76.com/business-blogging-ebook>

The Copyblogger blog | Copyblogger

A blog filled with blog posts about blogging by a company called Copyblogger who sells blogging resources. <http://www.copyblogger.com/blog/>

What can you and other members of your team teach your audience within these categories? Don't forget your buyer personas. Chapter 2 illustrated the importance of building out profiles for each of your key audience groups. Design your blogging strategy to address each persona's questions and needs.

White papers, buyer's guides & other premium content

As your prospect self-educates, her mindset shifts to the potential partners, vendors and solutions that can help apply the concepts at hand to her own business. This is the evaluation stage. Buyer's guides, webinars, case studies and other advanced content continue educating while simultaneously positioning you as a solution.

When your prospect finally reaches the buying stage, you've already become her best resource and established yourself as a potential partner.

ACTION STEPS

1. Identify three common questions your company gets from each buyer persona (see Chapter 2 to learn about personas) or three things you're constantly explaining to each. Your explanations will form the ideas for new blog posts.
2. After complete action step #1, write your first blog post. Aim for 500 words if blogging is new to you. Remember, your post should be educational – not promotional. Finish with a call-to-action so your reader doesn't slip away and disappear.

5. Capture Qualified Leads



What good is an educated prospect if you don't know who he is? And unless your website visitor possesses a pressing need to acquire your product or service at this exact moment, no "Contact Us" link in the top right corner of your website will ever compel him to raise his hand and say "I want to buy something." So how do you take an anonymous website visitor and transform this faceless person into a real lead with a name, an email address and a phone number? This chapter focuses on the conversion path – the route a website visitor takes from the point at which he arrives on your website to the point at which he comes a real contact.

Four key components define a website's conversion path:

I. Premium content offer

Your business exists because people are willing to trade you their money for products or services that provide them value. Similarly, people will be willing to trade their contact information for your premium content if it also provides value. Contact information is the currency of online lead generation. What you "sell" in exchange for that currency can take on many forms, including the following:

White papers

Buyer's guides

Webinars

Product demos

Manuals/ handbooks

Create and publish premium content that will engage your specific audience segments. Write white papers and informational guides (like the one you're reading now) that appeal to those in the exploratory stages of their buying process. Develop a buyer's guide for each of your buyer personas (see Chapter 2 for more on personas). Host a live webinar targeting one key vertical and another webinar targeting a different vertical. Remember that every buyer is different. Not all of these tactics make sense for everyone, so pick and choose those you feel add the most value for your audience segments and personas.

People will be willing to trade their contact information for your premium content if it also provides value.

2. Call-to-action

You've developed premium content offers. Now you need to expose your website visitors to those offers. The best website calls-to-action appear in context. On any given page of your website, consider the needs of a visitor who's reading that specific page. Then place calls-to-action related to those needs in front of him. Include at least one call-to-action on each page for those in their research phase ("download our white paper to learn more about our philosophy on this topic") and one call-to-action for those closer to buying ("download our case study to see how we helped another customer succeed"). This approach targets individuals no matter where they are in their buying process.

On any given page of your website, consider the needs of a visitor who's reading that specific page.

3. Landing page

"Landing page," in marketer speak means "lead-capture page." Any given call-to-action on your website should drive a visitor to a landing page that serves one purpose alone: capturing that visitor's information. Think of landing pages as the checkout aisles of your website. The transaction happens here — your premium content is exchanged for your prospect's contact info. Focus on briefly summarizing the offer at hand. If it's an offer

to download a white paper, include a one-paragraph summary and a few bullet points about what the visitor will learn if he downloads it. Next to

How to Use Landing Pages for Your Business

This Hubspot guide focuses on the anatomy of an effective lead-capture landing page. There's definitely a science to success on this front and this is a good resource for learning more. <http://offers.hubspot.com/an-introductory-guide-how-to-use-landing-pages-for-your-business>

the summary, include your info-collection form with a clear reinforcement: "Download now." The following links take you to a few sample landing pages we've created on our own website:

[White paper landing page example:
offers.gorilla76.com/b2b-website-planning-handbook](http://offers.gorilla76.com/b2b-website-planning-handbook)

[Free consultation landing page example:
offers.gorilla76.com/request-a-free-consultation](http://offers.gorilla76.com/request-a-free-consultation)

4. Form

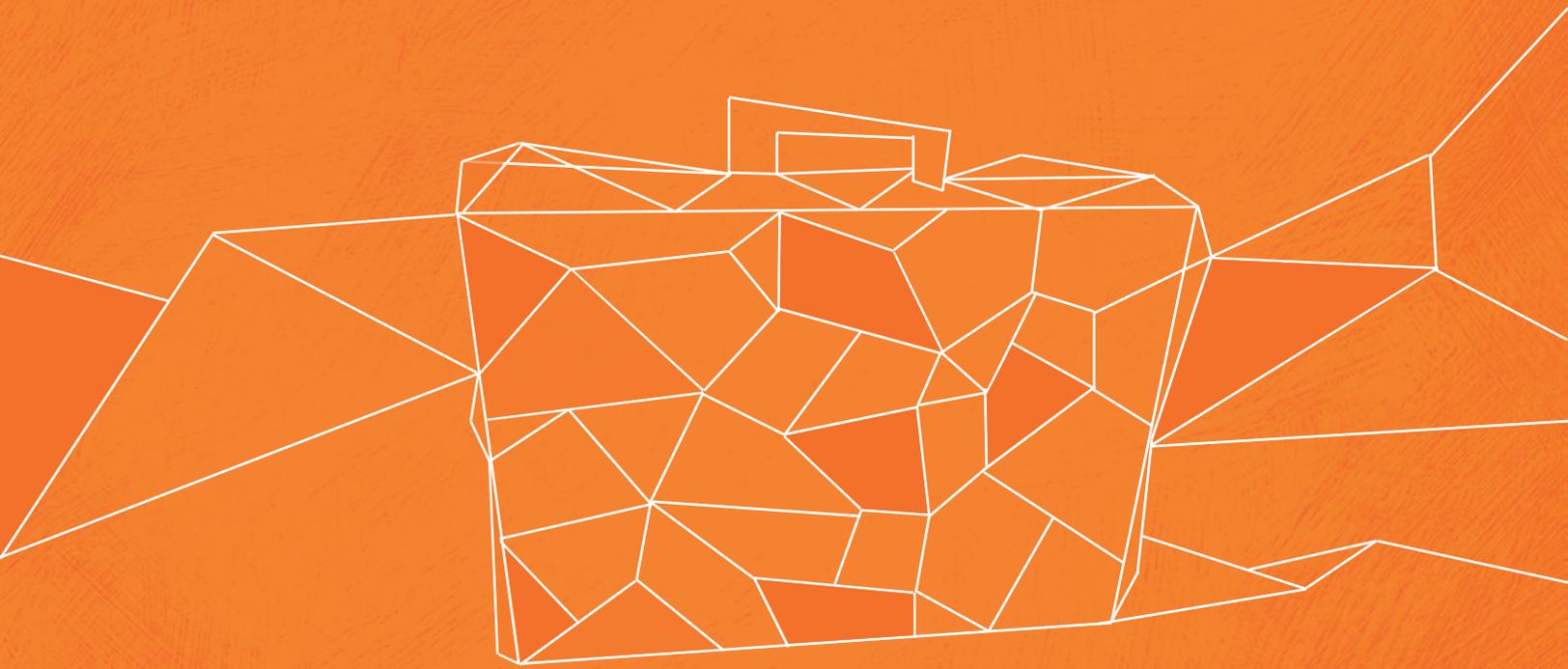
Don't under-think the forms that live on your landing pages. Collect the basics of course: name, company, phone number, email address. But then get creative. Ask questions that will prepare you or your team for a sales call —

information that will help qualify your prospect as a good or bad lead. Ask visitors about their biggest challenges and what services they would find helpful. Ask about their industry and the size of their company. Ask if they'd be interested in talking to a sales rep or if they're just researching. And ask what type of content they'd find valuable from a list of four or five topics so you can cater your email marketing approach toward each prospect accordingly.

ACTION STEPS

1. Create a list of 5-10 premium content ideas. On what topics can you educate your audience in greater detail than just a short blog post? Which of these ideas do you think will compel your potential customers to trade their contact information for it?
2. Begin outlining and writing this piece as your first white paper.

6. Join forces with your sales team



Marketing and sales living in harmony

When the sales and marketing teams within a business don't communicate, one of two things is probably broken. 1. One of the two groups isn't doing its job, which creates a lack of respect for that group. 2. The two groups aren't aware of what the other is doing with its time.

On the flip side, at organizations where the marketing and sales teams align their goals and communicate, they together form a powerful business development unit. Both groups understand the buyer personas they want to reach. In turn, marketing becomes the greatest supporter of sales. Marketing works to generate awareness and website traffic from within those target persona groups. They put qualified leads on the table for the sales team to pursue. And they help the sales team close more leads by warming up cooler ones while sales focuses on the hotter ones. Not only must marketing and sales coexist, they must work hand in hand with aligned objectives.

Collecting lead intelligence

Chapter 5 focused on capturing leads through a conversion path made up of a premium content offer, a call-to-action, a landing page and a form. After your website visitor moves through that conversion path and fills out the form, she enters your marketing database. But if you're using a marketing automation platform like Hubspot, this is where the fun just begins. Each time that new lead returns, your website will remember her and document her actions and page views within her profile. If she fills out other forms in exchange for different premium content offers, your website will ask her new questions to add additional data to her profile. Before long, this data paints an insightful picture about her that includes:

Her industry

Her name, company, email address, & phone number

Which service/product pages she has viewed

Her content interests

How she discovered you

The types of problems she needs solved

You'll also receive email alerts every time she returns to your site, so you know when she's in the right mindset. This kind of lead intelligence sets the stage for more informed and effective sales calls that are catered to the needs of that individual. This intelligence also makes possible our next topic – lead scoring.

Building a lead scoring system

When inbound marketing starts working, sales teams get bogged down. Lead scoring exists to help identify which leads are good fits, as well as those who are closer to a buying decision.

Lead scoring also helps weed out contacts that don't need to be on your sales radar, whether those people are vendors, competitors, students or just bad fits. An understanding of your leads dictates where your sales team should spend its valuable time.

So what is lead scoring? In short, it's a system for automatically assigning "points" to each lead in your marketing database, based on who that person is, what she has done on your website and how engaged she is with your content. Marketing automation platforms like Hubspot build lead scoring into their software.

Lead scores can be constructed around three sets of criteria:

Information a visitor submits through your website

Actions taken by the visitor on your website

The visitor's engagement with content on your website and within your marketing emails.

Lead intelligence sets the stage for more informed and effective sales calls that are catered to the needs of individual customers.

Lead scoring exists to help identify which leads are good fits, as well as those who are closer to a buying decision.

Scoring leads based on information they submit

The previous chapter touched on how you can use forms to collect information that will help identify good leads. You can also use the information that users submit on your forms to score the hottest leads and separate them from the warm leads and those who aren't in your target audience. Marketing automation software platforms, such as Hubspot, allow you to pre-assign points to users based on answers they provide. The stronger a lead is, the more points you would assign, and you can assign negative points to those you don't want to target at all. If your target buyer personas fall within the healthcare industry, you would assign points to any contact that indicates he's in healthcare. If you target people within the states of Missouri and Illinois ONLY, you might deduct points from those OUTSIDE of these states. If you specialize in delivering a specific service and a website visitor indicates her need for that exact service, you would add a lot of points.

The Challenger Sale | Mathew Dixon

A great bridge between sales and marketing, this book teaches a sales approach focused on educating your audience and reframing their mindset to help them discover solutions to their business challenges. <http://www.amazon.com/The-Challenger-Sale-Customer-Conversation/dp/1591844355>

Website activity

We can also score leads based on their website activity. Assign plenty of points to those digging around your site. A visitor whom returns to your pricing page five times is probably further along in her buying process than others. And if she has also read three of your case studies, she's likely considering you as a potential partner.

Engagement and re-engagement

Finally, we can score based on engagement. Add points when a visitor

returns to your site for the fifth time. And tack on some points for every marketing email she opens. Engaged leads who consume your marketing information and return again and again to your site are more likely to close as customers.

Segmenting your leads

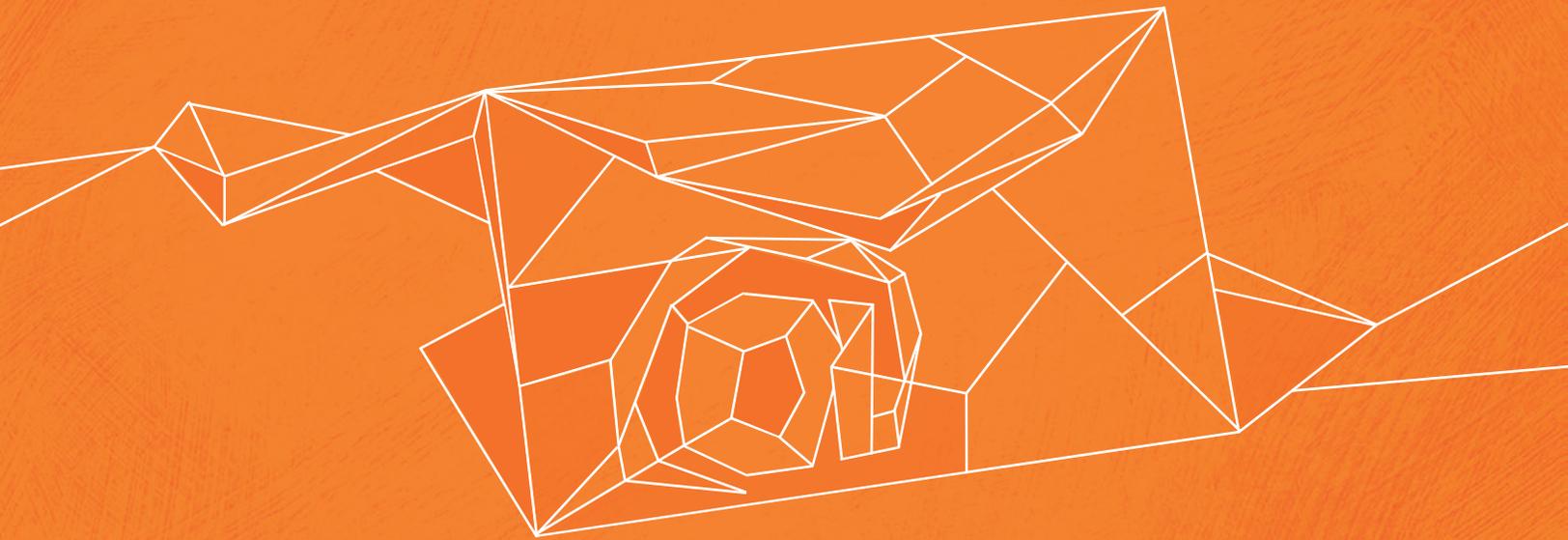
Lead intelligence and an effective lead scoring system allow you to segment contacts in a smarter way. While most companies can only segment their contacts by criteria like industry and “qualified vs. not-qualified,” marketing automation software lets us put our lead intelligence to work. We can build automated lists that slice and dice our leads in countless ways.

For example, we might develop a “smart list” of contacts with lead scores surpassing 500, a second list of contacts in the healthcare industry that have also downloaded two or more white papers, and a third list of contacts that are CEOs at companies with 100 or more employees who have also visited our site in the past three days. Construct lists that will help you identify who needs a hard sell right now and who needs the help of a very targeted lead-nurturing campaign to warm her up. On that note, we’ll jump forward to Chapter 7: Nurture leads until they become customers.

ACTION STEPS

1. Initiate a sit down between team members from both sales and marketing. Ask lots of questions. Learn from sales what their challenges are and where the best opportunities lie. Evaluate your buyer personas together and refine them on the spot. Begin building an open relationship and make it known that marketing’s goal is to bring good leads to the table for the sales team.
2. As the relationship between sales and marketing strengthens, work together to identify what characteristics define a good lead and what characteristics define a bad one. These points can form the basis for your lead-scoring system.

7. Nurture leads until they become customers



At this point, you've learned about identifying your buyer personas, attracting those audiences to your website, educating them, converting them to leads and using data to score and segment them. The natural progression from this point is to nurture those leads until they become paying customers.

We've repeatedly touched on the idea that most of your website visitors are not ready to buy something at the moment they arrive on your website. In some industries like construction, the sales cycle can take months, if not years. So how can you stay in front of the constantly-growing, highly-prized list of contacts you've started building? How do you keep them engaged from month to month, build trust over time and establish yourself as the obvious choice when it's buying time? This chapter focuses on the answer to these questions – email marketing and marketing automation.

Email marketing

Chapter 4 illustrated the concept of educating your website visitors, and this education absolutely must not cease after a visitor converts into a lead. The educational content you develop lives within your website and blog, and email is the perfect tool for delivering it to your leads.

Robust marketing automation software like Hubspot, as well basic email marketing software like Campaign Monitor or MailChimp, lets you develop a schedule of consistent touch points with your lead database.

Monthly e-newsletters are a great way to get started. If you're already executing a consistent content strategy through business blogging and premium content (see Chapter 4), the good news is that your e-newsletters will pretty much write themselves. Here's what we mean:

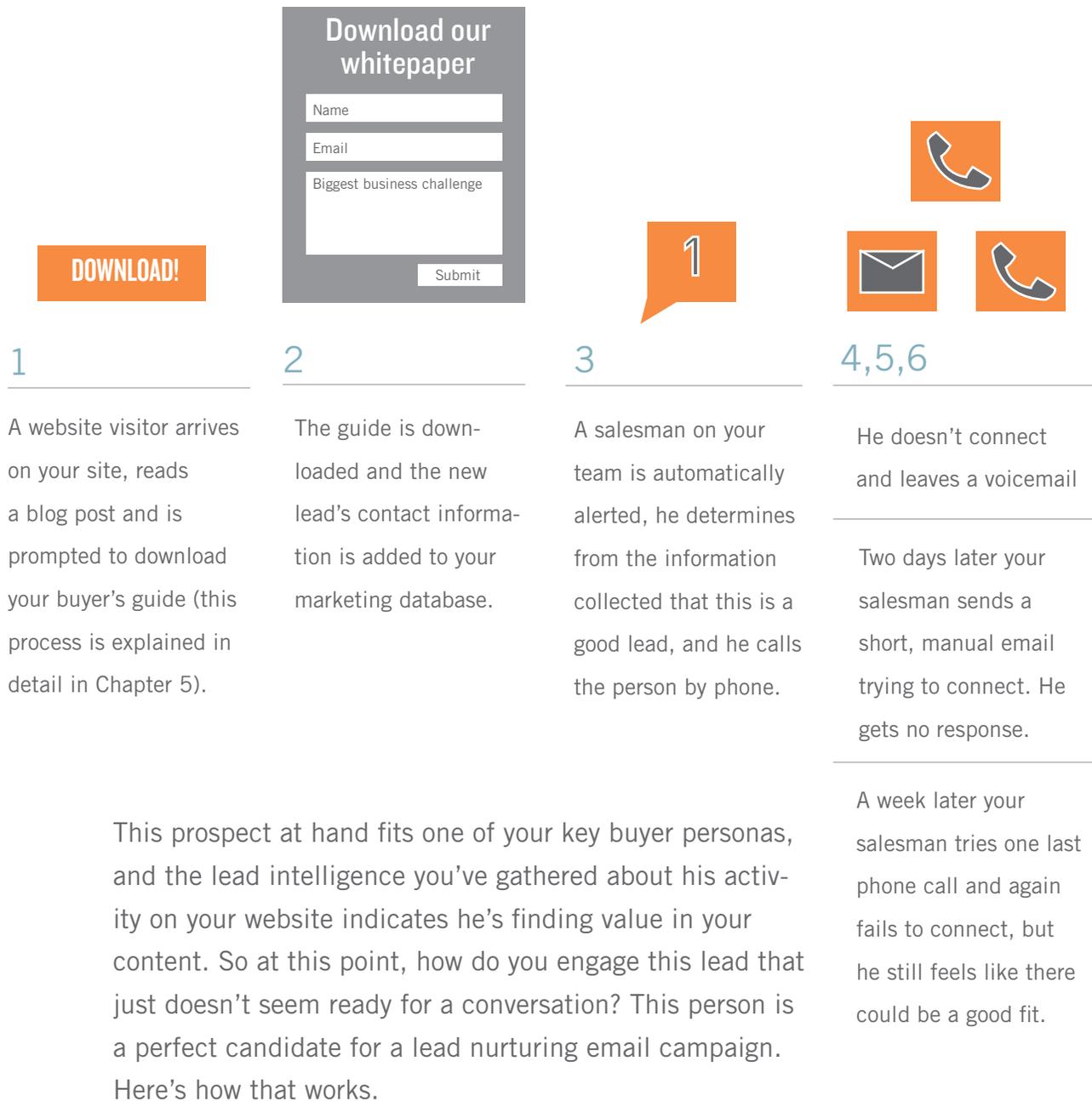
- You write one educational blog post each week.
- At the end of the month, you have four new blog posts. You send an e-newsletter to your lead database with two-sentence teasers promoting each of those four new posts. Within those teasers you prompt the email recipient to click through and read the full post.
- The recipient clicks the link and returns to your website to reengage with your content.

Once you've taken this first step and have a general e-newsletter off the ground, start thinking about how you can appeal to each buyer persona group more personally. For example, among the four blog posts you published last month, maybe two targeted your CEO persona, one targeted your young innovator persona and one targeted your detail-driven engineer persona. In an ideal world, you're sending three separate newsletters — each targeted specifically at one of those three personas. Depending on your available time, budget and energy, your approach can vary. The most important thing is that you get started.

Automated email workflows

Over the past few years, email marketing has reached another level, much thanks to the emergence of marketing automation software.

Automated lead nurturing campaigns perfectly complement your sales process. Many B2B sales teams struggle with prioritizing which leads are worth their time. When a few hot leads emerge, the warm leads get ignored. Automated email workflows help offset this. Let's illustrate the concept with an example.



Enhancing Business Development with Marketing Automation

Our introductory guide to marketing automation and your opportunity to get ahead of the curve in B2B marketing. <http://offers.gorilla76.com/enhancing-business-development-with-marketing-automation>

Hubspot

The marketing automation software we use for ourselves and for a handful of our clients. <http://www.hubspot.com/>

- You visit this lead's profile in your marketing automation software and check a box that says "nurturing campaign: on."
- A pre-written email is sent to this new lead indicating that you'd love to connect when the time is right, and hopefully in the meantime he'll find some of your content helpful. You include a few links to relevant content, leave your phone number and tell him to call with any questions.
- A week later, a second email is sent automatically. This email introduces a white paper that your company has written which he might find helpful. You link to it and avoid a hard sell.
- Another week later, a third automated email includes links to a couple blog posts that are related to this lead's interests.
- Etc, etc.

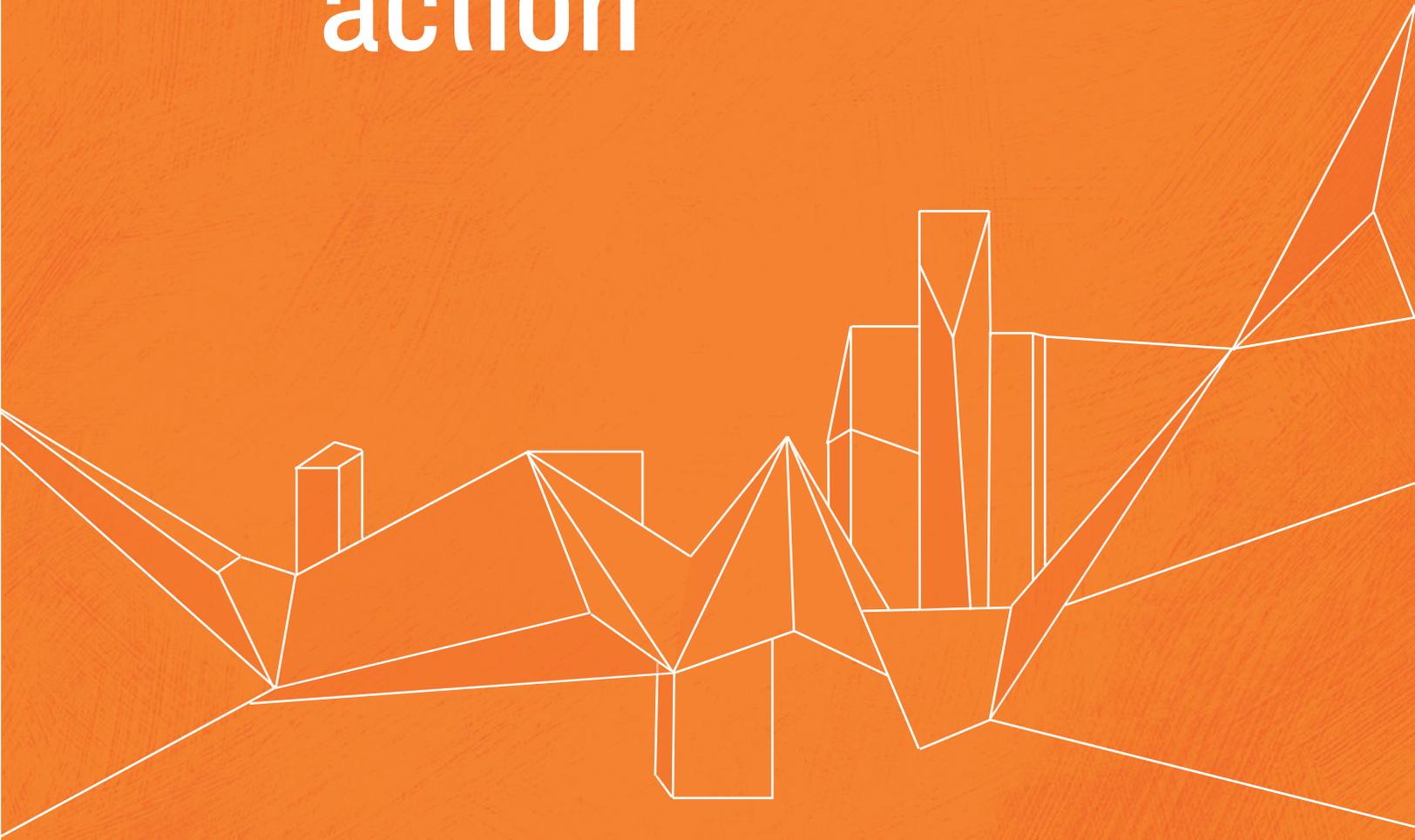
Some lead nurturing campaigns might only include two or three steps over the course of a week or two. Other campaigns may include 15 steps over the course of six months. Your approach depends on your audience. Create a balance between not falling off their radars, but also not annoying them with an excessive volume of email messages.

And remember, lead nurturing is about educating, adding value and establishing trust – NOT promoting yourself. The minute you start using these campaigns to hard sell, you'll see unsubscribe rates jump. You become just another advertiser rather than a provider of resourceful information.

ACTION STEPS

1. Before you can start marketing via email, you need a list of contacts.
If you don't have a readily available marketing list, take baby steps to get one in place. Go to each person at your company that plays a role in business development, explain what you're doing and request the name, email address and company name for five prospects and five existing customers as a starting point. This can form the foundation for your list.
2. Begin to explore marketing automation and email marketing software to see what might be a good fit for your company. We recommend the robust marketing automation platform Hubspot. But if you're working with a tight budget and need something basic, check out Campaign Monitor or MailChimp.

8. Measure results that let you take action



We're now in the era of no B.S. marketing. If your marketing initiatives aren't generating a positive return on your investment, something is broken. Thankfully, you now have the ability to identify those broken pieces and fix them. Today, you can measure just about everything, including the following:

- Where your website visitors discover you
- What content they look at
- How much time they spend on your site and on specific pages
- Which calls-to-action drive higher conversion rates
- Which premium content offers produce the most qualified leads
- Which automated email campaigns bring the most (and least) leads back to your site
- Which marketing initiatives produce the leads who actually become paying customers

The list goes on and on and on. If you want to measure it, you probably can. So in this overwhelming sea of website analytics and marketing data, how do you make sense of everything? What really matters? And most importantly, how do you utilize this data to initiate positive change?

Ultimately, these questions must be answered within the context of the business problems your company needs to solve. Chapter 1 focused on identifying those key business problems. Now you need to measure your effectiveness against solving them. Though every B2B company is different and needs to accomplish different goals, the following three buckets are usually great starting points for measuring marketing success.

1. Measure website traffic growth

Is your website traffic growing? Where are visitors coming from? Which blog posts and pages on your website are attracting visitors out of the search engines? Are you beginning to rank higher in Google searches for the keywords you're now targeting (see chapter 3)?

The Google Analytics Academy | Google

A series of free training videos that will help you start learning to measure online marketing success. <https://analyticsacademy.withgoogle.com/course01>

Google Analytics Training Seminars | Cardinal Path

Live, in-person Google Analytics Training – both basic and advanced. <http://training.cardinalpath.com/google-analytics/>

Occam's Razor blog | Avinash Kaushik

The blog of web analytics genius Avinash Kaushik. <http://www.kaushik.net/avinash/>

2. Measure lead generation

Are at least 1-3% of your new website visitors converting into leads by downloading your premium content or filling out other forms on your website? That's a good benchmark. If not, are your conversion paths (see Chapter 5) strong enough to compel conversions? Have you created a wide enough variety of unique premium content offers to appeal to each of your buyer personas? And have you included calls-to-action to appeal to those who are researching, those who are evaluating and those who are almost ready to buy? Which marketing initiatives are producing visitors who are actually converting to leads? Can you dial up your activity within the marketing initiatives that are producing the best leads? Simultaneously, can you dial back your activity where you might be wasting time attracting visitors who aren't converting?

3. Measuring customer acquisition

Which marketing initiatives have played a role among leads that became customers? Were some lead nurturing campaigns more effective than others at helping close customers? Did specific case studies or white papers engage those customers along their buying journeys?

Act on your data

In the end, your data is only as useful as what you do with it. Learn what's working and do more. Learn what's not and shift that time elsewhere.

Carefully hone and perfect your marketing machine at all times. Never be satisfied.

ACTION STEPS

1. Install Google Analytics. Whoever manages your website should be able to do so in ten minutes time. Even if you're not ready to start learning and using web analytics at this moment, you'll want to start collecting data on your visitors now.
2. If you're already working with web analytics or are starting to learn and want to expand your knowledge base, try some of the resources listed on the previous page.

9. About Gorilla 76



Gorilla 76 helps B2B industrial companies generate targeted website traffic, qualified business leads and paying customers using their websites and other online media. From our blog to our downloadable guides, we're committed to being the ultimate marketing resource in the B2B industrial space.

Need a hand jumpstarting your online marketing initiative?

We offer a free, 30-minute consultation for B2B companies to evaluate their websites and marketing strategies. Click [here](#) to sign up.

Other downloadable guides by Gorilla

[The B2B Website Planning Handbook:](#)

<http://offers.gorilla76.com/b2b-website-planning-handbook>

[Enhancing Business Development with Marketing Automation:](#)

<http://offers.gorilla76.com/enhancing-business-development-with-marketing-automation>

[Measuring Online Marketing ROI: A Manual for B2B Companies:](#)

offers.gorilla76.com/measuring-online-marketing-roi-manual



let's talk

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