BASIC MEMBER BRIEFING

Smart Insights

AN INTRODUCTION TO B2B DIGITAL STRATEGY

The Essentials of creating a B2B Digital Marketing plan for 2015 and beyond

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An Introduction to B2B Digital Marketing strategy

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Sponsor Foreword

Wouldn't it be good if for one year things would just stay the same? We'd be able to fully concentrate on that social channel and get it working properly or put all our efforts into that new system we have just implemented. Unfortunately (or fortunately depending on your outlook) the only constant in this modern age is change.

So as marketers, we need to look into the crystal ball to see what the year ahead has in store for us digital marketers. From technology trends to changing business models to evolving consumer behaviours; there's a lot to consider in order for today's marketers to really have a handle on what's important and what to improve upon. A planned approach can help here.

So we've teamed up with Smart Insights to try and give you a steer to the digital strategies and trends you need to keep an eye out for in 2015. From websites to SEO and social to lead generation – this paper covers a variety of important areas of focus for digital marketing in 2015. Sit back, grab a cup of tea, dig in, learn and enjoy!

If you want to discuss any of the topic further please contact me on the below. I look forward to hearing your opinions and comments!

Lee Chadwick, MD, CommuniGator

Lee regularly speaks at our own email marketing best practice seminars, trade shows and industry events.

If you would like Lee to speak at your event or conduct a half or full day seminar for your organisation drop him a mail.

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CommuniGator is one of the leading Marketing Automation software providers based in the UK.

Established in 2005, the core platform functionality now offers email Marketing Automation, a HTML editor for designing your emails, templates, responsive design, dynamic groups based on behaviour, lead and page scoring, integration with the leading CRM platforms, an event and survey management suite, robust reporting and so the list goes on…

For Marketing Automation we're able to track prospect activity across the web pages they visit on your website and the email content they consume and take action against. This means you can build up a really detailed profile of who has done what.

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About this introduction to B2B Digital Marketing

Our free partner-sponsored *Basic member briefings* are aimed at helping alert you to the main issues you need to think through to plan and manage digital marketing activities.

They are shorter, sample versions of the in-depth *7 Steps to Success Guides* used by Smart Insights Expert members to create and implement digital strategies for their businesses or clients.

What will this guide cover?

In this guide we will cover all the main drivers of successful B2B Digital Marketing starting with strategy and effective websites and then reviewing different demand generation techniques.

- ☑ *Step 1. Strategy for B2B digital marketing*. What needs to go into your plan and why?
- ☑ *Step 2 Effective websites*. What are the requirements for a persuasive B2B site.
- ☑ *Step 3 Search marketing*. Tips on attracting more visitors through SEO.
- ☑ *Step 4 Content and inbound marketing*. Reviewing the best content types for you.
- ☑ *Step 5 Social media for B2B marketing*. How to best use social media for B2B.
- ☑ *Step 6 Lead generation and E-CRM*. Using landing pages to boost leads.
- ☑ *Step 7 Analytics and improvement*. Metrics to use to enhance performance.

About Smart Insights Expert member resources

Our Expert member resources are focused on one thing - helping members get better results from their marketing. Our resources are all practical, showing members how to create strategies and then execute them using best practice. The guidance includes videos, workbook templates and the in-depth *7 Step Guides*.

The 7 Step Guides

We've created our 7 Step Guides for Expert members to be your constant companion as you learn, review and improve your approach to digital marketing. We know you're busy and under pressure to get results, so they're written to help you do just that. They take you through the questions you should be asking to improve performance and suggest the right approaches.

Our guides are created to help you:

- ☑ **Improve results**. A focus on getting the best results from your digital marketing.
- ☑ **Review your current approach**. A unique workbook format helps create a plan.
- ☑ **Apply analytics**. Integrated advice on using Google Analytics to improve performance.
- ☑ **Learn best practice**. Strategy recommendations and practical tips highlighted throughout.

What members say about our resources

"*We are at an early stage of our digital marketing journey, the templates, papers, videos and tutorials help us check and learn as we go*". **Stuart Sykes**, Digital Marketing Manager.

"*Smart Insights is the first place I go for good, practical advice on digital marketing. The material available is very comprehensive but also current*". **Jon Vasey**, Ecommerce Manager.

- ▶ See our full range of Expert member resources
- ▶ Expert members can download Rene Power's complete 'Bible' for B2B Digital Marketing strategy and management, the 250 page Brilliant B2B Digital Marketing Ebook.

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Introduction

B2B marketing has changed forever

Traditional promotional techniques will only get today's B2B marketer so far. The excellent Buyersphere B2B research below shows that there are now a range of online sources which are influential in impacting business purchases. You're missing out on a lot of potential business if you're invisible in the search engines, don't have an effective website for generating leads or aren't using email marketing to convince prospects about why they need your products or services. Particularly if your competitors are doing a better job of digital marketing.

Digital marketing techniques can support B2B marketing particularly well since B2B sales are rarely about an immediate, emotional transaction. Rather it is about building reputation, demonstrating capability and showcasing credibility. All with the express intent of being seen as a trusted partner. Building trust takes time and digital marketing can help you, if you get it right...

Figure 1 Buyersphere research on information search online in business markets[1]

Many business-to-business (B2B) organisations are already successfully using digital marketing in specialist sectors like financial and professional services, IT and software, manufacturing, engineering or science. Yet, for business markets, there is a limited amount of good quality, specific advice and best practice available to draw upon for the unique challenges and opportunities available from digital media. In this guide we will explain the

1 Base One Buyersphere B2B research.

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main areas where you should focus, but our Brilliant B2B Marketing goes into the detail on best practices for the key inbound marketing techniques like search engine marketing, landing pages and marketing automation that your business needs to master to be competitive.

About our 7 Steps Guide for Expert members

In our 200 page guide *7 Steps to Brilliant B2B Marketing* we go into much more detail to give B2B marketers a tried and tested, systematic process to improve their use of digital marketing. It will help you answer these questions:

- ☑ How should we create a plan for digital marketing?
- ☑ Do we have the right goals and measures to review and improve the effectiveness of different digital marketing tools?
- ☑ How can we increase our visibility online using search marketing, social media and PR?
- ☑ What is needed on your website to increase leads and prove you can be a trusted supplier?

About the authors

René Power

René Power, is business development director and digital lead with Barrett Dixon Bell, a leading independent international B2B marketing agency. He authors The Marketing Assassin blog and consults, talks and trains on the deployment of the full marketing mix within trade B2B sectors including packaging, food, science, construction, engineering and professional services. He specializes in integrating digital with traditional and demystifying digital marketing, social media and content marketing for B2B companies.

A regular conference speaker, chair and panellist, he is a fully qualified Chartered Marketer and regular contributor to Smart Insights, the UK's leading resource for digital marketers, developed by one of the world's top 50 digital experts, Dave Chaffey. He is author of the Smart Insights complete guide to B2B Digital Marketing strategy and management, the 200 page "Brilliant B2B Digital Marketing" Ebook.

This guide was his first when first published in 2012. Follow René on Twitter at @renepower and connect here on Linkedin.

Dave Chaffey

Dr Dave Chaffey is CEO and co-founder of Smart Insights, a digital marketing advice site that helps businesses compete online. He is author of 5 bestselling books on Ecommerce including Internet Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice and has been recognised as one of 50 marketing 'gurus' worldwide who have shaped the future of Marketing.

Dave continues to provide strategy advice and training to help businesses succeed online. He advises companies on digital marketing strategy including large international organisations like 3M, Barclaycard, HSBC, Mercedes-Benz, Nokia and Royal Canin (Mars Group) to smaller companies like Arco, Confused.com, Euroffice, Hornbill and i-to-i. He is a professional trainer who has trained since 1997 for organisations including the Chartered Institute of Marketing, The Institute of Direct Marketing and Econsultancy. Today, in-company training workshops are available through Smart Insights

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ONE

Set a strategy for B2B digital marketing

❒ *Q. Digital strategy defined?*

The options available for B2B marketing through digital technologies and media change so often, that if you constantly try to follow the latest trend you'll be chasing your tail. This is true, whether you or your company are relatively new to digital marketing, or if you're a digital native well-versed in digital marketing strategy and techniques.

A strategy will give you a consistent approach to your digital marketing that uses the most suitable approaches to help grow your business and support your audience needs.

A strategy is also important since you're battling for the attention of a customer base that is, in all likelihood, faced with an abundance of choice. So you need to stand out. You need to differentiate. You need to have a strategy for success.

Mistake to avoid 1 Not having a strategy...

Surprising, but all too common! You'll know the saying "*if you fail to plan, you plan to fail*". Without a digital strategy defining your roadmap to future improvements to digital marketing, your competitors who plan better will gain an edge.

What's involved with creating an integrated digital plan?

It is important to compose a digital marketing strategy that avoids creating a silo for your digital marketing. It should cover your approach to using key digital marketing technologies and tools, but also show how these work in harmony with other marketing activities.

Some of the core elements you should include in a digital strategy are to:

- ☑ Identify and prioritise target audiences
- ☑ Encourage use of digital channels
- ☑ Develop digital channel partners
- ☑ Create propositions to emphasise your differences
- ☑ Support integration between channels
- ☑ Set objectives for future channel contribution using the 5S goals.

Define core audiences *to target*

❒ *Q. Have core audience demographics been defined?*

You can't be all things to all people, so you need to focus to offer a targeted proposition, so you should specify your core audiences in terms of types of business and decision-makers.

Mistake to avoid 2 Missing out on opportunities to target audiences more closely

We recommend you complete customer research to create B2B personas and then to review options for targeting using search engines, publishers and social networks.

There may also be opportunities to sell to new market segments or different types of customers. Surveys can help here, for example, B2B company RS Components, a supplier of a range of MRO (maintenance, repair and operations) items, found when it first launched its site that 10 per cent of the web-based sales were to individual consumers rather than

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traditional business customers. It also uses the website to offer additional facilities for customers placing large orders online. In this example, RS components are asking their audience how well the propositions on the site are working for them.

Example online customer research survey by RS components

Using SOSTAC® to structure and manage your digital strategy

To create a re-usable, successful digital plan with a roadmap to improve into the future you need a solid planning framework. In *Brilliant B2B Marketing* we use SOSTAC®. This is a strategic framework incorporating planning tools first laid out by PR Smith. SOSTAC® stands for Situation, Objectives and Strategy, Tactics, Action and Control[2].

Recommended Guides?

Our in-depth Digital marketing toolkit provides Word, Powerpoint and Excel templates to supplement the Brilliant B2B Marketing guide to help you create a plan you can present to colleagues or clients.

2 Find out more about SOSTAC® in this blog post.

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TWO

Create an effective website

❒ *Q. Website effectiveness reviewed?*

In Step 2 of *Brilliant B2B Marketing* we show how to make the business case for website improvements and create an effective brief for an agency.

We also review many examples of best practices to help you review your site.

Mistake to avoid 3 Website is product or service and design led rather than customer-centric and driven by business goals

Following best practices is vital to avoid the fundamental flaws we see in B2B sites since they weren't created around customer and business needs.

Ten things successful business websites must have

❒ Q. *Have requirements for effective websites been defined?*

There has been a huge amount of research done and a body of information published on the must-have elements of successful websites. Here's how we see it, a checklist that you can use to review the effectiveness of your site.

Credible website checklist

☑ **1. Information is easy to verify on your website.** When we talk about verifying information we take this to mean being able to ascertain the company is trustworthy and stable. Simply being able to contact the company, identify its address and confirm its legal status are a telltale sign. If you can't find them, especially on transactional sites, proceed with caution.

☑ **2. There is a real organisation behind your website.** Evidence that the organisation exists takes this further by providing clear guidance on divisions, multiple site operations, a sense of personality, key people, roles and responsibilities, and more.

☑ **3. Highlight expert content and services offered**. As we move from being a broadcast to targeted inbound marketing economy, companies that produce focused content relevant to the needs of customers will stand out. This naturally has positive effects on getting found in the first place and becoming a first port of call for customers. International freight courier UPS stands out from the competition by being a little more personable and by offering an abundance of expert services and customer-focused content right off the home page.

☑ **4. Demonstrate honesty and integrity on your website.** These qualities may be seen as subjective but you can set a tone throughout your website as pages such as *About Us*, *Our Philosophy* and *FAQs* allude to your honesty and integrity.

☑ **5. Make it easy to contact you.** Contact details should be clearly signposted on every page throughout the website and not just on a 'Contact Us' page. This starts to get to the heart of considering each and every page as a potential landing page for new visitors. Offering a range of contact options increases the likelihood of customers getting in touch. Make the phone number prominent. We're still often frustrated when sites don't have the number prominent, for example, it's hidden in About Us.

☑ **6. Your website should reflect your business.** And, it should reflect the experience that customers enjoy offline, face-to-face, in stores, on stands and anywhere else.

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Consider if you want to be seen as professional, engaging, authoritative, playful, brave or conservative.

- ☑ **7. Your website should be accessible and easy to navigate.** There is a reason why websites developed in the West are structured broadly the same, with navigation bars either running horizontally across the top and bottom or vertically to the left-hand side of the website. Make sure you follow this rule as the majority of Internet users expect websites to look this way. Failure to comply risks alienating visitors, which leaves you with a higher than usual bounce rate.
- ☑ **8. Use frequently updated relevant and useful content.** Content is the biggest part of your digital strategy as it governs your selection of keywords, what you say, how and when you say it. Websites that offer frequent updates to pages that can be subscribed to – such as news and blog pages and other pages – ensures customers come back for more. The Oliver Valves site illustrates this integration of fresh, relevant well.

Oliver Valves (www.valves.co.uk)

- ☑ **9. Use restraint with promotional content**. Over the last 10 years, we've seen guidance fluctuate on promotional content. When Stanford published in 2002, the advice was to play down promotional content. Now though, it is permissible, and in fact desirable to serve up content to customers that requires them to part with data in order to receive it. Website browsers now expect to exchange personal data for relevant content that will aid them in their job.
- ☑ **10. Avoid errors of all kinds.** Sounds obvious but spelling mistakes, grammar and punctuation slip ups, 404 messages and any other error on a website which disrupts the user experience and risks harming your credibility have to be stamped out as soon as possible.

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THREE

Search engine optimisation: Getting found and staying visible through SEO

❒ *Q. SEO effectiveness audited*?

If you're in business, a great website is only great for the business if visitors can find it. Exploiting the options for visits from search engines using search engine optimisation (SEO) is an absolute must-have for any online and fully integrated website strategy. Often digital marketers are tasked with ensuring their company appears on the first page of search results pages, but it takes real focus, hard work consistency and understanding to secure this.

What is it? Search engine optimisation

Search engine optimisation is a proactive, structured approach used to improve the position of a company in the natural or organic results listings of search engines for the keyphrases you target. It's aim is to increase awareness and drive visits to a site from new prospects and existing customers.

Mistake to avoid 4 Outsourcing SEO completely

Although SEO may seem complex, you can be successful through following basic rules that internal copywriters and marketers follow. We think SEO is too important to "outsource and forget". You understand your customers and content best and it is more cost-effective to manage these internally. In this section of the need-to-know guide we will give some basic advice on keywords we hope you will find helpful.

Keywords are critical as they drive your messaging, content and success in search marketing. It's important that there is a relationship between how your site is written and what browsers are looking for, but it is very common for businesses to either do too little or too much which leads to keyword stuffing.

Keyword research

Keyword research involves mapping what your customers and prospects are looking for and what you can offer them. There is data available to give some insight into which words and phrases are used more frequently than others and a measure of the relative competition in trying to rank top on them. It is an exercise in predicting what users want based on a query they are performing in a search engine.

It's essential to use a keyword analysis tool, these give great insight on your customers needs. Free tools like the Google Adwords tool are perfect for initial research and help to establish the relative relevance and value of keywords, giving an indication of searches over time and regionally, and refining selection.

Best Practice Tip 1 Use the Google Adwords Keyword Planner for SEO

Search on 'Google Keyword Planner' to find it or watch the Smart Insights tutorial for the details that matter like selecting 'Exact' or 'Phrase' match or mobile to get more accurate figures.

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Save all **Search terms (1)** 1 - 1 of 1

Keyword	Competition	Global Monthly Searches	Local Monthly Searches
roofing tile	High	165,000	40,500

Save all **Keyword ideas (100)** 1 - 50 of 100

Keyword	Competition	Global Monthly Searches	Local Monthly Searches
roofing tiles	High	165,000	33,100
slate roofing tiles	High	9,900	1,900
concrete roof tile	High	14,800	6,600
roof tiles	High	246,000	60,500
ceramic roof tiles	High	3,600	1,900
ludowici roof tile	Medium	390	390
solar roof tiles	High	18,100	12,100
roof tile	High	246,000	60,500
spanish roof tiles	High	1,900	1,300
clay roof tiles	High	14,800	5,400
metal roof tiles	High	3,600	1,900
concrete roof tiles	High	14,800	5,400
terra cotta roof tiles	High	2,900	880
ceramic roof tile	High	3,600	1,900

Google Keyword Planner for roofing tile. See the Smart Insights members tutorial for correct use

Key techniques for using keywords effectively include:

- ☑ **Headline placement**. Place your primary keywords in your page titles, headings and sub-headings as these areas of content have greater weight in search engine ranking algorithms.
- ☑ **Include clarification words.** Sometimes if there are words with more than one meaning, it makes sense to use additional words to clarify the intended meaning. To help the search engine bot establish the meaning, use a ~keyword search in Google's search bar. The results will have the words in bold that the search engine believes are most related to that word. This turns keywords into keyphrases or 'long tail' as it is more commonly used. Increasingly Internet users are using three words to refine their search so your SEO should follow suit. These 'qualifiers' are delivered through Google Suggest.

Air compressor search looking for clarification words

- ☑ **Check keyword density and distribution**. You don't want to use keywords too much in your displayed 'on-page' content, but you do want to make sure they are used at least twice in the body copy as an absolute minimum. Reference needs to be natural and within context. A keyword in every sentence looks forced. Ask your copywriters to use synonyms.

In *Brilliant B2B Marketing* we show the importance of link-building to SEO success including techniques to benchmark your backlink profile using different tools including Majestic SEO which has a free "backlink history" you can check.

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FOUR

Inbound and content marketing

❒ *Q. Opportunities to attract more leads through content reviewed?*

In this Step we will show how content marketing, the ***creation and marketing*** of content gives new approaches to gain leads for the resource challenged business marketer. We think the definition from Joe Pulizzi, author of 'Get *Content, Get Customers'* is hard to beat and works well in a B2B context. Joe defines content marketing as:

'How *a brand creates, delivers and governs original or curated content to attract and retain customers, positioning the brand as a credible expert and, ultimately, motivating a change in behaviour.'*

What is it? Content marketing

Managing content as an asset to achieve marketing goals of reaching, converting and engaging target audiences.

Creating an inbound marketing process

We believe inbound marketing needs you to create a content machine to build a sustained process for generating engaging, shareable content. It's not something you can do halfheartedly if you want to make the most of it, although many companies do fall by the wayside of the road to content marketing. It's not all original content; when you curate content you act as a facilitator, coordinator or newshound for your industry.

Mistake to avoid 5 Not committing to publishing effective content

Content needs the right quality, publishing schedule and seeding to compete.

This content marketing model shows how your process should work.

Inbound marketing process

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Reviewing your content potential

To help you create relevant, useful and engaging content and initially make the best of what you have before considering creating new content from scratch use this review tool.

Dan Bosomworth and Dave Chaffey of Smart Insights adapted a content matrix developed by Eloqua to help review the best types of content to achieve different objectives at different stages of the buying process. The content matrix below, is a graphic structured to help you think through the dimensions of different content. This helps work out how your audience might think and what it might need at particular times and what you're trying to achieve as a business.

Content Matrix from Smart Insights

When using this tool you can:

- ☑ 1. Review your current assets to start with.
- ☑ 2. Consider everyday, regular content like blog posts and status updates against higher quality content which will need more of an investment.
- ☑ 3. Review your balance of current content. For example, is your current content just in the bottom left or is in other quadrants too.
- ☑ 4. Depending on the quadrant(s) that you feel work for your audience, the matrix offers a starting point for your ideas generation - it's great for brainstorming new ideas.
- ☑ 5. Don't select new content types based on a whim, you should create a structured way of reviewing content which will be most valuable for your audience and the business.

We believe a blog is an essential content hub for B2B organisations. In the full ebook we go through the steps and show examples of creating an effective blog.

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FIVE

Social media marketing

❒ *Q. Priorities for social media marketing and social business reviewed?*

We talked in the last section about the importance of curating and creating great content which helps to position you and your business as an expert as being the most credible way to incorporate digital content into your marketing programmes.

You can see where social media fits... With content marketing in place, you have the fuel needed to power effective social media campaigns that inform, educate, entertain, persuade, engage and endure. Remember, though, that social media marketing isn't just about broadcast.

What are social media and social business?

Social business specialist Jim Hammill,[3] says that these two quotes show its essence. Dion Hinchcliffe and Peter Kim, authors of *Social Business by Design* say:

'Social media touches the entire organisation, every department and every business process, every channel, every customer interaction, every investor and supplier relationship. Social is too important to be left to the Marketing Department.'

Social media guru Brian Solis says:

'A social business...embraces introspection and extrospection to reevaluate internal and external processes, systems, and opportunities to transform into a living, breathing entity that adapts to market conditions and opportunities.'

B2B marketers need to be ruthless about how, where and when they deploy social media. Without the stellar consumer budgets or mass market audiences the pressures on return on investment are heightened.

Here's a warning. Social media may not cost a lot in comparison to paid media campaigns, but it can suck time if not managed correctly. Don't believe the books, gurus and bloggers that suggest you can manage social media in 10 minutes a day, because that's not true. Even with the latest cutting-edge software integration, this is impossible. If you are going to use it effectively, it requires a change in your mindset.

Mistake to avoid 6 Avoid the pitfalls of social media

Social media has been hyped for several years now, but that doesn't mean it's cheap, quick or easy, or event that it should be your main priority in digital marketing. Make sure you don't fall into these traps.

Social media pitfalls remain common and suggest a company limited in its social business maturity. These 10 social media pitfalls identified by Darren Healy of Uber Social Media are still all too common:

☒ 1. Don't leave it to one person to handle [it needs to be integrated].

☒ 2. Don't leave it to the wrong [junior] person or people.

☒ 3. There is no social media content strategy [content calendars].

3 Smart Insights: What is social business.

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- 4. Lack of understanding of social media ROI [poor reporting capabilities].
- 5. They are on the wrong platforms.
- 6. There is no social policy for employees.
- 7. You're trying to control communications you shouldn't.
- 8. No employee empowerment to fix problems.
- 9. Social media is not fully integrated with business goals and objectives.
- 10. Some aren't prepared for the long-term effort necessary to see results.

Wise words!

Managing social media marketing

It may be useful to put a framework together in your mind to help you quickly and easily formulate a plan for your business approach to social media making sure you cover essentials like content, audience, relevance and evaluation of what works. An acronym like CARE© below might make the difference, keep your focus and positively impact your whole approach to social media – and how engaging and caring you can potentially be.

The CARE approach to social media © René Power

In addition to governance of social activity, it's vital to get the commitment to ongoing updates and interaction through social media otherwise you will present a "dead brand".

In the guide we give examples and discuss good practices for managing social presence on the key social networks important to B2B. That's LinkedIn of course, but also Twitter, Facebook and Google+.

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SIX

Lead generation and E-CRM

❒ Q. *Has the strategy for online lead generation and follow-up been defined?*

Our focus in the last two sections is to assess how a B2B marketer sets about delivering quality leads to the sales team and uses a variety of tools and techniques to drive more, and better quality leads which can be nurtured through to transaction.

Mistake to avoid 7 Not developing specific landing pages

Specific landing pages are essential to maximise response from demand generation campaigns. Different options are available according to the resources available.

The three most common types of landing page for B2B companies are outlined below.

Option 1: Landing page/s integrated into site architecture and style

Most websites are built to facilitate the easy adding of new and additional pages so it makes most sense to create campaign landing pages within the main site as part of the main architecture. The positives are the simplicity – tapping into existing structure, page templates and layouts – and control. The downsides are the need for specific optimisation as they are not a micro-site in their own right and they may struggle to convert traffic directly from referrers or from browsers on the main site.

Eloqua main site (above) and example on brand landing page (right)

Option 2: Bespoke landing pages that are not part of the main site structure or style

If you are looking for a more 'stripped down' landing page that may act to convert traffic from advertising campaigns, or a short-term brand campaign, this is the option for you. Increasingly some B2B companies are looking to differentiate by creating microsites that campaign on a specific issue, which sets them apart and doesn't necessarily carry the company badge. It also helps some B2B marketers delicately 'work around' complicated and embedded corporate websites to provide a campaign solution where one may not be available within the existing site.

Using these types of landing pages in B2B marketing often helps to achieve higher conversion rates whilst delivering a web presence that is more consistent with the overall

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goals and style of the marketing campaign being activated.

There are some disadvantages – namely that it requires more effort and maintenance and affects user experience across the site (different look and feel, quality and content). Also, to ensure search engine listing, make sure the page/s are incorporated within the same domain.

In the example below, global software as a service company Meltwater uses landing pages integrated into its site architecture.

The Meltwater Buzz social media landing page http://buzz.meltwater.com/

Option 3: Micro-sites with several pages or tabbed landing pages

There is an obvious problem with Option 2 in that many visitors to the page will not be at the right point in the buying cycle to convert. The simplicity of running a specific landing page within the architecture of your website that follows the look and feel of the campaign will often increase single visit conversion rates, but it probably caters for the visitors that need more information because they are in 'buying mode'.

Independent micro-sites take the concept of campaigning further, offering an entirely different site where you can operate more freely in terms of design, tone, message and more. Without the brand restrictions imposed from the main corporate site, companies can promote specific products and services in a more customer-focused way – assuming most corporate websites are not set up to help customers but rather broadcast what the company is good at!

The upsides are stark. Dedicated content and offers targeting specific customers which can be tracked and traced in minutia. Meaning you can categorically work out how successful all areas of your campaign are at each point of the process.

Take this approach and you will get sucked in. But be warned – managing an ever growing number of campaign micro-sites creates obvious problems such as managing domain name ownership, expiry, hosting, content, optimisation and analytics.

For businesses operating in

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multiple sectors or with products that can be grouped together to create application-specific portfolios, like Westlock controls below, micro-sites rather than integrated website landing pages will clearly work best.

Westlock, part of Tyco Flow Control, manufacture and market actuators which work in conjunction with industrial valves used in power generation, oil and gas, and process applications and monitor and control the valves in use.

The site was developed to launch a wireless range, meaning there was no need for miles of cable but more importantly less risk of communications failure in the circuit.

A web presence talking up the range made more sense and it wasn't possible via the existing website at the time.

Figure Westlock's www.breakfreefromwires.com launch micro-site

Once the form of landing page is agreed on there are many other issues to decide upon that we review in the 7 Steps guide:

- ☑ Range and type of content assets
- ☑ Best forms of promotion of landing pages through online marketing channels
- ☑ Page layout including form of call-to-action
- ☑ Data profiling and lead scoring and qualification
- ☑ Providing access to a range of resources
- ☑ Personalised email sequences used for lead nurturing
- ☑ Integration of online and offline (human) contact

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SEVEN

Improvement: Measurement and optimisation of your B2B online marketing campaigns

❒ *Q. Is our method of review and improvement of our online marketing is effective*?

Assuming as a B2B marketer that you are in the business of generating profit from your marketing efforts and need to quantify and improve the success of your activities including attribution (where leads come from), this step is a must.

We'll look at key metrics in each of the areas discussed in this book that will help you defend your marketing investment and potentially assist in requesting more.

Mistake to avoid 8 Not exploiting the power of analytics

In many companies, analytics are collected, but not acted upon. You need the best process, tools and people to compete online. If you don't have a great improvement process then there will be competitors that do.

Marketo offers some great advice on reviewing the effectiveness of your lead nurturing and lead generation process. The table below offers some examples:

Metric	Question it answers	Examples
Lead generation flow (*The process the leads go through*)	No of leads at each stage in a given period? Is the trend increasing / decreasing?	Prospect creation and qualified leads converted last month
Balance lead counts (quality of leads in the pipeline)	No of leads at each stage of pipeline? Is this number going up / down?	Active prospects (hot v lukewarm v cold)
Conversion (understanding how and why leads convert)	Conversion rate from stage to stage? Which types of leads convert best?	Is this number going up or down?
Velocity (the speed at which they convert)	Average cycle time to conversion? Average time at each stage?	Do certain types move faster through pipeline than others? Is speed changing over time?

Figure 7.2 Table adapted from Marketo's Definitive Guide to Marketing Metrics and Analysis[4]

Customised dashboards should be used to create a visual display of all the relevant information you need to measure and refine your current effectiveness in delivering against your goals. They communicate your performance levels more efficiently than other .

4 Marketo: Guide to marketing metrics.

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Identifying specific visitors and companies using IP Lookup

You will be familiar with the traditional and common lead capture and lead scoring approach where a site visitors' profile is disclosed through forms. The second is automatic identification through IP address lookup. The latter is less common and is provided by B2B marketing automation specialists (including CommuniGator).

In this example of IP lookup you can see that these leads are all scored highly based on the type of content and recency of interaction. There has been a manual process of assigning for follow-up or categorising as not a prospect, for example a competitor or existing customer. This marketing automation system also automatically detects company details based on IP address - a useful requirement for a B2B system, particularly where visitors haven't yet registered.

Key IP lookup service issues to consider when selecting a Marketing Automation service:

- ☑ *Quality of IP lookup* to identify business and individual names
- ☑ *Integration of analytics* to show landing pages and types of content accessed
- ☑ *Integration with social media profiles* for customer understanding
- ☑ Assignment to define leads on the system.
- ☑ Ability to add leads / potential prospect to a nurture programme

We hope you have found our briefing useful! If you have any comments or questions, please ask in our Answers member forum.

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About CommuniGator

CommuniGator is one of the leading Marketing Automation software providers based in the UK.

Established in 2005, the core platform functionality now offers email Marketing Automation, a HTML editor for designing your emails, templates, responsive design, dynamic groups based on behaviour, lead and page scoring, integration with the leading CRM platforms, an event and survey management suite, robust reporting and so the list goes on…

For Marketing Automation we're able to track prospect activity across the web pages they visit on your website and the email content they consume and take action against. This means you can build up a really detailed profile of who has done what.

Our services include:

- ☑ Hosted and installed Email solutions
- ☑ Lead scoring and IP-based visitor identification
- ☑ Marketing Automation
- ☑ CRM Email marketing integration
- ☑ B2B surveys
- ☑ Event management
- ☑ Social dashboards

To read all the juicy details of what the platform offers and how we can help your business, jump on over to our website: www.communigator.co.uk.

If you have any questions, please give us a call: +44 (0)1483 411 911.

About Smart Insights Expert membership

The Smart Insights resources library for Expert members is comprehensive, giving advice on all the key digital marketing techniques needed to reach and interact with prospects and customers to grow sales. Our team create or update a new resource each week.

Smart Insights Expert membership is trusted by Expert members in over 50 different countries who use our community and structured library of best practice advice based on our RACE Planning Framework to help them compete using:

- ☑ A strategic approach to integrated digital marketing, which is often missing, combined with best practices techniques
- ☑ A focus on using analytics and insight for data-driven improvements
- ☑ Regularly updated advice from over 25 subject specialists
- ☑ A range of learning formats from actionable downloadable guides, online courses and templates to help members create their own action plans

For B2B marketers we recommend our 7 Steps to Brilliant B2B Digital Marketing guide.

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