



GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED IN DIGITAL **B2B MARKETING**

A BRAND CULTURE EBOOK

 **BRAND
CULTURE**
MARKETING

I INTRODUCTION

You know your business needs marketing. Without it, potential customers won't know you exist. They won't know you have a product or service that will benefit them. Every business needs a consistent flow of new leads. They're the oxygen that keeps your business breathing. And it's marketing that supplies this oxygen. Marketing cultivates brand awareness. It nurtures prospects. And, ideally, marketing fosters those prospects into loyal, longtime customers. But understanding the need for marketing is separate from understanding how to market.

B2B marketing has grown in complexity as the digital business environment has evolved. Offline methods, such as trade shows, still have their place, for sure. But recognizing that half of all B2B buyers are now millennials, purchasing has transitioned from a sales-led process of uninformed buyers to a marketing-led process with highly informed buyers. Modern buyers have educated themselves through personal research, often online. Furthermore, B2B purchase decisions involve more stakeholders than ever. The typical purchase goes through the review or input of six to 10 people.

Businesses have responded by moving ever more digital, but simply having an online presence is not enough. Successful marketing finds leads, nurtures them and converts them into customers. It's not a simple, overnight progression, and the effective marketers are those who put the right message into the right channels. The intention of this guide is to explore – on a basic level – how that gets done. Consider this your B2B Digital Marketing 101 crash course.



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01

B2B MARKETING BASICS AND BACKGROUND



| B2B vs B2C

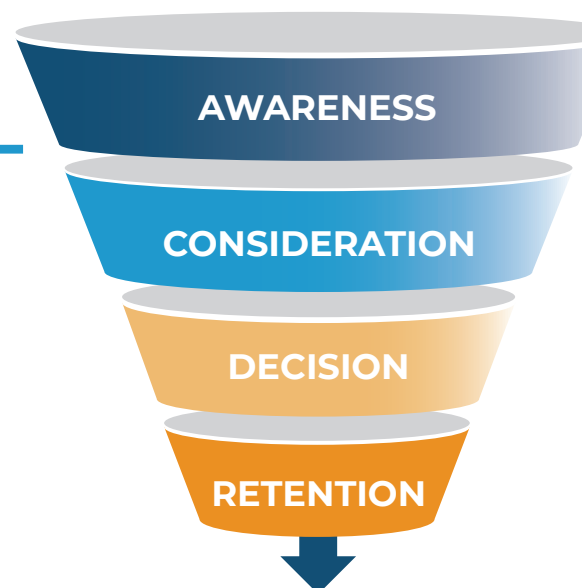
At risk of starting too basic, B2Bs are those which sell goods and services to other businesses, as opposed to selling to consumers (B2C). While you're likely aware of this, it's an important distinction that impacts the role of marketing in B2Bs.

Businesses and industries tend to be more specialized, thus needing products and services that are more specifically tailored for them. Whereas a consumer might want a custom T-shirt, a business might need a custom piece of heavy machinery. While the consumer's purchase is transactional, the business is likely investing significantly, which means making the right decision about who to buy from is vital.

There are traditional perceptions about B2B and B2C marketing that remain, but it's also important to understand where the lines blur, which is increasingly common these days. This crossover is primarily because B2B buyers have been heavily influenced by the consumer shopping experience. Buyers act more like consumers than in the past – looking for anytime access to information and expecting a smooth, streamlined purchase process. Understanding today's B2B buyers starts with knowing your particular buyers and their path to purchase.

| UNDERSTANDING THE BUYER AND THE FUNNEL

The path to purchase for business buyers was once rather simple and direct. Marketers developed a “funnel” to visually represent the journey a prospect or customer took from recognizing a need to making the related purchase. It was shaped like a funnel because of the vetting process within each step. The further down the funnel you get, the fewer leads remain.



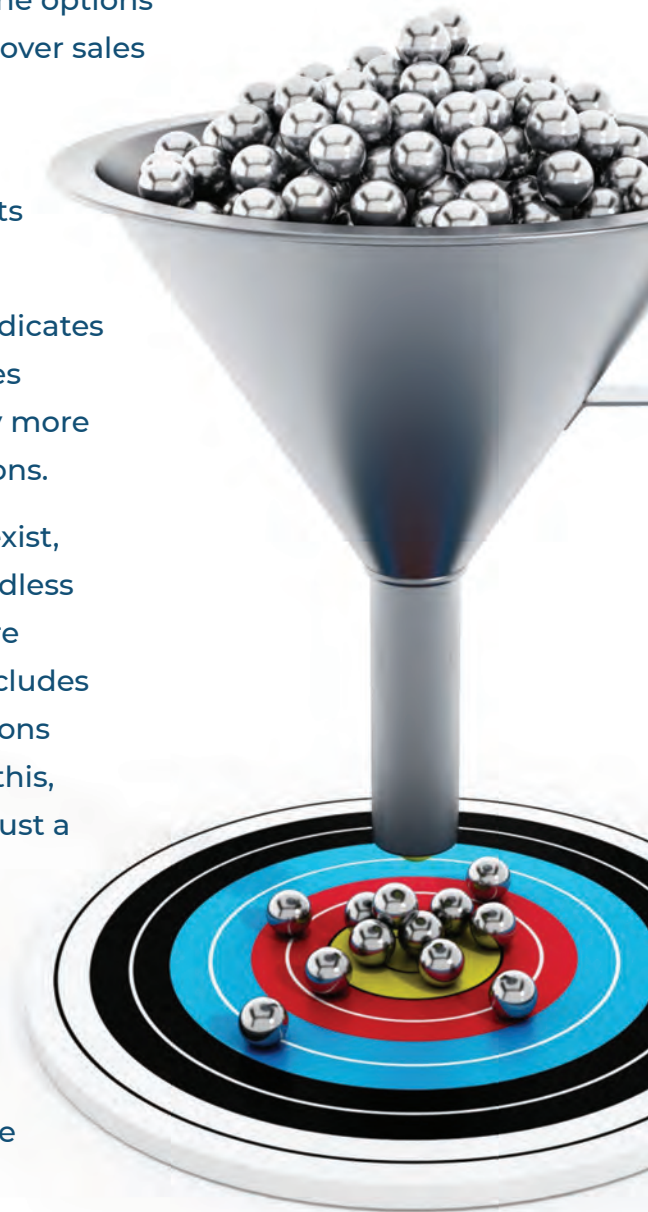
Traditionally in B2B sales, there was one or very few decision makers, and they generally followed a predictable path represented by the marketing funnel. First, there comes awareness that they have a problem to solve. They have a need. Once they're aware of that problem, they consider the options available to solve it. In days past, this might include looking over sales sheets or calling a vendor rep for more information.

After considering the options, a decision is made and the purchase is transacted. Following that, the business supports the buyer to retain that customer for as long as possible.

Today, the path to purchase is less linear. In fact, research indicates that 90% of buyers now move back and forth within the sales funnel, often repeating tasks – sometimes because so many more people are involved in making and influencing these decisions.

Multiple variations of the “modern” marketing funnel now exist, and some companies even devise their own versions. Regardless of how you envision the funnel or path to purchase, there are some basic actions that a buyer must always take, which includes identifying a problem or need and then exploring the solutions available to fill that need or solve that problem. Because of this, it's imperative for your marketing that you understand not just a normal buyer, but your buyers.

The first and most important thing you need to know is your target market. You can't sell if you don't know who you're selling to. It sounds super fundamental, but your target market is much more than “anyone who uses our widgets.” In order to market effectively, you need a complete understanding of your audience. You need more than their demographics. You should know their common interests, their pain points and their motivations for using your product or service. You need to know how they communicate and where they convene. A complete picture of your buying audience will help set the stage for how you market to them and move them along their paths to purchase.



INTERSECTION OF SALES & MARKETING



It's also useful to understand where B2B sales and B2B marketing intersect, which can be different in different organizations. Traditionally, sales and marketing were distinctly different departments. Business professionals with years of experience have likely witnessed siloed teams at best and outright competing departments at worst. Current conventional wisdom holds that sales and marketing departments need to be more cohesive. They still have different functions but are united in the goal of business growth.

Thanks in large part to technological advancements and the non-linear purchasing path previously mentioned, sales and marketing departments these days should be more united than ever. Buyers frequently alternate between sales teams and marketing content. This disruption to the traditional process of marketing handing off leads to sales means each department must know what the other needs and be prepared to contribute at multiple touch points along the buyer's journey.

The coordination of sales and marketing teams has proven its value. An Aberdeen Report found that organizations with strongly aligned sales and marketing teams averaged a 76% higher contribution to revenue from marketing. There are challenges to uniting these teams, especially in legacy businesses where their independence has been well established. But tackling these challenges is proving to be worth the effort.

CURRENT CHALLENGES TO B2B MARKETING

In many respects, digital transformation has made our lives easier. That's not necessarily the case for B2B marketers, however. Business marketing has never been easy, and digital transformation has added layers to the challenges B2B marketers already face.

Marketing is no longer simply accepted as a cost centre in the budget. These days, there are bottom-line expectations. Marketing must manage and promote the brand, drive sales and leads, and demonstrate ROI while increasing efficiency and keeping expenses in check.

But one of the biggest challenges to B2B marketing is simply knowing how to get started. It's easy to throw away money chasing potential customers. Making smart decisions on how and where to spend your budget is made simpler by having at least a foundation of knowledge to draw upon.

Armed with the background of exactly what B2B marketing is, its basic functions and requirements, along with some of its challenges, it's time to gain insight into how you can actually put digital marketing to work for your business. As with any major decision, action shouldn't be taken without first making a plan.



02

PLANNING



There are as many approaches to B2B marketing as there are businesses. Each company is unique and therefore no two marketing plans will be the same. Each organization will find different paths to success. That said, there are some fundamental strategies and tactics that generally apply to most industries and businesses. But first, we must separate what constitutes a strategy and what is a tactic.

I STRATEGY



A defined marketing strategy will focus your marketing efforts and provide a roadmap for effectiveness. But it's important to understand that tactics alone are not a strategy, and a strategy is more than just a group of tactics. It has been said that deploying different marketing tactics without a clear strategy that ties them together is like throwing spaghetti at the wall and hoping it sticks (not sure this metaphor totally fits here, but you probably get the point). Furthermore, it's important that your marketing strategy is developed around your specific customers. So, what goes into developing a basic B2B marketing strategy?

UNDERSTANDING YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION

Before putting any marketing into play, you've got to know your company's value proposition. This is what sets you apart from the competition. It is why a customer should choose you. It should, in simple language, spell out what you do, who you serve and how you're different.

When used correctly, your value proposition can have a significant impact on how businesses and customers perceive you. Making sure they see what makes you stand above your competitors gives you an edge. Armed with that value proposition, you're on your way to building a successful brand.

TARGETING

We already noted that knowing your target audience is the first step to marketing, so obviously targeting is a primary component of your marketing strategy. You need an in-depth profile of the people you're hoping to convert into customers.

Basic information is always the starting point – details like who the prospects are, where they live, their job titles – the demographic data. But to take advantage of the precise targeting that digital marketing can provide, you ideally need to know more. What are their needs and pain points? Where do they spend time online and offline? These details let you understand how your business can solve their needs and how to reach them.



| SEGMENTATION



With details about your target audience, you can then further hone your marketing by segmenting that audience. Not all of your customers are the same; not all have the same needs. That's where segmentation enters the equation. By breaking down your targets into subsets, you can build buyer personas.

A persona used in marketing paints a sketch of similar prospects. With these submarkets of your overall audience, you can tailor and deliver content and messaging that speaks directly to those buyers, providing the most relevant information for their needs. Receiving irrelevant messages probably turns you off as a consumer. As a basic example, if you're a roofing contractor, you would likely be annoyed by receiving content pitching a certain type of window. Segmenting your targets helps avoid this irrelevance in your marketing.

| MESSAGING

A major component of your marketing strategy will be its messaging – which is essentially what the marketing materials will say and how they say it. It's also about how you position your company and its products or services – how you convey that value proposition.

Specific messaging might be adjusted based on a particular campaign, and ideally the messaging is adjusted to match where a prospect is along their purchase journey. Messaging will also be affected by the channel you're marketing through. The messaging you use on a Twitter post won't necessarily be the same as what you use in a display ad.

A key part of messaging is built around your particular business and your brand. More than just what is being said, you must address how it is being said. For example, a law firm or a business in finance might maintain a very corporate or professional tone whereas a company in travel might have a far more relaxed or “fun” tone.

Whatever your tone, it's important that your messaging stays consistent. That consistency factors into maintaining the brand. There are those in B2B marketing who believe branding is unimportant – that brand is insignificant compared to attributes like pricing and support. While pricing and support are definitely important, don't underestimate the value of branding. So much of today's focus is on a customer's experience, and a customer's experience is directly representative of your brand. Recent research, from LinkedIn, confirms that branding is becoming an increasingly important aspect of B2B businesses, and your messaging forms an important element of your brand.

When developing your overall marketing plan, the targeting and messaging must be built around your value proposition. Once you have identified and segmented your specific audience and developed the foundation for your messaging, it's time to determine the specific avenues you'll take to deliver that message to the audience. Digital marketing provides a variety of tactics to accomplish this.

TACTICS

Not to be confused with strategies, the tactics of your marketing plan are the methods by which you'll carry out and accomplish your strategy. There are plenty of tactics to choose from, but let's begin with the one thing that forms the foundation for any digital marketing – your company's website.

WEBSITE



Your company website is not just your most important owned-media asset, it is your overall most valuable marketing asset. Shoppers today, whether B2C or B2B, expect a website to be both helpful and useful. That means being easy to navigate and easy to accomplish what they came there for. A good website must also be fast, secure and mobile-friendly. These days, a company's website is far more than just its digital storefront. It's where prospects research, learn, explore and purchase.


| CONTENT MARKETING

The Content Marketing Institute defines content marketing as “a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.”

Increasingly, buyers are relying on content to help them make buying decisions. Studies reveal that more than 50% of B2B buyers view at least eight pieces of content during their path to purchase. More than 80% say they view at least five articles on that path. If that's not enough, consider that three-quarters of buyers say content significantly influences their decisions, and six in 10 say they can and may finalize purchase decisions based solely on digital content.

These statistics indicate how important content marketing can be to a strategy. But content marketing is rarely a “hard sell” tactic. In order to successfully utilize content marketing, an organization must understand the tasks its prospects complete along their purchase journey, and then provide the information that addresses these specific tasks. This means creating content that fosters buyer enablement. It means having materials that can nurture leads before, during and after their consideration phases. Ideally, you have different content that addresses all stages of the funnel.

Content as a marketing tactic can be a deep and wide subject, such that it could warrant a complete guide of its own. But as we're staying introductory here, we'll simply touch on a few key pieces of a content marketing plan.



CONTENT IS KING



Blogs – Articles that are written and published regularly to build expertise and credibility for your company. Quality blogs can set your business apart as an authority and thought leader in your industry while also driving traffic to your website.



Case Studies – Thanks in part to our increasing reliance on reviews in buying decisions, case studies have become a highly effective and increasingly used element of a content marketing strategy. These use cases to demonstrate to prospects how your products or services have helped others solve their needs and pain points. More than just collateral touting the benefits of your product, these illustrate it in real-world examples, building credibility for your offerings.



Ebooks, reports and white papers – These long-form pieces of content are typically very in-depth on a topic and provide high-value content to prospects while generating leads. Because these documents offer depth and technical knowledge, they're often gated behind a form that gives you important information about the people who are downloading and reading them. Ebooks, reports and white papers offer a chance for your company to show off just how expert it is in your industry or niche.



Infographics and charts – Visual content that puts technical content or data into easily digestible images. Because visuals such as this are effective for social media, infographics and charts are among the more commonly shared forms of content. This can also work in conjunction with your long-form content by creating a short, easy-to-absorb synopsis of key/major points.



Podcasts – These downloadable audio files have skyrocketed in popularity in recent years. In fact, about four years ago, New York Times declared a “Great Podcast Renaissance,” and the number of shows has continued to climb. The great thing about this audio content is that the audience can take it with them, use it to kill time, listen to it while multi-tasking – it offers a different option from reading. Even if podcasting isn't something that sounds like it would fit your business, you might be surprised once you explore all the opportunities and potential.



Video – It seems every year for the past few could be labeled as the “year of video.” There's little doubt that video has taken its place on the throne of internet content. The great thing about video is that it's highly engaging, offers an opportunity for both visual and audio commentary, and can now be as mobile as the phone in your pocket. Best of all, the cost of entry for video is no longer the barrier it once was. You can produce quality video with that very same phone in your pocket. Video is an option to connect with buyers, generate leads and provide useful demos and details.

Content marketing has become a go-to marketing tactic for most brands. More than 80% of B2B marketing leaders say content is important to achieve their marketing goals. But more than just explaining product specs and prices, content allows successful brands to be resource centres for customers and prospects.

| SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

Often used interchangeably, the working definitions of these terms have evolved such that SEM (search engine marketing) typically refers to paid search, while SEO (search engine optimization) relates to organic search. But both refer to using search engines to generate leads and traffic.

You're likely familiar with SEM as the ads that populate at the top of search engine results pages (SERPs) when you type in a query. These are purchased by the advertiser based on certain keywords – those words and phrases used in the searches. SEM is a form of PPC (pay-per-click) advertising, which works something like this:

Let's say your company sells cleaning supplies. So, you set up a campaign around the keywords cleaning supplies and bid for premier placement. When someone searches for that keyword phrase, your ad is prominently displayed on the results page. If the user clicks on your link, you pay the search engine – you paid for that click (thus, pay-per-click).



SEM can be highly effective because we know that most buying decisions start with an online search. Research shows that three-quarters of people who click on paid ads say they make it easier to find information they're looking for. Paid search marketing is a simple concept but can be quite nuanced in execution. For example, knowing which keywords to choose and how to effectively bid for them can be tricky, given that your direct competitors probably have the same ideas you do for approaching SEM.

Meanwhile, search engine optimization is not about buying positioning, but rather earning it through effective content marketing. SEO refers to a set of practices that increase the rankings of your web pages in search engine results. There's a running joke in marketing that the best place to bury a body is on the second page of search results. In other words, you need your content to land on the first page of SERPs, because people rarely move beyond that first page.

SEO is a highly effective lead generation tactic. It revolves around the quality of your content and how you present that content. This involves things like metadata, page titles, page load speed, and keyword authority. While effective, SEO is neither quick nor simple. It requires consistent and ongoing effort. Complicating matters is that search engines are forever tweaking their algorithms, meaning best practices can change on a whim for Google or Bing. That said, if you're producing content and executing a content marketing strategy, SEO must be a major component of that.



| DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Perhaps the simplest form of digital marketing, display advertising is probably what first comes to mind when you think of online ads. These would be banner ads, those ads in the rails of your webpages and those in your social media feeds. Display advertising can involve static imagery or video, and it's a useful medium for building brand awareness (top of the funnel).

Even if you think people have become conditioned to ignore much of that advertising, research shows users who don't actively take in what else is on the page – outside of what they're reading or viewing – still subliminally absorb the advertising, even when distracted.

And, thanks to the effective targeting that digital provides, your display advertising can be contextual in nature. If your prospect is searching for those cleaning supplies or reading an article on antibacterial hand soap, you can target that specific audience with your ads. Furthermore, thanks to the next tactic described, you can also make sure prospects see your ads even after they're finished reading about hand soap.

RETARGETING

Also called remarketing, retargeting allows marketers to show ads to customers based on previous actions, such as those who have already visited their site but did not convert or purchase. For example, some studies say only about 2% of your website visitors convert. With retargeting, you can work on the other 98%.

Say a prospect finds one of your blog posts on a search engine results page. That user reads the blog on your site, but then leaves the site without further action. The good news is that you now have information about that user. You can now serve that user your ads when he or she moves around the internet, such as visiting news, weather or sports sites.

Furthermore, knowing what blog post that user viewed, you can actually target the ads you put in front of that prospect based on the interest they've exhibited.

You've likely encountered this concept in your own life as a consumer. Perhaps you shopped for a pair of shoes online. If you didn't buy those shoes, there's a good chance you later noticed ads for those shoes or for that merchant or brand elsewhere on the internet as you conducted activity unrelated to the shoes. But those ads kept the shoes top of mind in case you were still looking to purchase.



WEBINARS & EVENTS

Events and trade shows have always been an important component of B2B marketing. What digital transformation has done is open the door to additional opportunities that were once possible only at events and trade shows.

Research by Regalix found that 96% of B2B marketers say event marketing accelerates lead generation. Digital events like webinars and online summits provide an opportunity to reach a wide and interested audience that may not have otherwise traveled to get this information.

Furthermore, webinars allow you to showcase your company's expertise and leadership. They're an excellent opportunity to educate and inform your prospects and customers while putting your brand in front of them. Don't assume your prospects all know everything they need to know to effectively do their jobs. There are always newcomers, workers shifting roles or taking on new responsibilities. They might relish the opportunity to gain industry knowledge and insight, and you can start building a relationship with them while providing them that insight.

| SOCIAL MEDIA



While it undoubtedly lends itself more to B2C marketing than B2B, social media – largely because of its global reach – can't be overlooked. The key to using social media in a B2B setting is understanding your audience and how it fits into the different channels that make up social media.

Where social media can excel for businesses is building brand awareness and building customer relationships, or more plainly, customer service. You can also gain insight into your audience through so-called social listening, which is monitoring social media to stay up to date with your industry and the leaders within it. In that regard, it's more of a research tool than a marketing medium.

Nonetheless, some businesses have found success in connecting with their customers and prospects through social platforms. Again, it's imperative to understand the setting. LinkedIn maintains a much more professional feel, while Instagram is a very visual medium. Understanding the differences in the various platforms is key to developing content and strategies for them. Typically, you're better served to choose a handful of platforms that make sense and do those well, rather than spreading too thin trying to maintain a presence across all possible channels.

03

EXECUTION



The greatest plans in the world are all but worthless without proper execution. Once you have a basic understanding of the components of digital marketing, it's a matter of getting the machine in motion.

So far, we've looked at B2B digital marketing from a foundational perspective, and then we looked briefly at some of the planning elements that form your strategy. Next, we touched on some common tactics that can be used to construct that overall strategy. Now comes deploying those tactics and that strategy through execution of your plan, which starts with putting your messaging into the proper channels.

CHANNELS

Channels are essentially the distribution methods for your messages. This is where prospects will discover and interact with your marketing. Marketing channels range from old fashioned direct mail to social media platforms, to email and magazines. Marketing channels can easily be separated into subcategories of online and offline.

Online channels, as the name implies, are those which are digital. If the prospect is connecting digitally, that's an online channel. Though mostly outside the scope of this guide, offline channels are still an important component of an overall marketing plan, especially for B2B sellers. These channels include events, printed materials, phone calls or traditional mail.



Choosing the right channels is vital because all the detailed planning and clever messaging will be wasted if it doesn't reach the intended audience. Understanding the right channels for your marketing plan ties back with knowing your audience and where to connect with them. But it's also more than just knowing what your audience reads or where they search for information. Matching the channel with the message is imperative. As we noted previously when discussing messaging, different channels call for different approaches. The message in your paid search listing will differ from a Twitter post. A LinkedIn message will probably carry a different tone than a blog. Channels and messaging work hand-in-hand.

Knowing the right mix of marketing channels can be one of the toughest challenges for a marketer. The more you know about where to find your audience, the easier it will be to choose the right channels. Understanding the different segments of your audience will also help narrow the scope of your channel selection. Without unlimited resources and budget, though, you can't just push your marketing into every channel full throttle, which is why determining the right channels for your business is an important piece of executing the marketing plan.

ANALYTICS

One of the advantageous aspects of digital marketing is its inherent opportunities for measurement. Marketing has always been part art, part science. But now, with the analytic capabilities of digital marketing technology, the science part is easier and can eliminate a dependence on instinct, which can at times be misguided and unreliable. With analytics, empirical data informs what is working and what isn't.

Using analytics is key to executing your marketing plan. You put in all the work to develop your messaging and targeting. You've rolled out campaigns across carefully chosen channels. But then the data shows some aspects of your plan are underperforming while others are knocking it out of the park. This is great, because now you have identified areas to address. Why are these certain areas underperforming? You can make assumptions, and best of all, thanks to the ability to analyze the data, you can test your hypotheses and prove if you're right or if further adjustment is necessary.

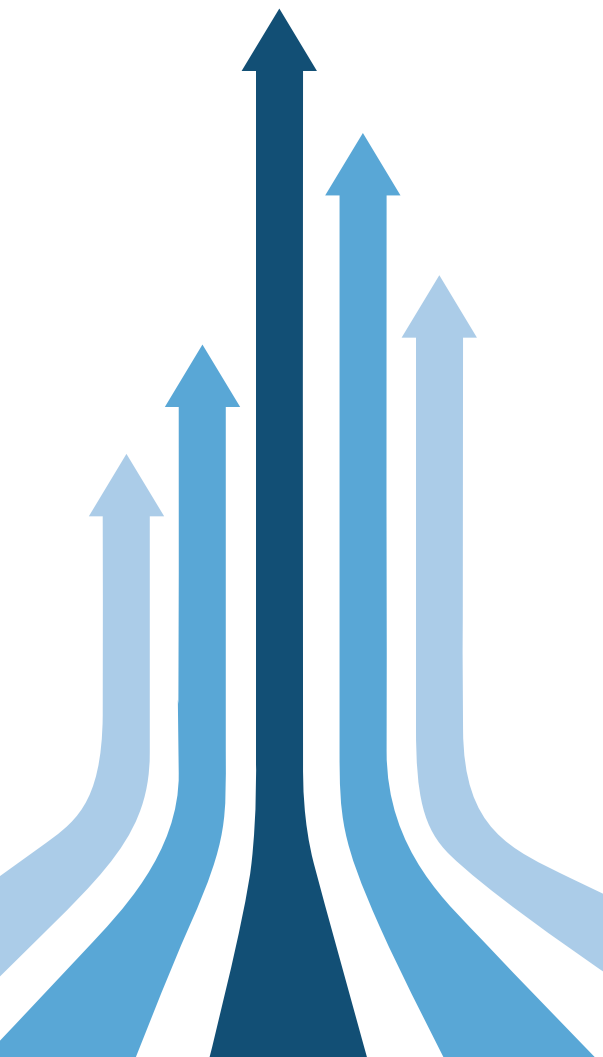


Analytic capabilities also help marketers in another way. Most marketing leaders are under intense pressure these days to prove to leadership and stakeholders the value of their department and efforts. More than ever, marketers are forced to demonstrate their worth. The ability to draw on factual data to prove this value represents a key ally for successful marketing teams.

Knowing how and what to measure are key. Plenty of metrics exist, but you must determine which are important and tell the right stories for your business. This is generally done using KPIs – key performance indicators. More than simply metrics, a KPI is a metric that ties directly and closely to the overall success of your business.

By using an important component of digital marketing – analytics – you can then consistently tweak your plan to maximize its return on investment. These ongoing adjustments are another part of overall plan execution known as optimization.

| OPTIMIZATION



Just as you like to improve any product or service offering over time, your marketing plan can always use improvement. Thanks to the analytics capabilities of digital marketing this is possible and commonly referred to as optimization. Many digital marketing channels have flexibility that allows an optimization process to work relatively quickly, such as when compared to a print ad campaign, for example.

Optimization doesn't just refer to your overall plan and objectives but is something that should be applied to all the tactics you're employing. The basic process is to collect the data, analyze the data for insight, take action based on that data –and then repeat throughout the campaign.

Given the scrutiny marketing departments can operate under, taking advantage of the opportunities for optimization that digital marketing offers can be a significant element of your overall marketing plan.

| CONCLUSION




In the preceding pages, we covered a basic understanding of B2B marketing and some of its challenges. We also dived into the various elements that are necessary for an effective marketing strategy. Further, we explored some of the tactics used to implement a digital marketing plan, followed by some of the key considerations for executing your plan.

There's no textbook that applies to all businesses for guaranteed success in marketing. But the fastest way to guarantee your marketing won't succeed is to approach it without having a solid knowledge base about where to start. Each of the topics in this introductory guide can be explored in far more detail, but with this foundation you understand what is needed before you dive in and what to expect once you get wet.

To further help, we've also included a glossary of terms commonly found and used in digital marketing. Marketing likes to speak its own language and plenty of confusing acronyms can ensue. This glossary can serve as a simple reference in the event you come across a new or unfamiliar term.

A good marketing experience leads not only to sales, but to loyal, long-term customers. It's also important to understand that marketing doesn't end with a sale. Your customers are a source of reviews and word-of-mouth marketing. Good experiences can turn customers into advocates for your brand. But it all has to start somewhere.

**For more information about Brand Culture,
and how we can help your business reach its target audience**

 brandculture.ca  [905-361-0305](tel:905-361-0305)  info@brandculture.ca

CONTACT US TODAY!

I GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A

A/B Testing A test that compares two versions of a web page, email or other marketing asset with just one element that changes. (i.e., if you're A/B testing a headline, you would create two versions of the same page with only the headline changed.) This can tell you which version proved most popular among your audience based on specific metrics, such as conversion rate or time spent on a page.

Ad Extension Additional pieces of information about your business that can help advertisers create more informative, in-depth ads. Some examples include a phone number, a link to a specific page on your website, reviews, address, pricing, callouts or app downloads.

Ad Network A company that connects advertisers to websites that want to host advertisements. This provides an aggregation of ad supply from publishers and matches it with advertiser's demand.

AdWords (Google Ads) A program that is used by advertisers to place ads on Google search results pages, on Youtube, and on Google ad network sites.

Algorithm Sets of processes used to order and rank websites in search results.

Analytics A collection of statistics and data that businesses can use to drive actionable insights.

Automation Using computer programs to perform tasks that are repetitive, that would otherwise normally be completed by a human.

B

Banner Ad A type of digital image ad that can be placed across various websites. There are many popular image ad sizes, such as square, banner, etc.

Behavioural Targeting Data based on visitor browsing habits or previous purchase/search behaviour is used to display relevant ads and offers, improving campaign effectiveness.

Blocklist A list that identifies the sites on which an advertiser does not want its advertising to appear.

Blog A web page or website that is regularly updated with new written content. Blogs can offer fresh content to help attract new visitors, engage existing visitors, etc.

Bot An automated program that visits websites so they can be ranked and added to search indexes.

Bounce Rate The percentage of visitors to a website that leave immediately without clicking or interacting with any portion of the page.

Buying Journey The entire path a buyer takes before making a purchase.



C

Campaign A series of advertising messages that share a theme and have a shared goal of marketing a product or service. Campaigns can be run through various platforms such as search engines, social media, email or other online platforms.

Click-through Rate (CTR) Metric showing how often people click on an ad or search result after they see it. This can be useful when determining whether the messaging resonates with the consumer or matches what they're searching for. A higher click-through-rate = more engagement.

Contact Form A section on a website with fillable fields that visitors use to contact the website owner. These fields commonly collect names, phone numbers and email addresses of potential customers.

Content Any form of online media that can be read, watched or provides an interactive experience.

Content Marketing A form of marketing focused on creating, publishing and distributing content for an online target audience.

Content Syndication When any web-based content such as blog posts, videos, etc., is re-published by a third-party website.

Conversion Successfully enticing a prospect to complete a desired action, such as filling out a contact form, subscribing to a newsletter or completing a purchase.

Cookie A small item of data sent from a website that is stored on the user's device to track website activity. Cookies can also help that device remember useful data like items in a shopping cart, which pages have already been visited, etc.

Cost Per Acquisition (CPA) A metric that measures how much money is spent in order to acquire a new lead/customer.

Cost Per Click (CPC) The amount of money paid for each click on an ad.

Cost Per thousand (CPM) The amount an advertiser pays per 1,000 impressions of their ad.

Call to Action (CTA) An element on a web page used to induce a viewer, reader or listener to perform a specific act, such as *buy now* or *click here*.

D

Display network A network of websites and apps that show display ads on their web pages. Businesses can target consumers on the display network based on keywords/topics or placement on specific webpages.

F

Featured Snippet These appear in a block at the top of search results with a link to the source. They provide users with concise, direct answers to their questions on the search results page without the users having to click through to a specific site.

G

Geotargeting A method of determining the geographic location of a user or prospect and delivering specific content to that user based on their location.

Google Analytics A free software platform used to analyze users accessing a website. Site traffic, conversions, user metrics, historical data comparisons and effectiveness of each channel can all be managed using this tool.

Google Partner Agency Agency or third-party that manages Google Ads accounts on behalf of other brands or businesses. The Google Partner badge shows that specific Partners have passed Google Ads product certification exams and are up to date with the latest product knowledge.

I

Impression A term that represents when an ad renders on a user's screen. Also called a "view." Impressions are not action-based.

Inbound Marketing A technique for drawing potential customers to products, services or websites via content, social media marketing, search engine optimization and branding strategies. Differs from outbound marketing that pushes the brand toward prospects.

K

Keyword Words or phrases a person uses in a search engine query. These words should be found in your web content to make it possible for people to find your content via search engines.

Key Performance Indicator (KPI) A measurable value, such as profit margins or revenue-per-click, that demonstrates how effectively a company is achieving business objectives.

L

Landing Page The destination webpage a user lands on after clicking on a search result or call-to-action.

Lead A potential customer who has communicated with a business with intent to purchase.

Lead Generation The initiation of consumer interest of products or services of a business.

Lead Nurturing The process of developing relationships with buyers at every step of the buyer's journey. This includes customizing marketing efforts, listening to the needs of prospects, and providing the information and answers they need.

Link/hyperlink An icon, graphic, or text in a document that links to another file or object; used to connect web pages on the internet.

Location Targeting A setting that allows you to choose your target locations in order to reach out to customers. These can include specific areas, countries, etc.

Long-tail Keyword Search phrases with longer word counts. Their length makes them more specific than searches with fewer words. A long-tail keyword gets less searches per month but has a higher search intent.

M

Marketing Qualified Lead (MQL) A lead who has been deemed more likely to become a customer compared to other leads based on the interest they have shown in a brand.

Metadata A set of data that describes and summarizes basic information about other data, which can help to decide what information from a webpage to display in their results. Examples can include the date the page was published, the page title, author and image descriptions.

N

Native Advertising Ads that match the look, feel and function of the media format in which they appear. Often found in social media feeds or as "recommended content" on a web page.

O

Organic (traffic) A source of traffic to a website that comes through clicking on a non-paid search engine result.

P

Pay-per-click (PPC) A way of using search engine advertising to generate clicks to your website, rather than "earning" those clicks organically; advertisers are charged for their ad once it is clicked.

Paid Search Allows you to pay to have your website prominently displayed on the search engine results page when someone types in specific keywords or phrases.

Persona Characters created to represent your different ideal customers, their backgrounds, goals, challenges, etc. Personas are based on research data about your existing customers.

Persona Targeting Reaching a target audience based on predefined “personas” that represent your different potential customers.

Podcast A set of digital audio files that are available on the internet for downloading.

Programmatic The algorithmic purchase and sale of advertising space in real time using automated bidding. This provides the opportunity to show an ad to a specific customer in a specific context.

R

Ranking Where a website appears in search engine results. A site’s “ranking” may increase or decrease over time for different search terms. Factors that influence ranking include the content relevance to the search term.

Reach The potential number of customers your business can reach through any marketing channel or campaign.

Retargeting A type of paid advertising that allows marketers to show ads to customers based on previous actions, such as those who have already visited their site but did not convert or purchase.

Return on Investment (ROI) The ratio of gain to outlay. This helps an organization measure the degree to which marketing efforts contribute to revenue growth.

Real-time Bidding (RTB) The means by which advertising inventory is bought and sold on a per-impression basis in real time.

S

Sales Qualified Lead (SQL) A lead that has been identified and vetted by the marketing and sales teams as a potential customer.

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) A form of Internet marketing that promotes websites by increasing their visibility in search engine results pages, primarily through paid advertising.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Using a variety of methods to improve a website’s performance and positioning in organic search engine results.

Search Engine Results Page (SERP) The page(s) displayed by search engines in response to a query by a user.

Site Retargeting A technique used to show display advertising to people who have previously visited your website.

GLOSSARY

Social Selling/Targeting The process of using social media to develop relationships and nurture leads as part of the sales process.

U

Unique Visitor A metric used to show how many different, unique people view a website. Unique visitors are tracked by their IP addresses, so if a visitor visits the same website multiple times, they will only be counted once as a unique visitor.

URL The address of a web page.

User Experience (UX) This encompasses all aspects of the end-user's interaction with the company, its services and its products, including websites or apps.

V

View-through A post-impression response. Occurs when a customer sees an ad, doesn't click, but then later completes a conversion on your site without directly clicking on the ad.

W

Webinar An online seminar used to train, inform or sell to an audience of viewers.

Whitelist The opposite of blocked list. Identifies only the sites on which an advertiser approves its advertising to appear.

White Paper A report used as a tool meant to educate and inform customers/partners and potentially to promote a product or viewpoint.

For more information about Brand Culture,
and how we can help your business reach its target audience

🌐 brandculture.ca

📞 905-361-0305

✉ info@brandculture.ca

CONTACT US TODAY!

