7 PILLARS OF SUCCESSFUL
DEMAND GENERATION

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WHY IS DEMAND GENERATION IMPORTANT IN B2B MARKETING?

Demand generation is an effective B2B marketing strategy. While helping define the way you drive traffic and generate leads, it is also a highly targeted process that focuses on maximizing results by defining and optimizing every step of the conversion and sales cycle.

Demand generation helps your company:

*   reach new markets
*   engage with prospects
*   build long-term relationships with customers

It utilizes many inbound marketing tactics, but unlike pure inbound, demand generation bridges the gap to sales, and ultimately revenue, to create a holistic approach.

How?

It brings together personalized content, strategically managed distribution channels (such as programmatic and paid social), tactical lead generation and sales account management **to attract the right leads, nurture prospects and close deals.** But achieving synergy between these elements is only possible with robust planning.

This **B2B Demand Generation checklist** is a simple and clear guide to creating and implementing a winning demand generation strategy that is measurable, manageable and generates regular new business opportunities.

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PILLAR 1: MAPPING YOUR DEMAND GENERATION ACTIVITIES

What are demand generation programs?

Demand generation is an umbrella strategy for a range of coordinated marketing programs that seek to achieve your overarching goals.

Here's some examples of demand generation goals:

- increasing turnover
- improving the efficiency of the sales process
- cultivating better brand loyalty
- growing higher customer lifetime value

While many traditional marketing campaigns focus on handing over leads to your sales function, demand generation creates a more unified and comprehensive approach for sales and marketing teams.

This approach radically shifts the focus of your efforts, moving away from fragmented and often disjointed campaigns to a carefully orchestrated set of marketing programs that work more effectively at achieving your overarching organizational goals.

Most notably, the number of leads generated from your marketing efforts becomes a Key Performance Indicator (KPI), rather than an end goal, and important marketing metrics like close rates and revenue come into play.

The key to success is aligning your tactical objectives to your overarching goals and setting the right control mechanisms to keep your campaigns on track.

EXAMPLES OF GOAL AND TACTIC ALIGNMENT

EXAMPLE 1

Revenue Orientated Business Goal: Increase sales to new customers

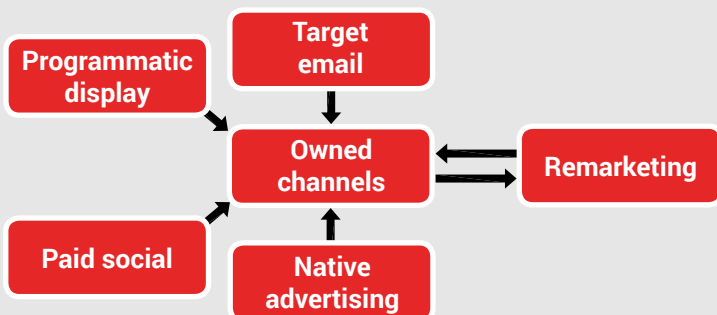**Marketing Tactic:** Enter new market and gain healthy share

EXAMPLE 2

Revenue Orientated Business Goal: Increase reoccurring revenue from existing customers

Marketing Tactic: Turn customers into loyal brand advocates

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Here's an are example of a series of demand generation programs that might make up your strategy:

PROGRAM 1: BRAND AWARENESS

Programmatic display

Target email

Owned channels

Remarketing

Paid social

Native advertising

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Objective:

Increase awareness of brand in new identified market by 20% in 6 months

KPI
- Number of new website visitors

Metrics
- Number of impressions
- Number of page visits
- Number of returning visitors

PROGRAM 2: LEAD GENERATION

3rd Party Publishing Platform

Target email

Landing Page

Remarketing

Paid social

Native advertising

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Objective:

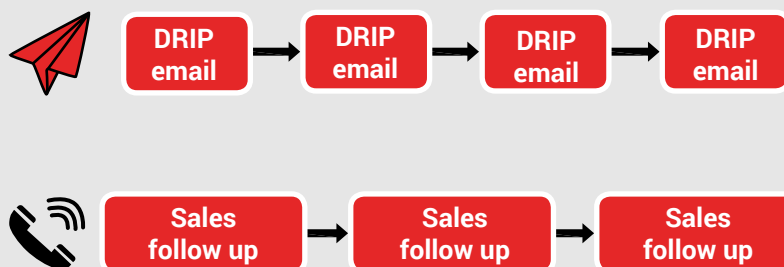**Generate 500 MQLs in 2 months**

KPI
- Volume of qualified leads

Metrics
- Total number of leads generated
- Landing Page conversion rate
- Number of Landing Page views

PROGRAM 3: LEAD NURTURE

DRIP email → DRIP email → DRIP email → DRIP email

Sales follow up → Sales follow up → Sales follow up
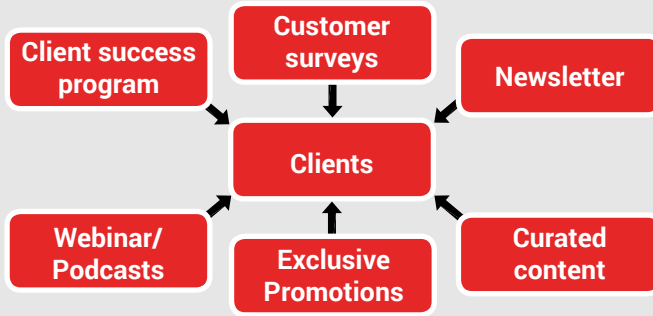
INSIGHTS

Objective:

Generate 250 SQL in 6 months

KPI
- Number of SQLs

Metrics
- Number of MQL drop offs
- Number of requests for sales call
- Number of inbound enquiries

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PROGRAM 4: RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

Client success program → **Clients**

Customer surveys → **Clients**

Newsletter → **Clients**

Webinar/ Podcasts → **Clients**

Exclusive Promotions → **Clients**

Curated content → **Clients**

**Take your time with the planning
Demand generation is not a quick fix.**

Objective:

Increase recurring revenue by 25% in 12 months

KPI
- Reduced customer churn rate

Metrics
- Increase in up and cross selling
- C-sat/NPS scores
- High engagement (newsletter open rates/resource hub visits etc.)

As our diagram illustrates, demand generation can be broken into a set of coordinated programs that while working to achieve their specific set of goals, all line up to achieve an overarching holistic strategy that cover the full customer life span.

This requires integrating a wide range of tools, channels, touchpoints and metrics into one cohesive structure. This will be challenging to get right, so it's important to take your time at the planning stage and make sure the foundations are solid before you start putting anything into action.

It's easy to get impatient, particularly when there's pressure from above. It may seem that doing something is better than doing nothing. However, this will only bring you short-term gains and will prevent you reaping the longer-term benefits of an integrated strategy.

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PILLAR 2: SALES & MARKETING ALIGNMENT

Aligning sales and marketing is a key aspect of demand generation too.

Bringing sales and marketing together can be difficult, but it's worth it: according to research, businesses whose sales and marketing teams are aligned achieve

208% higher marketing revenue

when compared to misaligned teams [Integrate].

Your sales team and marketing departments must work together from the start by combining knowledge of the market, the buyer and their internal processes. Your marketing team will have lots of first party data on buyer behavior from your website, previous campaigns and research; meanwhile sales teams have a more personal, hands-on experience of what happens away from the computer screen. They can tell you who exactly is involved in the decision making process, what their key concerns and questions are, and what other issues they have to contend with.

To make sure everyone is on the same page, there are some key targeting decisions that must be agreed on before you start to develop your plan:

1 **Who are your target customers?**

What size company are they, and where are they based? What industries do they operate in? Are you focusing on existing markets or diversifying into areas you are not as well known in?

2 **Why will they buy from you rather than the competition?**

Is your product simply better, or is there another area in which you excel?
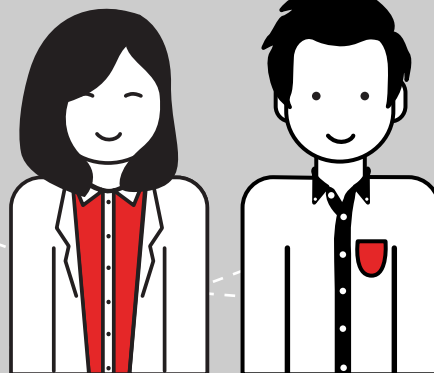
3 **How much information do you need to give away?**

What information do you need to control?

4 **At what point do you want to get sales involved and how does that process work?**

Is it a simple hand over, or is there a period of phasing out automation of campaigns and into personal communications?

Once you have your campaign objectives and target market defined, profiling your buyer in detail is the next step.

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PILLAR 3: DEFINING YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

We've reached an exciting time in B2B marketing. Programmatic advertising and biddable/RTB Media is booming and it's bought with it a whole new plethora of targeting possibilities that make reaching your ideal audiences a tangible reality, without requiring a massive budget.

Traditionally hard to reach accounts are now accessible, target account lists (TAL) can be expanded with accurate lookalikes and multiple stakeholders within a DMU can be strategically engaged, all thanks to the new possibilities opened up by programmatic AdTech.

The data is here along with the means for precision-based targeting. How you make the most of it is entirely down to your research and planning…

It's crucial the rationale dictating the audience criteria is robust. Afterall, you will not achieve your ROI if you go after the wrong prospects for your business. Neither will your leads progress through your coordinated demand generation programs if you are pumping out the wrong kind of content, at the wrong touchpoints.

Here are 2 key considerations:

1. Is your segmentation criteria based on research or assumptions?
Who are your most attractive customer segments? What makes them a good fit for your product/services?

Kicking off with your first party data through interrogating your existing CRM with these types of questions, will help you uncover the salient characteristics that underline your segmentation criteria. Getting this right will open up the possibilities of scaling up your available reach through identifying accurate lookalikes.

Once you have compiled your TALs you can move onto third party data to build these lists out and embellish with **customer insights** and **intent data** that tell an accurate picture of your audiences' buyer behavior.

2. Is your content strategy based on research or assumptions?
Understanding what really motivates your prospects enables you to develop highly customized content that translates into sales. Too many businesses churn out 'Everyman' content that has wide reach but no effectiveness –

around 2/3 of marketers create content without any sort of documented strategy. [Contently]

Content that doesn't help your prospects in some way is simply a waste of resources.

To create targeted content, you need to understand a range of things about your customers, from job titles and purchasing power to the channels they use. In addition, you're likely to be dealing with multiple individuals within a decision making unit (DMU), each with a unique set of characteristics and information needs.

Extending your customer insight to include third party intent data will shed light on behaviors, motivations and preferences that will enable you to design more accurate, precision-based campaigns.

RECOMMENDED READING:

Ready or Not? 5 Types of Buyer Intent Data to Gauge B2B Engagement

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Buyer personas

These are fictional characters that summarize the characteristics, preferences and 'pain points' that your real life buyers identify with. By working from buyer personas you can ensure that your content remains focused and consistent. This is especially important if you are using external marketing or content agencies.

When defining personas, all customer facing teams must work closely together. Sales, marketing and customer services know the client from different vantage points and all aspects of the customer are vital to painting a complete picture. There are many things you may want to include into your personas, while other things may not be relevant. As a start, consider the following:

1. What is their job role?

Who do they report to, how senior are they and how much influence do they have on the purchasing decision?

4. What are their 'pain points'?

Are they time poor or do they lack resources? Are they under pressure to improve productivity or performance? If they are not the end user – for example, those in purchasing or finance departments – do they understand the problem your product solves?

2. What are their goals?

Are they tasked with cutting costs, achieving efficiencies, or improving their own sales? Are they keen to impress senior management or earn a bigger bonus?

5. How do they prefer to interact with suppliers?

Do they want a dedicated account contact who can field all their questions, or would they rather the resources are available online?

3. Where do they go for information?

Blogs? Industry publications? Forums? Dedicated websites? Do they read whitepapers and authority content, or do they ask their peers?

6. What does the buying process look like from their perspective?

How can you align this with your sales process to streamline their journey?

Getting your buyer personas right is absolutely critical, but if you are targeting new markets you may not have the right information within your organization. Surveys, market research and third party data will help you build a picture of your customers so long as you have the capacity and skill sets in-house to manage the research. If not, consider using an agency to do the legwork for you. As well as having the expertise to manage the data collection efficiently, they will also be able to advise on the best tactics for accurate audience segmentation.

> **RECOMMENDED TOOLKIT:**
>
> **Article: B2B DMU Buyer Persona Cheat Sheet**
>
> **Template: Download here**

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PILLAR 4: CONTENT MARKETING; HOW TO FUEL YOUR DEMAND GENERATION ENGINE WITH KILLER CONTENT

Great content is the lifeblood of any solid demand generation campaign, but creating effective content is a challenge for many businesses. As well as maintaining high standards of quality, producing new content regularly and trying new ideas, **you must make sure that you are creating content across the spectrum of all your campaigns.** Some areas will always be more difficult to address than others, but that doesn't mean you can ignore them to focus on the fun stuff.

Once this is done you can get down to the business of creating some killer content.

Map out a content plan. Think about everything you will need to cover across each purchase

process of every customer type and translate this into a matrix of touchpoints.

To help with this, start by listing all your distribution channels – social, email, lead nurturing, direct sales, customer services, blogs – and work out how they carve an immersive content environment that enables your audience to self-navigate towards your chosen objective.

Think about formats and how they relate to the distribution channel, as well as the ultimate purpose of each piece of content. Include a mix of short lived and evergreen content, as well and long and shorter form content.

HOW DOES YOUR CONTENT REACH EVERY TOUCHPOINT?

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Ideas need to be generated constantly. Your best source of inspiration is your customers: talk to your sales team, customer service team, even the finance team, anyone who has direct contact. The best content is that which is inspired directly by the customers themselves – what questions are they asking? What are they struggling with? What feedback are they offering? Read the magazines they read and keep abreast of the news, views and innovations that will interest them. Look at what your competitors are writing about and keep an eye on content from other industries too. Keep all ideas in one place so that whoever is responsible for creating or commissioning content can easily access inspiration.

BROWSING INTENT

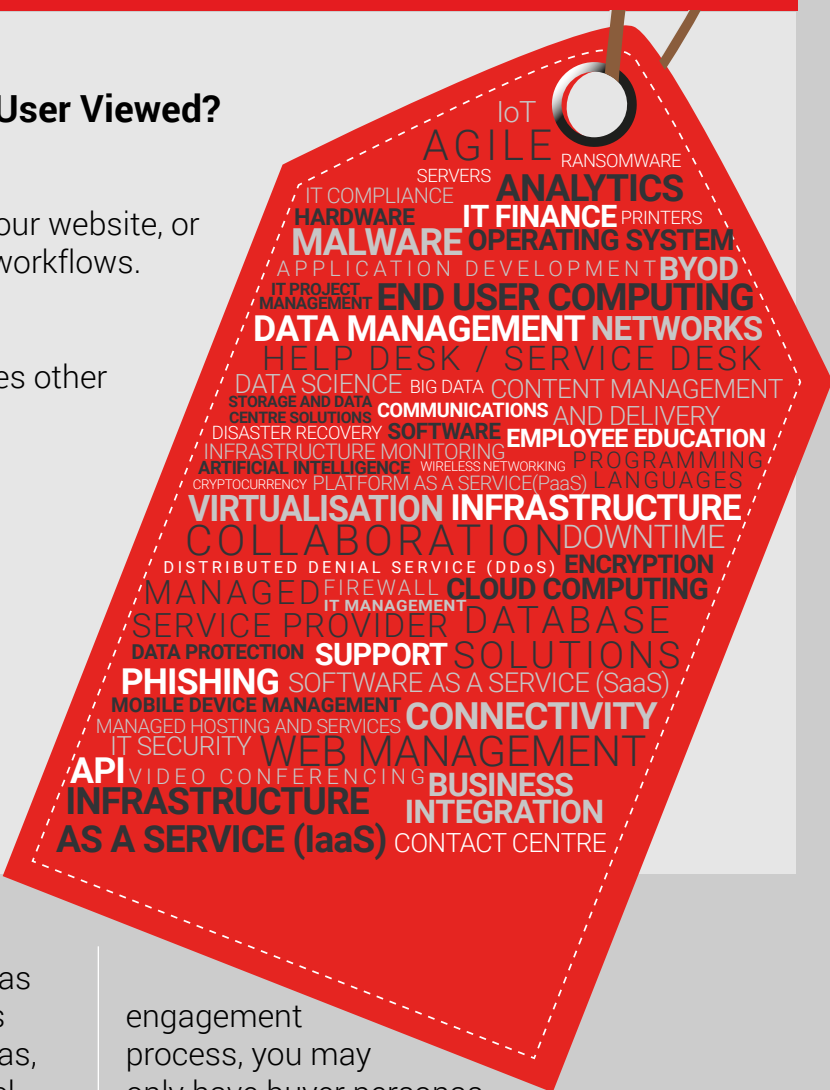### Which Specific Content Has the User Viewed?

First Party
Pages that your users are viewing on your website, or reading in your marketing automation workflows.

Third Party
Users browsing relevant content on sites other than your own.

> " *SOME OF THE BEST INTENT DATA ON THE MARKET TODAY COMES FROM WELL-KNOWN B2B CONTENT COMMUNITIES WHERE BUYERS GO TO SELF-EDUCATE.*
> *- MARKETO* "

IoT
AGILE RANSOMWARE
SERVERS
IT COMPLIANCE ANALYTICS
HARDWARE IT FINANCE PRINTERS
MALWARE OPERATING SYSTEM
APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT BYOD
IT PROJECT MANAGEMENT END USER COMPUTING
DATA MANAGEMENT NETWORKS
HELP DESK / SERVICE DESK
DATA SCIENCE BIG DATA CONTENT MANAGEMENT
STORAGE AND DATA CENTRE SOLUTIONS COMMUNICATIONS AND DELIVERY
DISASTER RECOVERY SOFTWARE EMPLOYEE EDUCATION
INFRASTRUCTURE MONITORING PROGRAMMING
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE WIRELESS NETWORKING
CRYPTOCURRENCY PLATFORM AS A SERVICE(PaaS) LANGUAGES
VIRTUALISATION INFRASTRUCTURE
COLLABORATION DOWNTIME
DISTRIBUTED DENIAL SERVICE (DDoS) ENCRYPTION
MANAGED FIREWALL CLOUD COMPUTING
IT MANAGEMENT
SERVICE PROVIDER DATABASE
DATA PROTECTION SUPPORT SOLUTIONS
PHISHING SOFTWARE AS A SERVICE (SaaS)
MOBILE DEVICE MANAGEMENT
MANAGED HOSTING AND SERVICES CONNECTIVITY
IT SECURITY WEB MANAGEMENT
API VIDEO CONFERENCING BUSINESS INTEGRATION
INFRASTRUCTURE
AS A SERVICE (IaaS) CONTACT CENTRE

Repurposing content maximizes value. Don't fall into the trap of thinking an idea 'has been done'; even popular posts and articles won't have reached everyone. Combine ideas, reformat articles, and try a different channel. Look at what you put out a year ago and see if it can be updated. A great blog post can be expanded into a valuable eBook; a short customer testimonial can become an interesting case study based on helping them with their challenges.

Personalization is an effective way of increasing conversion levels. At the top of the engagement process, you may only have buyer personas and generalized information to work with. However **third party intent data** could greatly enhance your ability to layer on relevancy.

By the middle and bottom of the demand process you will start to gather data like names and job titles. The more you know about a prospect, the more personalized you should make their content. HubSpot found that

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personalized call-to-actions increased customer action by **42%** and statistics are similarly impressive for other forms of personalized content too.

Quality is key.
Your content reflects your business and must create a good impression.

If you outsource your content production, ensure you brief out up-to-date brand guidelines. If you produce content in-house, nominate a chief content editor to be responsible for tidying up text, enforcing a consistent tone of voice and ultimately deciding whether or not to publish.

If employees have ideas, don't discourage them – it's often easier to clean up a poorly executed article than to generate ideas.

If you are working in a very specialist or technical area, you may also need to nominate product experts to check terminology and accuracy.

Additional resource may well be required.
Demand generation is a content-heavy strategy and you should be realistic about how much your existing team can handle. If you don't have the capacity in-house, you can consider hiring new staff or using external support. Agencies can provide a great boost to your marketing as they give you access to top notch writing skills and specialist marketing expertise in a scalable pay-on-performance model.

For those with overseas prospects, agencies will also be able to provide reliable and trustworthy translations and localized knowledge to make your content resonate more powerfully with your intended audience.

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PILLAR 5: OPTIMIZING YOUR
CONTENT DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY

The best content in the world is useless if the right people don't see it. It's not the case that good content will always be found: the world of content is extremely competitive, and audiences have limited time.

You need to work hard, and often creatively, to make sure it is in your target audience's hands at the right time, at the right touchpoints. There are a number of ways to do this, some of which require investment and some of which are financially, but not resource, free.

Before deciding upon any content distribution channel, go back to your buyer personas and look at the places they go for content. There's no point in wasting time on Pinterest if everyone is on LinkedIn. But **always base your decisions on data**, not assumptions, and if in doubt, run an experiment.

Let's take a look at just a few distribution channels at your disposal:

Advertising

Don't ignore the early stages of the demand generation process: advertising is a great way to raise the profile of your brand and the problems your products can solve. By selecting placements carefully, display and native advertising can provide a non-intrusive way to broadly raise brand awareness in a relevant context at crucial touchpoints in the buyer journey.

Biddable/RTB Media and **programmatic advertising** enable you to **precisely target groups, TALs** or even individuals with **precisely targeted content**. You can cost-effectively resurface your message and content to prospects even when you don't have their email address. Used in combination with social or other channels, this can greatly accelerate the prospecting stage and provide a powerful boost, progressing leads through your demand generation engine at greater speed and effectiveness.

Email marketing

Email marketing is a consistently high performer. *Email is more than 40 times more effective at acquiring customers than social media*, while for every $1 spent on email you can get returns of $45-$50 [SalesForce].

Email enables you to be micro targeted about the content you send. You can personalize subject lines, body copy, layout and links to improve the chances of conversion, while results are almost immediate.

Through leveraging action based intent data you can increase the relevancy, precision and likelihood of engagement tenfold. This is because you can match a specific topic, to a specific audience in a specific timeframe. This enables you to reach your audience at just the right time in their buyer journey with content they are actively researching.

Lead nurturing systems will help you optimize your customer contact, particularly via email, but regular newsletters can also play a role. Remember that newsletters are there to build relationships and reinforce company messaging, rather than make a hard sale.

Search Engine Marketing (SEM)

SEM is a vital part of demand generation throughout the pipeline. Search optimized landing pages can draw prospects to your site, while paid search can guarantee your content is in front of the right people at the right time.

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Your landing pages give you can opportunity to write directly to your identified audience. Therefore, each page should have a carefully considered content strategy that addresses:

- **Target audience**
- **Keywords and high demand search queries**
- **Pain points**
- **A tailored message that incorporates the most relevant USP and value proposition for your specified audience**
- **A clear call to action (always pre-empt their next step)**

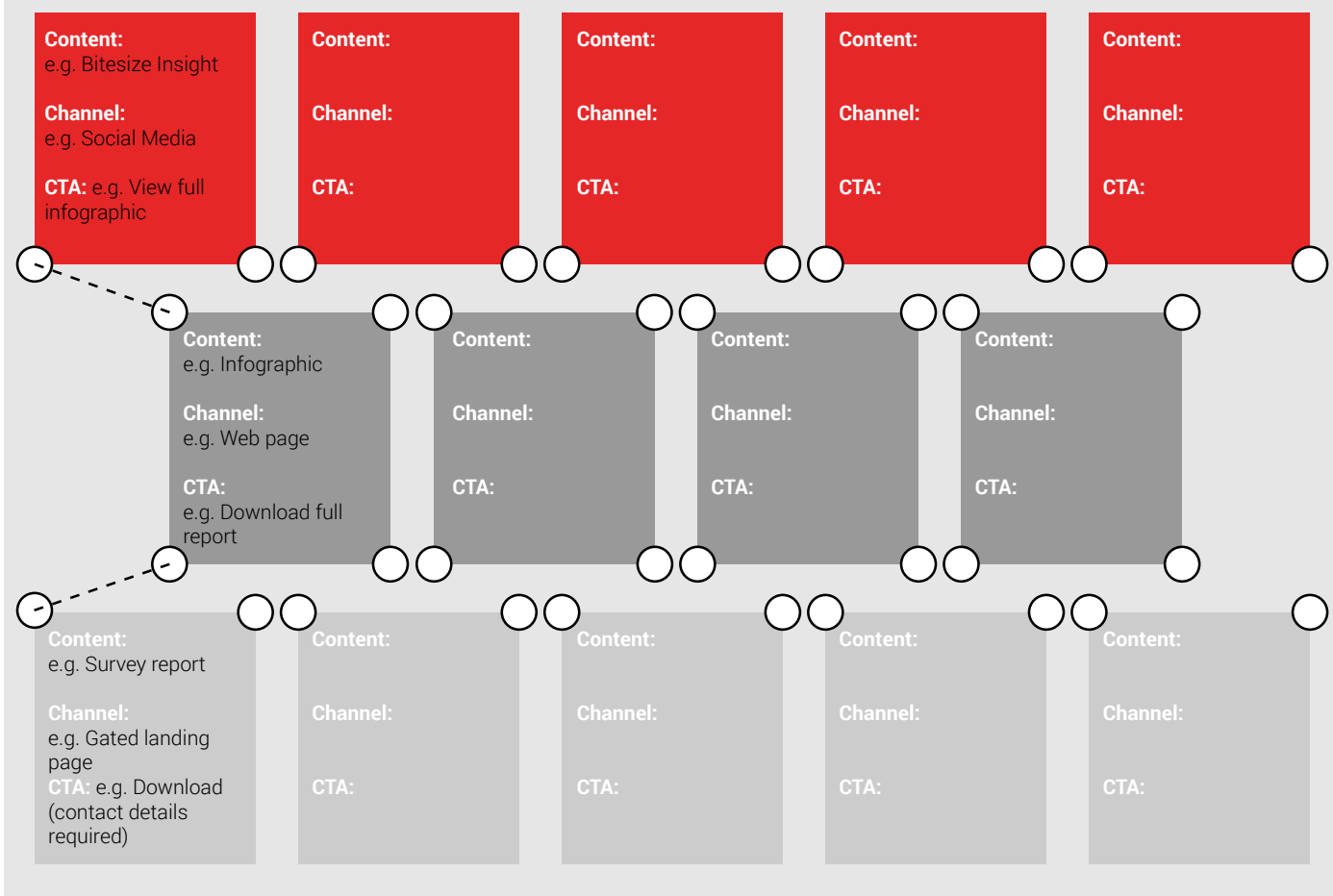Always use your landing pages as a gateway to more content. Depending on where the prospect is in the sales pipeline, you may want to try to bring them onboard a nurturing program by gating your content.

Effective demand generation leverages touchpoints to keep your audiences in perpetual motion towards your next conversion goal. To do this successfully you must always anticipate their next step, providing a clear logical path from A to B.

Plotting all your CTAs against your touchpoints is an effective method, that will enable you to identify any dead ends and optimize your journeys to decrease the chance of drop off. This is applicable to all your campaigns, not just your landing pages and SEM activities.

Touchpoint planner
Use this template to map out your conversion paths

Content: e.g. Bitesize Insight	Content:	Content:	Content:	Content:
Channel: e.g. Social Media	Channel:	Channel:	Channel:	Channel:
CTA: e.g. View full infographic	CTA:	CTA:	CTA:	CTA:

Content: e.g. Infographic	Content:	Content:	Content:
Channel: e.g. Web page	Channel:	Channel:	Channel:
CTA: e.g. Download full report	CTA:	CTA:	CTA:

Content: e.g. Survey report	Content:	Content:	Content:	Content:
Channel: e.g. Gated landing page	Channel:	Channel:	Channel:	Channel:
CTA: e.g. Download (contact details required)	CTA:	CTA:	CTA:	CTA:

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Take advantage of someone else's audience

Publish content, or links to content, in the very places your prospect goes to find information specifically for their industry or problem. There's a vast amount of online publishing platforms that have cultivated highly engaged specialist communities of readers. Tapping into these active audiences can fast track your prospecting and jumpstart your pipeline with highly engaged, relevant leads.

Many industry magazines and publications will accept third party articles if you sponsor the submission, run advertorials or full blown lead generation campaigns. Identify the thought leaders and trend setters in your prospects' industries and see if you can develop a relationship or reciprocal blogging arrangement with the most relevant publishers for your content.

If you are partnering with someone else in this way, be sure that you have chosen carefully in terms of not only audience but tone of voice and content. The best relationships take time to develop so plan long-term.

"Traditional" channels

Don't ignore old school. Yes, people do still read paper magazines, and as Mark Ritson points out, everything is digital now – print magazines are available online, more people listen to the radio through the internet than FM, and direct marketing has response rates of 10-30 times higher than digital [Forbes]. Be smart about how to integrate traditional and modern and think about how you'll track channel performance.

Traditional face to face methods such as events and networking are also still highly effective in B2B marketing.

Social Media

According to Marketing Think,

> *SOCIAL MEDIA IS THE MOST IMPORTANT GEAR IN THE SALES AND DEMAND GENERATION ENGINE. SIMPLY PUT, IT'S THE SCIENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND LEAD GENERATION PHYSICS.*

It is the most widely used B2B content marketing tactic, used by 83% of organisations [integrate]. Just like consumers, B2B buyers trust recommendations from peers and influencers over brands.

Sharable content will improve your visibility, while linking to fresh content on your site will generate traffic and increase readership. Don't rely on organic alone – a targeted paid campaign can put your stuff right in front of the right people.

But social isn't just for dissemination. You can use it to understand audience behaviors and preferences, social listening and lead generation, as well as lead nurturing.

Paid Social

In today's marketing world, it's unlikely you'll be able to build and reach your communities within your social media outposts, without the support of paid targeting.

Paid Social and biddable media in social provides a broad range of targeting opportunities, from custom audiences, driving synergy with your CRM to niche data segments based on content consumption.

This combined with profile, affiliation and interest based data targeting easily allows you to map target segments into the channels and build towards a social CRM approach.

How advanced you get with this, is up to you or the capabilities you have in-house, but with time

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you can drive a multi-layered strategy using interest based intent, custom segments and social CRM. This allows you to leverage data to build depth into your approach.

Using a combination of multiple types of content distribution will ensure maximum reach.

In fact, marketing campaigns that cross multiple channels perform better than those which with limited distribution – according to Business 2 Community, **multichannel strategies can generate up to 24% increase in conversions**.

But the more channels you incorporate into your pan, the more complicated it will be to manage all the placements.

You should not underestimate the resource needed to manage multi-channel campaigns. Ideally, you would need access to specialists in each of the channels, as well as content creators and analysts who can keep track of the data and make recommendations.

Outsourcing your demand generation campaign to an agency is a straightforward way to gain access to expertise, experience and specialist knowledge without the need to take on additional staff. Contracts which charge on a performance basis, for example pay-per-lead, mean the agency has a vested interest in delivering results and will proactively work to enhance and optimize your campaign's performance.

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PILLAR 6: DESIGNING A **WINNING LEAD NURTURING PROGRAM**

Lead generation is not the same thing as demand generation. Lead generation is one aspect of demand generation that focuses on getting people's email address, usually through gated premium content. Many demand generation strategies carry an element of lead generation used on a tactical level to capture leads for nurturing.

The most successful strategies, however, acknowledge the need to generate leads at different stages of the buyer journey not just top of the funnel engagers. This is because, thanks to the evolution of intent data and immersive digital experiences, potential leads are far more accessible at multiple touchpoints within their buyer journeys.

This demands more creative thinking from marketers and a dynamic nurture program ensures the right information is amplified at the right times, in the right way.

Regardless of when you generate your leads, nurturing your active leads is almost as important as acquiring them in the first place, with a recent Forrester report finding that

lead nurturing generated 50% more qualified leads at 33% less cost.

Email workflows are great at providing timely automated communications that drip feed relevant information that generates long-term value exchanges with your audiences.

KEY BENEFITS OF EMAIL NURTURE WORKFLOWS

- **Drive traffic back to your website where they can find more information that aids decision making**
- **Promote quality content that provides value to your readers**
- **Provide a point of contact from your company**
- **Send tailored offers or exclusive promotions**
- **Stay front of mind even when prospect is off your website**

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Email nurture workflow programs can vary massively in size and complexity due to your available resource and marketing automation platform.

However, there are 2 main approaches to bear in mind, no matter what your ambitions:

WORKFLOW FOR EARLY ENGAGERS

Audience: Soft conversion (whitepaper download, sign-ups to receive marketing comms...etc.)

Aim of your email program: Provide timely information at regular intervals that:

- **Differentiates:** your brand from competitors
- **Reinforces:** your value through offering a high level of utility
- **Informs:** about the latest industry insights and news
- **Persuades:** readers to take action

WORKFLOW FOR IN-MARKET ENGAGERS

Audience: Prospects that have downloaded sales collateral or have a reoccurring relationship with your brand

Aim of your email program: Provide timely information at regular intervals that:

- **Differentiates:** your service offering from your competitors
- **Reinforces:** your USPs and value proposition
- **Informs:** about latest offers, news or product/service information
- **Persuades:** prospects to take action

The above approaches demonstrate the need to distinguish where your audiences are in the buyer journey and to adopt a specific set of tactics to keep them engaged and moving through your process.

When you are developing your lead nurturing program, one of the key things to define is the point you hand over to sales. Most automated nurturing systems enable you to score leads based on their interactions with your content, so think about how you will score different actions and what different behaviors might mean. You can also use nurturing programs to non-invasively cumulatively gather more information on your prospect, so that you can make future communications even more targeted.

This information should be captured against each contact so both your sales and marketing teams are equipped with the very best insight

to help build a winning rapport. You may decide to keep SQLs in a marketing workflow that provides a steady supply of background information that continues to provide value to your readers throughout their duration in the sales pipeline.

However, make sure your sales team are fully informed about the communications your SQLs are receiving. Keep them updated with openers, clickers, unsubscribers and content downloaders on a regular basis. This will help ensure everyone is on the same page and your messaging remains consistent.

Many lead nurturing programs work on the assumption of a relatively simple sales funnel, where prospects "at one stage" are encouraged to move "to another stage". But remember prospects may not move through your content in a linear fashion. Purchase processes may be delayed, paused, re-started with different

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criteria or cancelled for reasons beyond your prospect's control. Your lead nurturing needs to be respectful of your prospect's time and schedule.

In order to accommodate the complex and often fluctuating needs of your target audience, it's worth considering the use of cookies and intent data to deliver timely messages in addition to your email workflows. The pervasive nature of intelligent automated display has helped many of the world's most successful brands create immersive multi-touchpoint environments that propel the right opportunities through their demand generation engines.

Re-marketing

Re-marketing is not new but the technology behind it drives fresh, relevant insight if used wisely.

An intelligent re-marketing or nurture strategy is designed to drive value into your audience and connect interest with more information. Advanced re-marketing and nurture looks at delivering relevant messaging based on where the user sits within the content journey.

A topic or category re-marketing approach drives better alignment with your audience needs and a timely relevant CTA with a reason to engage, based on insight, ultimately drives better response.

Think about how you can join up your data points to start building your own multi-channel amplification nurture systems.

PILLAR 7: MEASURING DEMAND GENERATION SUCCESS

Success should be defined early in the planning process, along with the marketing metrics by which you measure that success. You will need a systematic and simple approach to producing and evaluating the data that matters. Different information will matter to different people, so reports should be developed in conjunction with sales and management teams. Terms like marketing qualified lead (MQL) and sales qualified lead (SQL) need to be defined in themselves.

Typical marketing metrics often stop at the lead handover point, but in demand generation you have to think more strategically. Some activities, like face-to-face sales meetings or networking events, are hard to reduce to statistics. Reports should involve or relate directly to the revenue the company is earning.

Don't confuse top-level KPIs with the more granular campaign performance metrics you will use inside the marketing department to evaluate the success of different elements of a campaign.

Demand generation is a holistic, end-to-end strategy. You may find you generate some quick wins but a large part of your work will take months or even years to demonstrate value. Some metrics are best understood in terms of trends over time, rather than quick-wins and snapshots of success.

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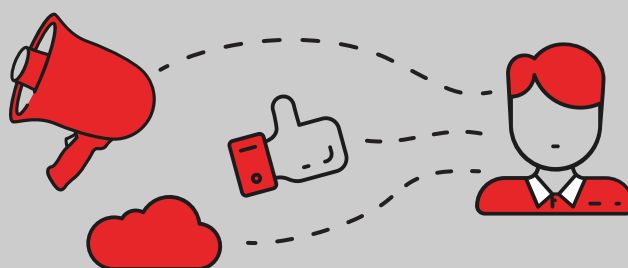
Control mechanisms are crucial for every campaign but it's important to establish the difference between KPIs and metrics. Both are important marketing measurements used to evaluate the effectiveness of your marketing efforts.

However, the difference occurs in where you apply these measurements:

KPIs support your overarching strategic objectives and goals, providing a critical marketing measurement to aim for. They can also provide an early warning system if performance is slipping.

Metrics provide a quantifiable measurement and are directly aligned to your tactical goals (the activities, actions or processes you have taken to achieve your overarching objective and KPIs).

A set of metrics can be used to support your KPI, for example:

KPI:

Revenue

Metrics:

- Increase in sales from new customers
- Increase in recurring revenue from existing customers
- Loss due to customer churn

6 key KPIs to consider in your reporting:

1

Revenue

Revenue is a simplistic but essential measure of the health of your sales and marketing efforts. All marketing and sales activities aim to impact revenue directly or indirectly. However it may take some time before your efforts show a demonstrable impact on revenue.

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2

Pipeline Value

While not all the prospects in your pipeline will convert, you should know what percentage is likely to convert. The value of your pipeline overall, the value of each pipeline level and the number of prospects at each level gives you a solid long-term view of potential revenue. The attrition rate (or conversion rate) for each step, including the final step to making a purchase, will show you where you are losing prospects and help you identify where to focus your optimization efforts. Reporting on the size and value of early pipeline stages will also provide a quicker indication of the impact of your marketing efforts.

3

Cost Per Lead/ Cost Per Acquisition/ Return On Investment

These measurements demonstrate how effectively you are spending your overall marketing budget. If you are fighting budget cuts, requesting additional investment or paying external consultants, these are the figures you will need to rely on to justify the expenditure. However, like revenue, you may need to wait to see how changes affect the figures – the average length of the purchase process is a good rule of thumb.

If your campaign is focused on efficiency, you will also need to work out the cost of nurturing a lead from discovery through to closing the sale.

4

Customer Lifetime Value

It is more expensive to sell to new prospects than to existing customers – according to Harvard Business Review, somewhere between 5 and 25% more expensive. Likewise, it can be more profitable to increase the overall expenditure of an individual customer than to convert more of them. Customer Lifetime Value, or CTV, is a more nuanced metric than number of leads or value of sales as it takes into account the work the company does addressing your existing customer base.

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5

KPIS For Optimization

Digital marketing provides us with huge quantities of instant data. We can use it to understand our customers and marketplace and to improve the performance of our campaigns, but it is easy to get distracted or lost in useless figures. In order to stay focused, it's important to define in advance what information we really need and what we intend to do with that information.

Lead generation and nurturing campaigns are relatively easy to report – with metrics such as the number of leads generated and their subsequent conversion rates. When it comes to raising brand awareness, marketplace positioning or improving demand, it is far more difficult. 57% of the buying journey may already be completed before the customer reaches out to you. [Marketing Think]. The Content Marketing Institute suggests you monitor social media reach, brand mentions, media mentions and brand searches. You can also use Google Trends to monitor the buzz around products or problems.

6

Measuring Content Performance

When it comes to individual content assets, there are many metrics you could look at. However, there is no single metric or set of metrics that will be applicable across all the content you create. For example, short landing pages with a lead gen call-to-action should be measured completely differently to a long-form technical whitepaper. If data is not actionable, it is just a "vanity metric" – numbers reported because they look good. No wonder marketers are confused – over half of marketers aren't even sure what successful content looks like [Contently].

Define what the objective is for each piece of content, and then you'll know how to measure it. Importantly, you'll also know which data to ignore. If a piece of content is designed to get late-stage prospects to finally place an order, the number of social shares isn't relevant. Equally, you will struggle to calculate conversion rates for content designed to attract early stage website traffic.

Over time you will build up a sufficient body of data to set benchmarks against, and from here you will be able to compare and contrast in order to gain insights into the performance of your campaigns. Using this feedback to optimize your content and improve your ROI is the ultimate goal, but these insights will also help you fine tune your strategy and get to know your buyer even better. Remember that most campaigns need time to build momentum, so don't be disappointed if your change in strategy doesn't result in instant revolution.

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CONCLUSION

Demand generation is an effective and measurable way to upgrade sales and marketing efforts. It is an 'always-on' marketing process that demands long-term commitment and investment if it is to attract and retain new clients, but it must be executed as part of a tightly controlled strategy with clearly defined objectives. Multiple elements must work together seamlessly, so each stage requires consideration and preparation.

Demand generation addresses the whole of the sales funnel, from understanding customer pain points and generating interest through to winning the sale. By focusing on the needs of customers at every stage of the purchase process, a demand generation campaign can create a regular flow of fresh leads throughout the funnel.

Choosing the right metrics to monitor the performance of different elements as well as the marketing program overall will create a positive feedback loop to ensure your return on investment grows over time.

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Inbox Insight are B2B marketing experts. Their team draws on the skills of media experts, experienced copywriters and data specialists to manage effective, targeted multi-channel campaigns. From profiling your target audience to generating high quality leads through content-led demand generation, Inbox Insight will accelerate your sales pipeline and grow your company's brand.

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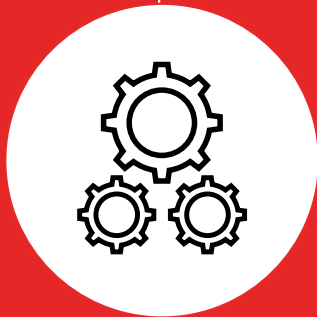- **The 4 Principles of Nurturing a Lead**

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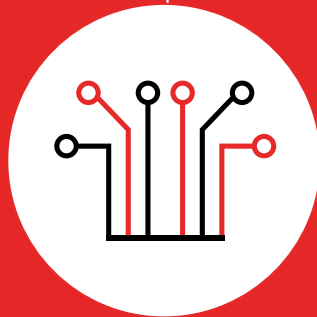- **B2B DMU Buyer Persona Cheat Sheet**

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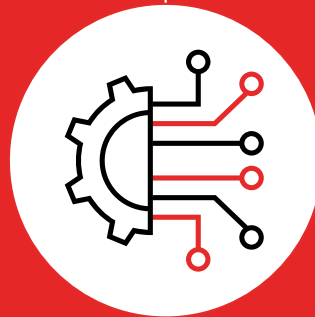
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