

Proven B2B Digital Marketing Tactics To Get And Keep Buyer Interest

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Did you know that today's buyer prefers to be contacted by email for new business development opportunities? Do you know how to use your website and social media to engage buyers and triple to quadruple your lead-to-close rate? Today's buyer is an adept online researcher. He or she reads online testimonials, conducts keyword searches and asks peers on social media for referrals. Industries today want more services with fewer, carefully selected suppliers.

What are the best practices for staying in front of buyers to build solid relationships and gain new, profitable business? We cultivated the following insights through our own research into the regional perspectives of buyers on contract manufacturers and suppliers, complimented by nation-wide research into buyer behavior and the benefits of using B2B social media to effectively engage this audience.

The Decision Associates marketing practice welcomes your questions and continued discussion on how to use these tactics to drive sales and sustainable strategies for profitable growth.

Buyers advice to suppliers for building a relationship for new business opportunities:

Send an email and know my business

- Email best use of my time and enables me to review capabilities at my convenience
- Don't try to make yourself look bigger or better than what you are, I only want to know what you are the best at
- Present info in a brief meaningful manner; electronic media such as a presentation or capability statement is helpful for circulation and storage for future opportunities
- Respect my time, if I say it is not a good fit move on
- Provide reasons why I should consider your services; have references, both positive and critical that I can contact. Research the products my company provides and offer opportunities to help my products and not just sell what you may be able to

Know my priorities

- My customers are very demanding, but tend not to forecast well; flexibility and agility are required in my supplier base
- We need more suppliers that partner, not telling me what or if they can support me
- Various industries have various requirements, and at times suppliers do not understand the market or the demands of the end sale, thus partnership is weakened/strained

Average initial engagement rates

- Approximately 77% of buyers are open to email from suppliers they don't know; average email open rate is approximately 21%
- Approximately 51.5% of buyers are open to a cold call from suppliers they don't know; it takes an average of 18 calls to connect with a buyer

Format guidelines to increase likelihood your email is read by prospects:

- Write at a 3rd grade reading level (short syllable words & simple sentence structure)
- Include 1-3 questions
- Aim for 3-4 word subject lines
- Have an opinion and use slightly positive or negative tone
- Keep message between 50-125 words
- Use words like: "Quick" "brief" "short" (emphasis on respecting time)
- Use open ended who/what/when/where/why/how questions: "Because" (reasons for consideration); "Talk" instead of "presentation;" "Challenges" instead of "pain points"

Specific benefits of incorporating B2B social media into your overall business development initiatives:

- 84% of B2B companies are using some form of social media marketing. However, "best in class" companies generate over 3X their share of all leads (17% vs. 5%) from social media as do average performing companies.
- 90% of B2B marketers are doing some form of content marketing, and B2B marketers spend on average 26% of their marketing budgets on content. The most effective content marketers spend twice as much as their less effective peers on content development and consider buying stage when developing content.
- Among B2B companies, LinkedIn was the most effective in generating sales leads through social media, with 65% having acquired a customer through the professional network, followed by company blogs (60%), Facebook (43%) and Twitter (40%).
- 77% of buyers say they are more likely to buy from a company whose CEO uses social media. 82% of employees say they trust a company more when the CEO and leadership team communicate via social media.
- Only 27% of B2B leads are sales-ready when first generated. This makes lead nurturing essential for capitalizing on the other 73%, but 65% of B2B marketers have not established lead nurturing campaigns.
- SEO-driven leads have the highest lead-to-close rate (15%) among common lead generation sources. Paid search leads average a 7% rate, while outbound marketing leads (e.g., direct mail, telemarketing) close at a 2% rate.
- 57% of B2B marketers say SEO has the biggest impact on their lead generation goals.

- Search provides the highest quality leads. According to research by HubSpot, “SEO leads have a 15% close rate, on par with the close rate for direct traffic, and ahead of referrals (9%), paid search (7%), social media (4%), and outbound leads (2%).”
- B2B companies with blogs generate 67% more leads per month on average than non-blogging firms.