Marketing Transformation Toolkit

Presented by the Marketing Concierge

Microsoft

Marketing Transformation

Introduction

The Marketing Transformation toolkit equips you with up-to-date information on various aspects of modern marketing and gives you practical advice on how to make it work for your business.

Microsoft has designed the Marketing Concierge service with you in mind. The Marketing Concierge Packages address all your marketing needs in a holistic manner and take the load of marketing responsibility off your shoulders.

You can find out more about the Marketing Concierge by just following the links from this document. Each section is linked to a relevant package for your convenience.

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To find out more about **Microsoft Partner Marketing Concierge Packages**, please contact our Concierge team:

ukmc@microsoft.com 0330 587 8007 Aka.ms/ukconcierge

Marketing Transformation

1 Why change? The partner marketing transformation

"Maintaining the status quo will be a failing strategy for IT solution providers. These business partners of some of the world's top IT vendors... have to make multiple changes, and soon." IDC: Partner of the future, 2015

This quick reference guide is all about helping you develop your marketing approach to remain competitive in light of some pretty dramatic changes happening in the marketplace, the IT industry and our customers' businesses.

Find out how the **Marketing Concierge Packages** below can help you sell more – just download our catalogue.

- Business transformation: positioning and value proposition – page 10
- Cross selling marketing – page 31
- Business transformation: campaign execution – page 32
- The complete cross-selling marketing – page 33

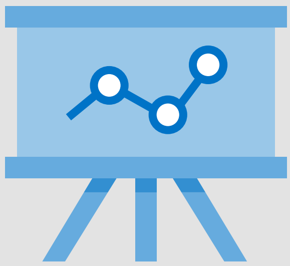
Download the **Marketing Concierge Catalogue** here > >

Checklist for a modern marketing organisation

The landscape for B2B buyers of IT is changing – which means partner marketing organisations have to change too. Where is your business on the modern marketing journey?

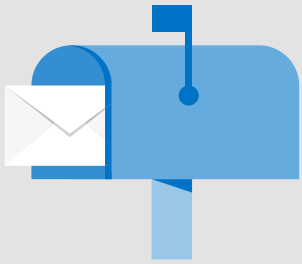
Evaluate yourself against the following action areas:

Are we as a business targeting a specific vertical market or a specific technology or business process? Or is our offer generic?

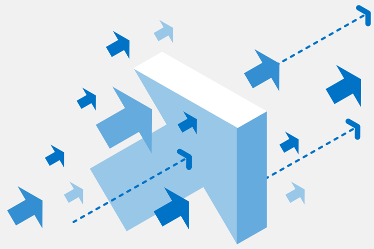


Are we targeting business decision makers and IT audiences or do we only target IT decision makers?

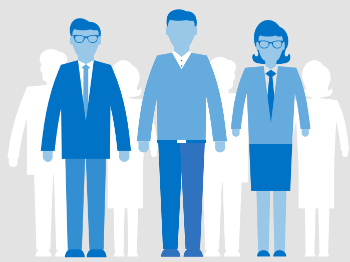
Are we focusing on just closing the deal or do we look to build an ongoing and profitable relationship beyond the sale?



Are we still relying on mostly traditional offline marketing tactics? Direct mail, printed brochures and event material.



Are we simply "reselling" or are we looking to the future? (by thinking about how our business might adapt itself to offer managed services and develop owned IP?).



Have we considered partnerships to develop customised and tailored value propositions?

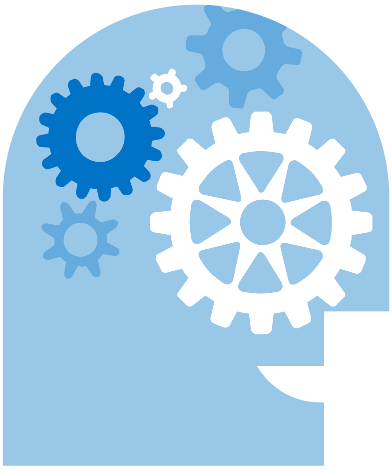
For a deeper analysis of your digital marketing activities, try maya.com.

Getting closer to the new breed of B2B buyers: creating a buyer persona

In 2014, IDC predicted that by 2016, line-of-business buyers will be involved in 80% of IT investments.

Talking to Line of Business (LoB) professionals means understanding business challenges and being able to talk credibly in their language. For example, our solutions might be able to increase sales per square metre for a retailer or lower the average cost per claim for an insurance company.

Think like your customers: create buyer personas for sales and marketing, so you understand who you're dealing with. Here's what you might want to think about when developing your personas:



Who are the buyers? What are their needs and expectations? How is their success measured?

What does a typical day look like for them? What are their roles and responsibilities?

What is the buying process and when does this type of buyer get involved? Who else plays a part?

What are their unanswered questions?

What are their pain points or challenges?

Where do they get their information? What do they consider a trusted source of insight?

Here are a few points relating to one example.
It's generic: specific cases may have specific differences.

HR DIRECTORS

1. Need to attract and retain the best people. Success metrics include employee churn, productivity and customer satisfaction.
2. Work will involve macro decisions on pay, benefits, training, and structures e.g., appraisal policies; but it will also include detail e.g., on the needs of specific departments or even individuals.
3. Buying process may be initiated by the HR team and not by IT, although IT and finance will be part of the process and the decision may need board sign-off.
4. Unanswered question: if I make a technology purchasing decision how can I measure its return on investment?
5. Challenges: how do I monitor and enhance performance? How do I improve collaboration? And in a world where people no longer expect to do the same thing forever, how can technology help me think laterally and give new opportunities to the talented people we want to keep?
6. Sources of insight: various, including peers, the LinkedIn groups of which they're members, media serving not just the HR function but their specific business sector, experience from within their own organisation – and of course their own careers. Where did this HR Director used to work? What might he/she have learned there?

You might also like to hear experts and customers give short descriptions of various C-suite roles and of factors to consider when selling to them.

You'll find a portfolio of short videos on our bubl tool.

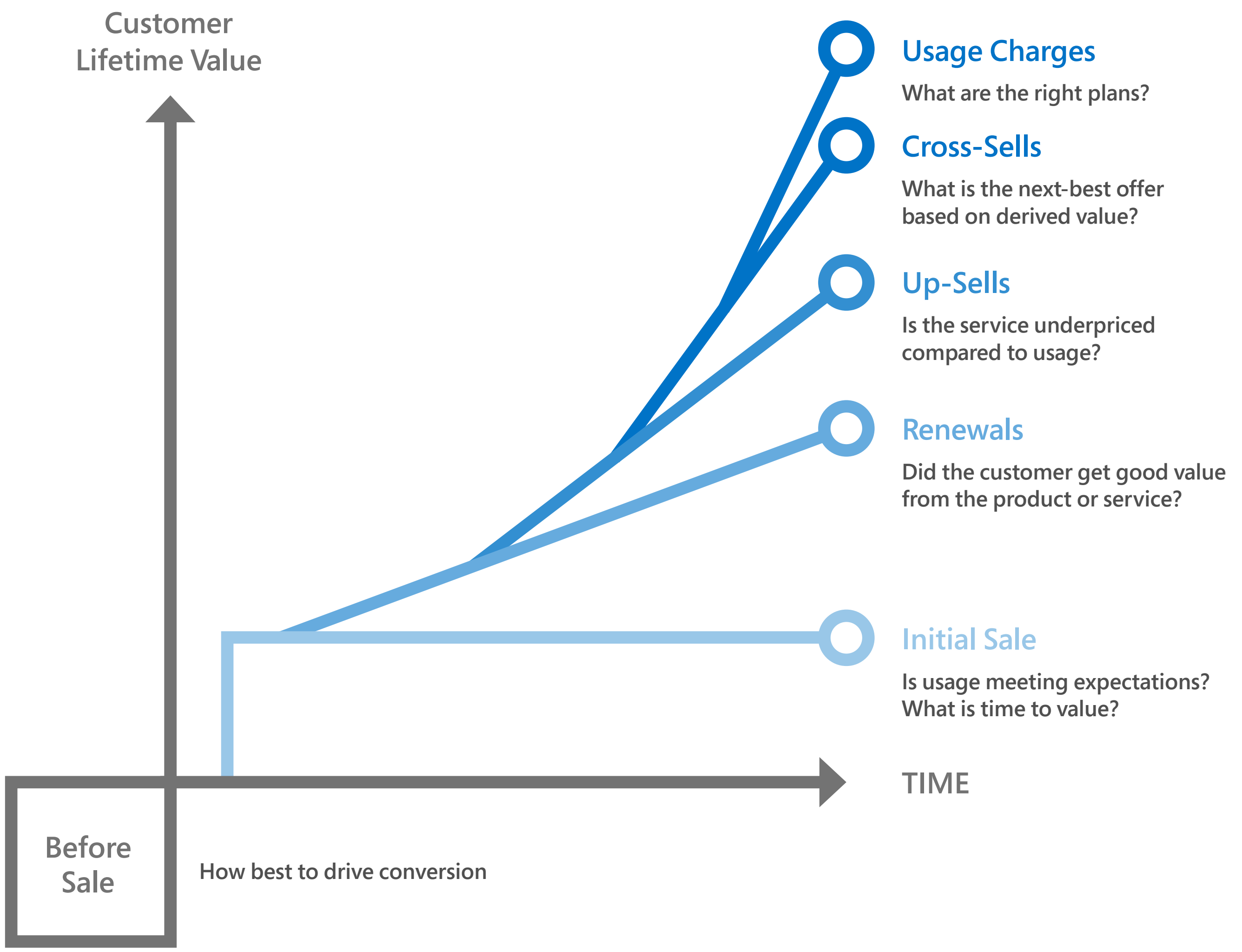
Considering our customers: CRM

70% of companies say it's cheaper to retain a customer than acquire one.*

Because we focus too much on acquisition, we miss the opportunity to engage with and develop existing customers. There are lots of reasons we don't focus on the business we already have. For instance, we may not have the resources or the customer data we need, or we may not have designated someone to own the issue.

The key to optimising customer lifetime value is to alter the slope of the revenue line. The steeper the better!

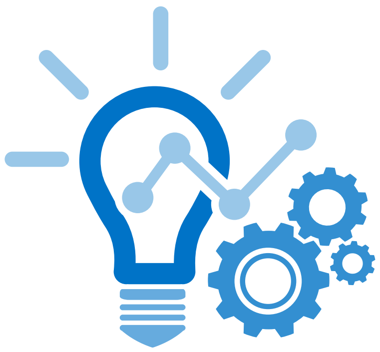
How good is your organisation at finding ways to deliver increasing value, and hence support increasing revenues? Ask yourself: who owns customers in your business? How well are they looked after?



*eConsultancy 2015

Marketing can make a big difference

Why not try out one of these three customer relationship campaigns?



ONBOARDING CAMPAIGN

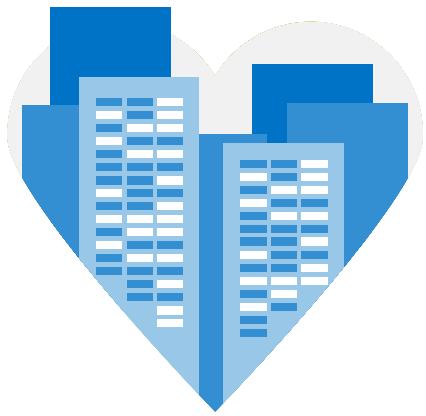
Automate some of the more repetitive tasks involved in onboarding:

- ✔ Create/promote our training resources
- ✔ The purchase isn't the end. Consider and act on next steps
- ✔ Draw up roadmaps for product kick-offs, including timelines
- ✔ Put yourself in their shoes: draw up some FAQs

UPSELL NURTURE

Capitalise on your existing clients to drive more revenue:

- ✔ Focus your message on benefits
- ✔ Adopt a friendly tone of voice
- ✔ Create a process for customers experiencing any issues that removes them from any potentially irritating upsell messages until matters are resolved



RENEWAL CAMPAIGN

Remind your existing customers that it is time to renew contracts:

- ✔ Start early, warning the right people
- ✔ Continue to nudge until renewal date
- ✔ Liaise with account team on non-responders

Nurture shouldn't just be a stream of selling messages. Customers find this off-putting. Instead it should be driven by your insights into their circumstances.

All of our customer marketing collateral for partners is stored [here](#).

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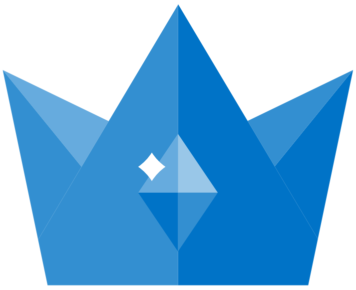
2 Content marketing that works

"There are 27,000,000 pieces of content shared every day." Hubspot

Content is king. So we need more of it. Right?



Wrong. We're so keen to create more and more of it to satisfy our need to support campaigns that we're stuck in a hamster wheel. We need to stop creating any old content, and start creating the **right content**. We need our content to help, not hype.

Find out how the **Marketing Concierge Packages** below can help you sell more – just download our catalogue.

- Write a case study – page 12
- Thought leadership white paper – page 14
- Content campaign in a box – page 19
- Automated digital marketing – page 21

Download the **Marketing Concierge Catalogue** here >>

What's the problem with our content?

IT decision makers say our content isn't great and we know too there's a lot of it.
So what's the problem exactly, and more importantly, what can we do about it?

Research from IDG (2015) tells us this:

	What they say the problem is	What we can do about it
41% say	"Too much marketing hype/ empty buzzwords"	Keep it simple and unbiased – there's a place for vendor-owned "unbiased content" that serves to help and not simply hype or oversell
38% say	"Hesitant to download because I don't want the sales follow-up"	Don't follow up too soon, unnecessarily or without permission, that only puts buyer off
31% say	"Incomplete or inconsistent technical information"	Keep an inventory of your content and make sure to remove anything out of date content and update as necessary
31% say	"Information is too general"	Be specific, consider adding a vertical slant or message to make the information more specific to a certain persona

Content aligned to the buyer journey

Make sure that the content you serve is relevant to where a recipient is in their buyer journey with you.

Unbiased, simple and helpful
Hype is counterproductive – whereas discussion-based blog posts, for instance, promote your credibility as a thought leader.

Good timing
Don't jump in too soon or without permission. Meet the needs of customers at the right stage of their buying journey.

Keep things up to date
Old or irrelevant content is irritating.

Make an effort
Generic content is often ignored. A little tailoring to the right persona can make a big difference.

For instance, the buyer journey often takes place in the cloud. Customers have goals for each stage of that journey – and if you understand these goals you'll be a help rather than an irrelevance. Check it out.

Check out our **Content Campaign in a Box Package** designed to support you in creating a content-based inbound marketing campaign to attract new customers.

To find out more, download the **Marketing Concierge Catalogue** here >>

Here's another way to consider that journey – together with examples of relevant content:

1

LOOSENING STATUS QUO

1. Analyst research
2. Articles on trends
3. Feature articles about new technology

Example: Forrester Total Economic Impact of Windows Server 2012, white paper

2

COMMITTING TO CHANGE

1. Challenge-led content and research
2. Technology opinions
3. Case studies

Example: Enterprise Mobility + Security, Petrinovich Pugh Case Study

3

EXPLORING SOLUTIONS

1. Product literature
2. Product reviews
3. Case studies

Example: Office 365 Datasheets

4

COMMITTING TO A SOLUTION

1. Analyst reviews, comparisons
2. Product reviews, opinions
3. Product demos

Example: SQL 2016, Closer Look at Advanced Analytics Demo

5

JUSTIFYING THE DECISION

1. ROI tools
2. Product testing, reviews
3. Case studies

Example: Customer Lifetime Value Model

6

MAKING THE SELECTION

1. ROI and assessment tools
2. Vendor directories/comparison
3. Product demo

Example: Secure Cloud Development Environment Demo

7

ONBOARDING

1. Welcome packs
2. Getting the best from guides
3. Implementation

Example: Excel 2016 Application Guide

Make content to fill the gaps, not cover old ground

51% of marketers say "lack of time" is their biggest content marketing challenge.*

To make sure we're getting the best out of our limited content creation time and resources, we need to be sure that we create the right stuff. Creating a content audit is a good idea. Why? Quite simply, it allows you to see what you've got, aligned to each buying stage and each persona. It'll help you keep up to date and control the content. What's more, auditing your content to the buying journey will allow you to spot the gaps and also make sure you're not making more of the same.

Creating a content audit in four steps:

1

Create an Excel spreadsheet with the following columns for your inventory: format, title, description, creation date, audience.

2

Then use the seven stages of the buyer journey (as on previous page) each as a column to the right.

3

Then consider the content item and the stage of the journey at which it would be helpful or useful. Remember that some larger pieces of content might span multiple stages of the buying journey. Shade the relevant columns to show the span of usefulness for each piece.

4

Now, list each content asset in turn, completing the cells for each item.

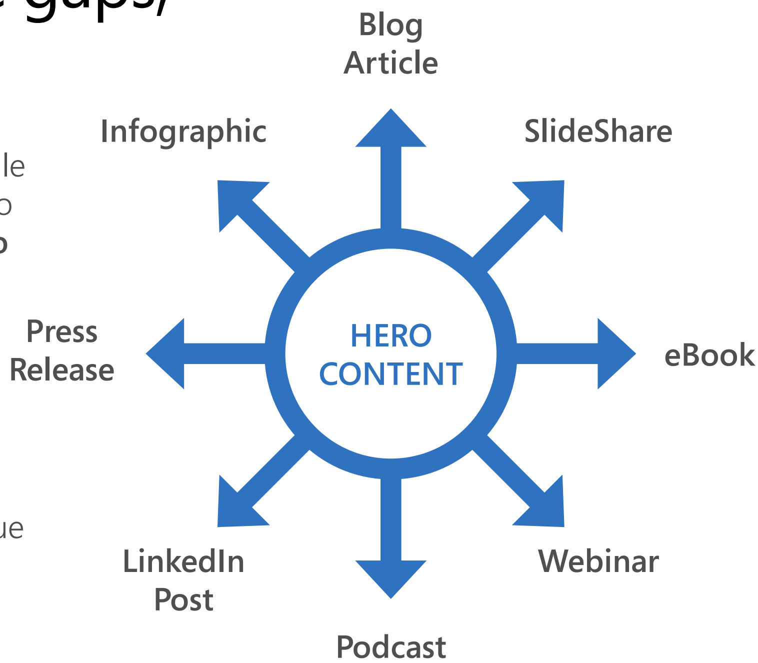
Once you've got your spreadsheet completed, you can use the sort function to organise the entries to show you the content you have aligned to each stage, or each audience group or, indeed, the particular format for the content is in.

*Spiceworks, 2016

Make content to fill the gaps, not cover old ground

You don't have to create new content every single time. Some of the best content gets replaced too soon. **Consider breaking good content up into multiple pieces** that allow you to address the stages of the buyer journey.

Quality "hero content" should be atomised into smaller pieces, or repurposed to deliver a new, interesting, more helpful point of view. Smaller pieces of content are more accessible, easier to digest and allows you to get better value from the bigger pieces that take so much time and effort. **Plus: smaller, more visual content works well in digital and social marketing.**



Remember that different people prefer content in different formats: **audio, diagrams, videos, text etc.**, so always consider alternative ways of appealing to them.

For instance, a research white paper hosted on your website could be atomised in several ways as shown below. In each case, be sure to include a link to the full white paper online as your call to action (CTA):

- Rework key stats into an **infographic** and use as an **electronic mailshot**.
- Break out key stats into a series of **tweets**.
- Use key stats and killer quotes from the white paper as talking points in single-paragraph posts on **LinkedIn** on your **company page**, on personal pages and also in relevant **groups** to which you belong.
- Rework the key findings of the research into a shorter **opinion piece**. This can be used as a **blog** post on your website – and you can drive traffic to the post with **mentions on LinkedIn** or perhaps on your company **Facebook page**.
- You could even offer your short opinion piece to **media outlets** serving your target markets.
- **Rework the key findings into a series of slides.** Post them on **SlideShare** with keywords that will help relevant audiences find them. You could also run them as a filmed clip, record an accompanying voiceover and post them on **YouTube** – once more with key search words. In addition you could of course use the slides in **sales and marketing presentations** or deliver them at an independent **business conference**.
- **Create an email campaign** driving traffic to many of the other things you've already done: for instance, the infographic, the LinkedIn posts, the blog posts, YouTube and any media coverage you achieved.

You'll find several examples of how a big piece of content can be broken up and re-used by visiting our online store of marketing assets.

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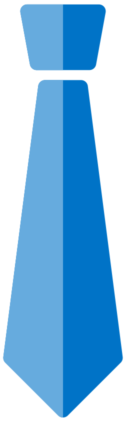
3 Social Media: where and how to engage

Why social media for business?

In short, because it's where our audience is and it's how they're influenced.

Social media is an opportunity to:

- Get online exposure for yourself, your marketing content and your opinions
- Showcase your brand – become an ambassador
- Hear what people are saying about the topics you're interested in
- Generate leads by spotting opportunities and engaging in a personal way
- Build relationships with potential customers by sharing relevant content.



73%

of IT executives are influenced in their decision-making by social networks

(SocialCast)

There are several social media platforms you could use. Here we're going to look at three of the best ones for B2B marketing: Twitter, LinkedIn and blog posts.

Find out how the **Marketing Concierge Packages** below can help you sell more – just download our catalogue.

- Social selling workshop – page 9
- Know your customer and engage with blog posts – page 15
- Driving reach with linkedin – page 16
- Social outreach marketing – page 27
- Storytelling through social – page 28

Download the **Marketing Concierge Catalogue** here > >

Twitter: What is it good for?

Discover content: It's like having a bespoke newspaper delivered every day

Communicate: Reach out to people, discover influencers and opportunities

Tweets with visuals have 5x more engagement compared to text-based tweets

There is a 19% increase in retweets when you include a quote

There is a 17% increase in retweets when you include a stat

TOP TIP: Mix up your social media content!

These figures are all courtesy of HubSpot, which itself runs a Twitter feed that's a great example of good practice. HubSpot is an inbound marketing and sales platform, and it tweets not just about itself but about generic social media topics as well as broader B2B issues. HubSpot also writes blog posts and other content on all these subjects and uses tweets to drive traffic to them. In other words, it doesn't set out to sell – it starts by aiming to be interesting and useful. Check it out at @HubSpot.

Tweeting Dos and Don'ts

State clearly that the views and opinions expressed are your own.

Be polite.

Be mindful of copyright: if you're referencing a third party always credit the author or source.

Add value. Think before you post.

Invite action. Leave space for a link.

Do not lie.

Don't pick fights or post anything defamatory, vulgar, obscene or threatening. If you think your mum or boss wouldn't like it, don't post it.

If in doubt, don't tweet.

Check out **Partner Sociable**, a free service from Microsoft providing you with social media content related to Microsoft solutions, industry news and thought leadership. You can republish any of this content on your social media channels as your own.

To find out more, click here.

LinkedIn: What is it good for?

LinkedIn is a great way to meet, engage and interact with prospects, peers and industry news.

Staying in touch with business contacts and building relationships with them. Say a key contact leaves one of your client organisations for another company. Great! Now you have a new prospect…

Getting background information on contacts e.g. previous employment, education, personal statement with photo (called 'Summary' on LinkedIn).

Getting background information on businesses: most organisations have their own LinkedIn page now. Use it to find out what the company sees as its strengths and also to see how it talks about itself. The more you know about the character and mission of the business, the better.

Joining interesting groups and following, engaging in or starting discussions, e.g., are you running a retail campaign around Azure™? Make sure you are engaged in key retail ITDMs/BDMs discussions or start your own.

Sending direct messages to contacts, or InMail messages to prospects outside your circle.

Seeing who's been looking at your own profile.

Sales Navigator is the ultimate sales tool. It helps you to get custom lead recommendations, do the prospecting, find out who are the key decision makers and most importantly it allows you to get in touch with them using the InMail feature.

Building a compelling and helpful LinkedIn profile

"64% of social referrals to a company's website come from LinkedIn." [eConsultancy]

- In the About Us section, describe your company – where you are and what you do. Remember, it's not just about you: tell the visitor what you can do for them. People visit your page because they want to know how you can make a difference for them, so don't disappoint. You can add photos too, so choose the images carefully and make sure they're relevant, appealing and reflect your brand.
- LinkedIn is a great way to find the right people. As well as posting jobs, use it to show potential employees how amazing it is to work at your company. It also helps show potential customers a positive side to your business.
- It sounds obvious, but keep your updates up to date. If your last post is weeks old, it suggests that your company can't be bothered. Your posts and updates should create dialogue or have a call to action. A positive buzz is worth its weight in gold.
- Use your Showcase pages to focus on vertical sectors or on specific solutions. They're a super-efficient way to make people engage with what you offer.

LinkedIn Dos and Don'ts

✓	✗
Spend time on your company's Summary page. Describe what your organisation can do for companies, maybe giving examples of satisfied customers and percentage improvements.	Don't sound like a corporate machine. It's OK to be on-message but your company needs to sound like it's run by real people and not like its own mission statement. In other words, be businesslike but human.
Take advantage of automatic features. For instance, LinkedIn can mine email accounts and send invitations to connect to contacts. Get your colleagues to do the same and pool your knowledge for the company-wide LinkedIn page.	Don't ignore LinkedIn emails: ENDORSE your contacts' skills – they get notified of that endorsement. It's a good way to stay in touch and build a relationship. WATCH out for job changes or work anniversaries. They keep you up to speed, giving you an opportunity to make contact.
Join groups and follow company pages. Smart companies don't simply join industry peer groups – they also join groups where they're likely to find customers and prospects. You can search for business groups by sector, geographic region or by interest.	Don't dive in without thinking. It pays to do background research on prospects so you can tailor your approach accordingly.
Be active. Your company profile will rise the more you shape out your page, post updates, like or share others' updates, join groups or participate in discussions.	

Check out our **Driving Reach with Engagement Package**. Drive revenue with new customers with a LinkedIn targeting campaign to undertake social selling. Create, manage and implement highly-targeted online demand generation.

To find out more, download the Marketing Concierge Catalogue here > >

Find relevant contacts – grow your audience

The more relevant your contact base, the more useful LinkedIn will be to you as a sales and marketing tool.

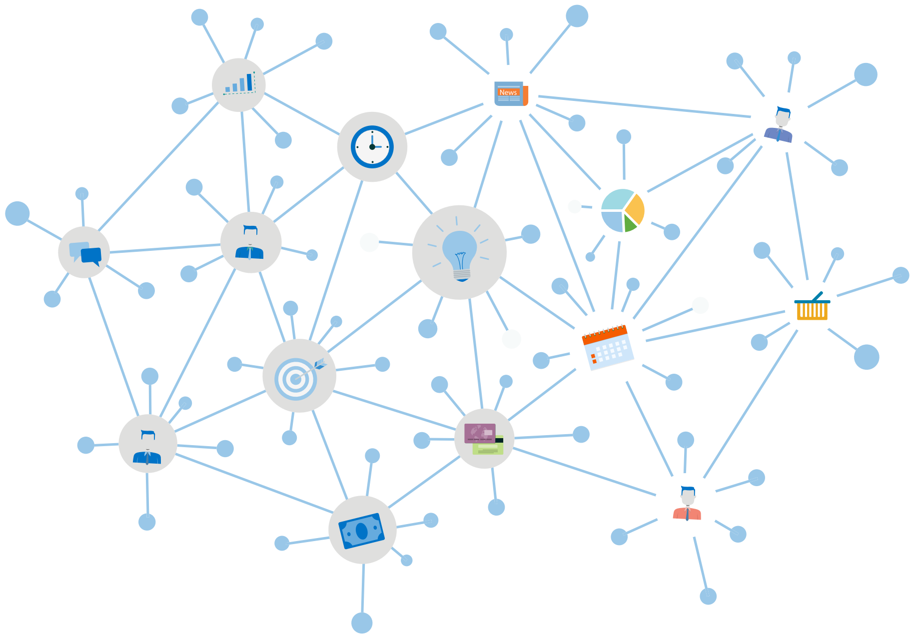
Start with people you know – for instance, your company's LinkedIn profile, your colleagues and current business contacts – to build the first layer of your network.

Find people by company. Search under the "Companies" tab to start looking for employees in IT departments.

LinkedIn allows you to connect your Twitter account to your LinkedIn profile. Make use of this.

LinkedIn can also connect to your email address book. All you need to do is uncheck any non-business suggestions it makes.

Use LinkedIn Sales Navigator. It's a paid-for upgrade, but it's a great way to figure out the decision-making process within a company so you can identify the best people to connect to.



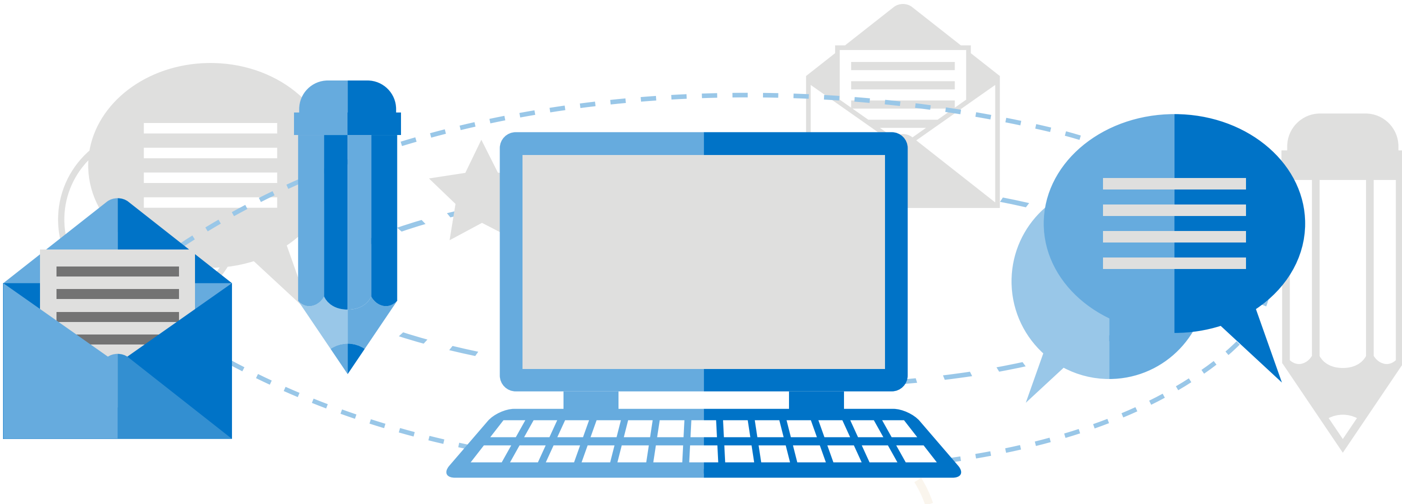
LinkedIn Groups: joining, engaging and interacting

There are very many groups on LinkedIn, so it's important to join and be active in the right ones. This can involve some lateral thinking as well as a little logic and can be great for targeting customers to drive a vertcial/specific campagn.

- Don't automatically assume the biggest groups in your target market are the best for you. Sometimes a group of a few hundred people may contain more relevant decision-makers than a much larger one.
- Use the knowledge you've gained from LinkedIn Sales Navigator (see above). If you've identified key people in the decision-making chain at target companies, see which groups they belong to and join those – especially if the same group names keep popping up.
- Be different. If you're selling into finance markets, sure, join groups of finance IT decision-makers – but consider other finance sector groups too, such as those where you can see strategic discussions taking place. Joining in these discussions will set you apart from many other IT sales and marketing people and may open doors for you.
- Be interested. Joining in discussions with no immediate prospect of a return develops your profile and gets people talking to you. And of course you can start a discussion topic yourself.

Writing a blog – and making the most of it

Blogs are great and useful content. They help with SEO, they give your company character and authority and once they're written they can be used in a number of ways:



- Understand your audience. Consider their needs and unanswered questions, and get your topic ideas from them.
- Think of length and structure. Aim for 600-800 words with a punchy intro and a logical development of your argument, which you can sketch out first in bullet point form. A story, a stat or a rhetorical question is a good way to open, and a 'call to action' is a good way to close e.g., to click on a link or sign up to an event.
- Use your bullet points as a guide and start writing. If you finish everything you have to say in only 200 or 300 words don't worry. Why pad it out if you feel it says everything?
- Check it through, and get someone else to do the same. Give it an eye-catching headline.
- Post the blog on your company website and then get busy driving traffic to it. You can do this by:
  - Visiting a relevant LinkedIn group of which you're a member and starting a discussion there on the same topic, including a link to the blog.
  - Mentioning (and linking to) the blog in a relevant thread in someone else's LinkedIn discussion.
  - Developing a series of tweets on aspects of the piece and posting them at intervals over a week or two – once again including a link.
  - Looking for an opportunity to mention the blog post on a website for media covering an appropriate sector.

In summary, when using social media for business:

- **Be a trusted advisor.** If you're interesting and you help people before you start selling, they'll remember you when the time comes.
- **Do research.** Find out who people are, where they are and what interests them. It takes a little longer but it's better than cold-calling.
- **Be authentic.** Aim to be interested and interesting. You need to break the ice before you can go into sales mode.
- **Make time for it.** Think of it as part of your sales process now.
- **Nurture prospects and clients.** Stay on people's radar. Keep adding value and they'll value you in return.
- **Be joined up.** If you write a blog, mention it on LinkedIn. If you start a LinkedIn discussion, tweet about it. This one small additional step can get you a lot more traction.

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4 Digital that's more than the sum of the parts

A move from traditional to digital marketing

What's happening?	What does it mean?
"65% of B2B buyers already know what they want to buy before they get in touch with a sales rep." [IDC]	It's only a minority of buyers that sales can guide through the buying process.
"Marketing and in particular digital marketing is going to have to take much of the load in winning new customers." [IDC]	Our digital marketing needs to be integrated – not random and unplanned.
"Successful partners are investing in digital, especially digital content... Just to make sure they're offering the right educational content for customers." [IDC]	We need content that keeps customers with us or they'll find it from our competition.

Find out how the **Marketing Concierge Packages** below can help you sell more – just download our catalogue.

- Increased web traffic to reach new customers – page 17
- The complete integrated digital marketing – page 23
- Winning back your digital audience – page 24

Download the **Marketing Concierge Catalogue** here > >

Inbound marketing allows customers to find their way to us

Inbound marketing is about making our content available to prospective buyers – when they're seeking it. It's about **CONTENT, SEARCH** AND **SOCIAL** working together.

Content

Content is key. When prospective buyers start scoping their options online it's content they seek. It comes in different forms but each one of them contributes to the information-gathering and decision-making process. For instance:

TECHNOLOGY BACKGROUND INFORMATION – online assessments of general technology approaches, e.g., the relative merits of private vs. public vs. hybrid cloud environments

COMPANY INFORMATION – company websites, third-party assessments of key industry players e.g., on partner or sector media websites, promotional audio-visuals

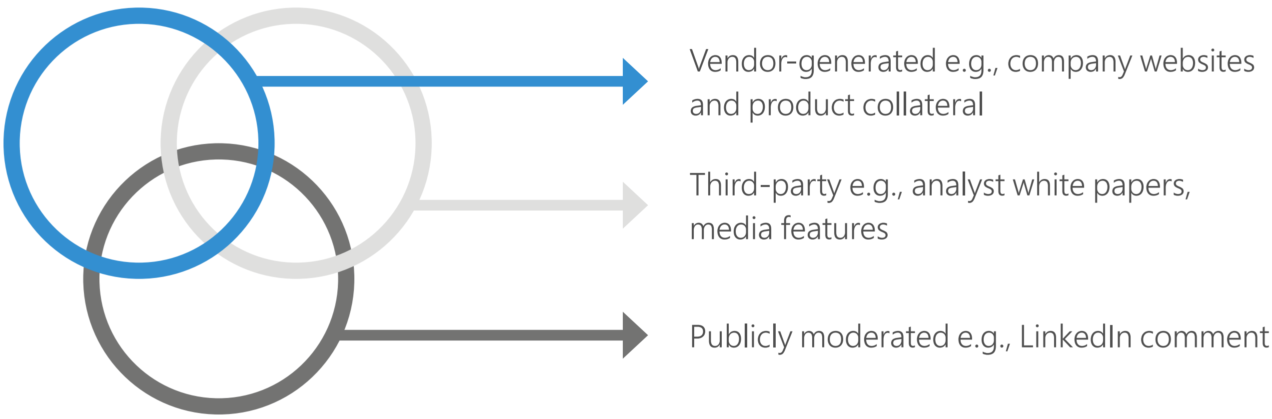
PRODUCT INFORMATION – website summaries, downloadable literature, streaming media on company websites, on YouTube and elsewhere

MARKET ANALYSIS AND STATS – online reports from analyst groups, infographics, news features

OPINION PIECES – social media discussion threads, blog posts, online media columns

CASE STUDIES – company websites, blog posts, online media coverage

THIRD-PARTY REVIEWS – downloadable white papers from analyst groups and management consultancies, online media analysis, social media comment



Search marketing: getting started

"88% of IT buyers use search as the starting point in their decision-making journey"
(IDG)

If search is the main starting point, it stands to reason we need to be seen and available. That comes down to:

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

Optimising our websites, landing pages and content to be available and seen through organic search (turning up on the Search Engine Results Page (SERP))

Pros:

- Great longer-term value
- Exposure, branding and awareness
- High volumes of traffic
- Users TRUST organic search

Cons:

- No guarantees of high ranking
- Volatile: needs constant attention to keep delivering

Pay-per-click (PPC)

Paying the search engine to display a search result based on a bidding system and keywords. What is displayed in the SERP is really an advert.

Pros:

- Immediate results
- Highly measureable and quantifiable
- Pay for results
- Fewer resources needed for success
- Granular targeting

Cons:

- Pay for results
- Lower perceived value: users KNOW it's paid for

TOP TIP: Combining both approaches is the best approach, perhaps reducing the spend on PPC when your organic rankings and traffic improve.

Check out our **Increased Web Traffic To Reach New Customers Package**.
Drive Revenue from new customers with SEO and paid search. This campaign will help improve search engine rankings for your company website and gain a competitive edge with SEO content.

To find out more, download the Marketing Concierge Catalogue here > >

Social

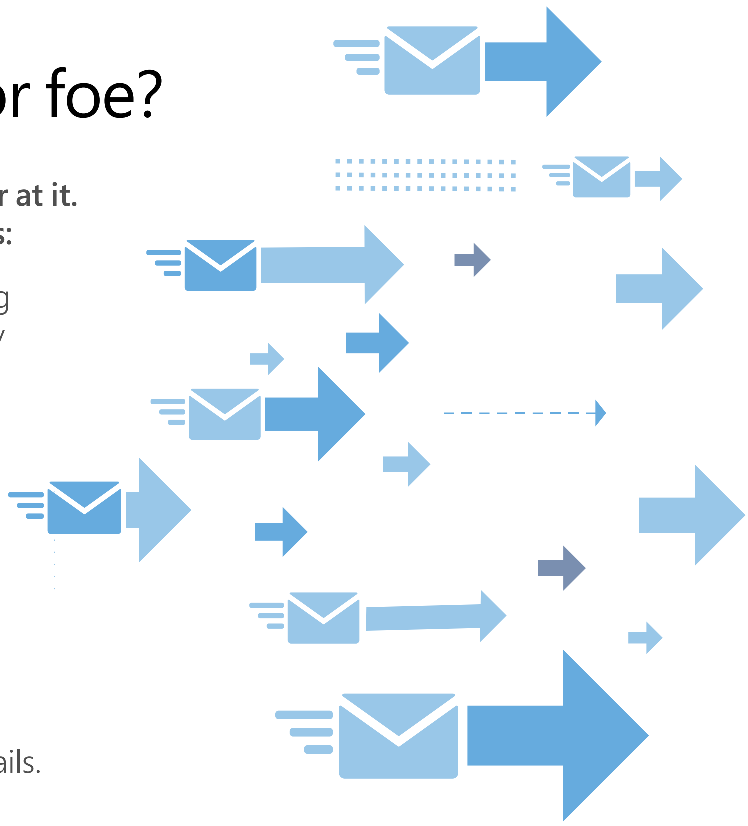
Social media provides a number of channels for the delivery of content and therefore multiplies the effectiveness of everything you put out there. Plus, the more the content appears across all those channels, the more likely it is to be found in searches.

Which is why content, search and social deliver more than the sum of their parts.

Effective inbound social media channels include:

- **Twitter** – reach out to people, discover influencers and opportunities, drive traffic to longer content.
- **LinkedIn** – meet, engage and interact with prospects, peers and industry news.
- **Blog posts** – structured and topical arguments that help with SEO and give your company character and authority.

Email marketing: friend or foe?



Email marketing works, we just need to get better at it. The most effective email marketing looks like this:

- **Compelling content** for each stage of the buying journey. This way, we have content to accompany buyers along their journey via email marketing.
- **Segmenting email campaigns based on behaviour.** Some more sophisticated email marketing or marketing automation tools will allow rules and scoring to determine who gets what, delivering contacts a better, more relevant email marketing experience.
- **Offering valuable, downloadable content.** We can avoid asking email visitors to complete forms because we already have their contact details.

Check out our **Cross Selling Email Marketing Package**. Starting with research to understand more about your business, the services you offer and who you are targeting, this email nurture campaign will help generate awareness and create new leads.

To find out more, download the Marketing Concierge Catalogue here > >

Avoiding random acts of marketing

With multiple digital tactics at our fingertips, it's easy to get blindsided. We can't run a social media activity, call it a campaign and deliver no meaningful outcome to the business.

Our campaigns should integrate multiple tactics, designed to interact with our prospects in the best way, throughout their buying journey. The joining of disparate tactics is facilitated through marketing automation. This way we see the bigger picture, measure the effectiveness of each tactic and demonstrate results that matter through integration with CRM systems.

Marketing automation allows you to track the interactions you're generating, monitor user behaviour and use that insight to drive the relevance and personalisation buyers are looking for.

Marketing automation also has:

- **Automated actions:** Personalising a comms journey for each individual would be too time consuming.
- **Lead scoring:** You'll need to recognise when a lead engages to the right point for them to be passed to sales.
- **Automated integration:** Sales-ready leads can be passed into CRM systems.

Marketing Automation Platform (MAP)	Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system
All about prospects (acquisition, lead/demand generation) **Examples:** Marketo, Eloqua, HubSpot, Act-On, ClickDimensions	All about customers (retention, customer service, up and cross-sell) **Examples:** Salesforce, Microsoft Dynamics

Here are some marketing automation tools and the social media platforms with which they can be used:

Tool	Blog/ Website	Facebook	Google+	LinkedIn	Twitter	YouTube
Buffer https://buffer.com/		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Hootsuite http://hootsuite.com/	✓ (Wordpress Plug-in)	✓	✓	✓ (post to profiles, company pages and groups)	✓	✓
HubSpot https://www.hubspot.com/	✓	✓		✓	✓	
SocialPort www.rfact.com.com						
Marketo https://www.marketo.com/	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Meet Edgar https://meetedgar.com/		✓		✓ (post to profiles, company pages)	✓	
Sprout Social https://sproutsocial.com/		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Tweetdeck https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/					✓	
Tweet Jukebox https://www.tweetjukebox.com/					✓	
Wistia https://wistia.com/	✓					

Bear in mind, though, that marketing automation doesn't solve everything. They are no more than what they say they are – automation systems. They can replace a great deal of manual effort, but only if you're currently engaging in the type of marketing the platforms handle.

The marketing automation checklist:

✓ Data to personalise the experience (contact data that can be segmented).

✓ Audience-specific content and info (enough content to map to the customer journey).

✓ Email and campaign assets (lots of emails and landing pages – copy, images and assets).

✓ Lead definitions and processes (the process and sales integration to manage a lead when it is created).

Success in digital marketing is about remembering... it's the sum of the parts

1. **Understand your audience and where to engage** – use audience insight and personas to select the most appropriate digital tactics and compelling marketing messages.

2. **Be available when they're looking for you** – mainly through search and social media as the critical starting point for their journey.

3. **Create the right content for the right stage of their journey** – so you can go from stage to stage with your prospects, guiding the way and building trust.

4. **Don't start a conversation you don't intend to finish** – if you create an interaction with a content piece that doesn't lead the prospect to the next stage, you're simply starting a conversation for a competitor.

Check out our **Complete Integrated Digital Marketing Package**. Ideal for entering new markets or product launches. This package includes everything you need to run an integrated digital campaign.

To find out more, download the **Marketing Concierge Catalogue** here > >

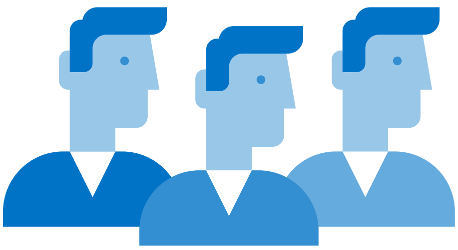
Marketing Transformation

5 A marketing engine that speaks business language

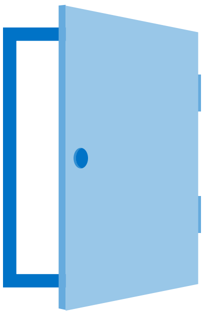
How can marketers get a seat at the table?

Marketing sometimes finds it difficult to prove its own value, which is why its budget is rarely ring-fenced. Wouldn't it be useful if we could demonstrate the bottom-line impact of every marketing dollar we invest?

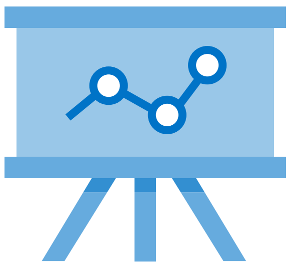
We can. By using modern marketing techniques, including marketing automation, CRM systems and revenue marketing techniques, we can track how:



Investments generate leads



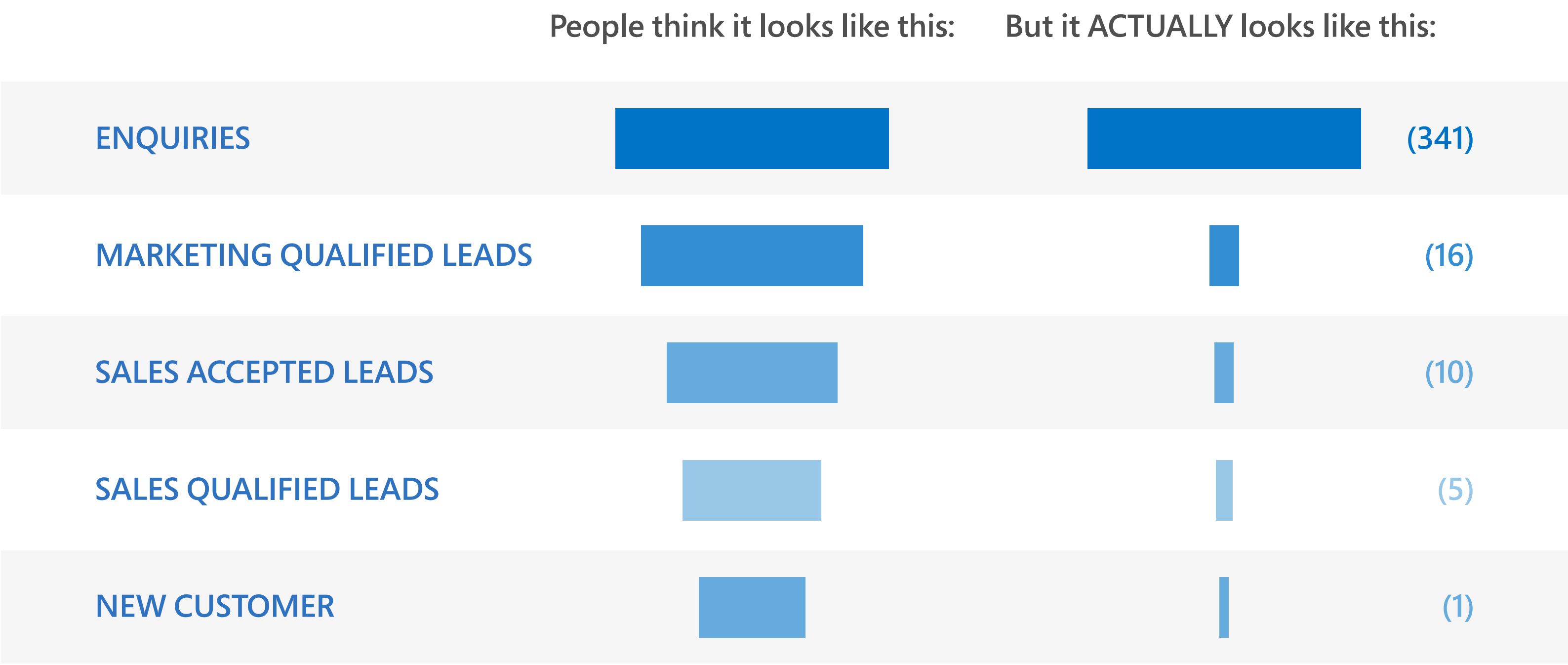
How leads become opportunities



How opportunities become sales

Start by building a funnel

We talk a lot about 'the funnel' in marketing. The reality of what it looks like is quite scarily different from what we imagine.



Based on the average conversion rates, you'll need **341.4 enquiries** at the top of the funnel to create one customer at the bottom.

Building a funnel

1. Understand **average deal size** to turn customer numbers into **potential revenue**.
2. Work with sales to understand:
   a. Conversion from Sales Qualified Lead (SQL) to won customer.
   b. How many of the leads marketing deliver as "marketing qualified" are held onto and progressed into opportunities.
3. Bring together your marketing campaign reporting to understand:
   a. How many marketing qualified leads are generated from enquiries (known interactions) and interactions.
   b. What the conversion is from outbound and inbound channels to enquiry.

What should conversion look like?

Benchmark your conversion rates against the following:

	Average conversion (341 enquiries to create one new customer)	**Best-practice conversion** (70 enquiries to create one new customer)
ENQUIRIES (Interactions from known contacts)	341	70
MARKETING QUALIFIED LEADS (Interactions from known contacts)	16	7
SALES ACCEPTED LEADS (Interactions from known contacts)	10	6
SALES QUALIFIED LEADS (Interactions from known contacts)	5	3
NEW CUSTOMERS (Interactions from known contacts)	1	1

Considering a different way – revenue marketing

"Revenue Marketing" is the development of repeatable prospecting programmes that drive new customer acquisition and measurable sales. The focus is on revenue. The key to revenue marketing is a predictable return on investment: if you know the impact of marketing investment then it's possible to link marketing plans to specific revenue objectives.

That means the business can start to see marketing as a revenue generator. Budgets start getting called investments because they have a quantifiable return within a given timeframe.

What kind of marketing organisation are you working within?

Plot yourself against the journey below.

Revenue marketing shortens your sales cycles, allows you to close leads at a higher rate and makes your salespeople more successful.

The journey to revenue marketing

TRADITIONAL

Cost centre

- MarComm function
- Marketing and sales in silos
- No B2B lead gen

LEAD GENERATION

Cost centre

- Email based
- Tactical
- Focused on cost of lead generation
- Little sales/ marketing alignment

DEMAND GENERATION

Cost/revenue centre

- Marketing Automation + CRM
- Lead nurturing
- Marketing funnel
- Alignment with sales

REVENUE MARKETING

Revenue centre

- System optmised
- Sales and marketing are REVENUE team
- Predictable, repeatable scalable outcomes

The Revenue Marketing™ Journey, The Pedowitz Group.

How do you measure marketing effectiveness?

The majority of tech B2B organisations measure themselves against lead volume. What do you measure marketing effectiveness against?

Traditional	Lead Generation	Demand Generation	Revenue Marketing
Website visits Social engagement Database size, activity Awareness	Cost per lead Lead volume Lead velocity	Lead quality Lead value Close rate Time to close Conversion rate	Total revenue Cost per customer acquisition Customer lifetime value

To find out more about **Microsoft Partner Marketing Concierge Packages**, please contact our Concierge team:

ukmc@microsoft.com **0330 587 8007** **Aka.ms/ukconcierge**

Marketing Transformation

6 Nurture for value not for vanity

"Only 17% of business to business (B2B) leads are sales-ready when first generated." [Pardot]

In marketing, people can be so keen to generate engagement they're often not prepared to deal with situations where it doesn't equate to an immediate sale. Why wouldn't leads be ready to buy?

- Timing (budget availability, other vendors in play).
- The organisation is not yet sold on the idea of change.
- They're not entirely sure what they're looking for.
- They're not sufficiently confident in our offering or in our ability to help.

What's the answer? Nurture. But nurture has become yet another marketing buzz phrase. It's a term that needs to be rescued. It needs to carry meaning.

Find out how the **Marketing Concierge Packages** below can help you sell more – just download our catalogue.

- Essential discovery marketing – page 13
- Essential expansion marketing – page 26
- The power of demos to drive usage – page 12
- User adoption – page 36

Download the **Marketing Concierge Catalogue** here > >

Are you nurturing or dripping?

Nurture isn't purely about the frequency of contact. Consider this:

> "83% of customers only want to hear from you if you are able to be relevant and contextual"
> [IDC and Salesforce, 2015]

A drip marketing programme:

Sends (drips) communications (email, direct mail, etc.) following a timeline set by the marketer. But it doesn't take into account customer activity and behaviour because it is static and non-adaptive.

A nurture programme:

Takes into account that B2B buyers want to be listened to. Nurturing leads is all about building relationships with potential buyers, helping to build trust and giving them what they need to do their research when, where and how they want to.

Both are valid methods, but they're very different.
Real nurturing that considers the audience is where the future lies.

Do you drip or nurture?

Draw up a single programme of messages for your entire marketing prospect base?	Alter contact frequency in line with stages of the customer journey?
Tailor messages to individual customers or to audiences by group?	Fix a holistic delivery process for each asset?
Determine one set of activation timings up front?	Allow for customer contact preferences, eg. email, direct mail, phone contact?
Mostly gray = DRIPPING	Mostly blue = NURTURING

Moving towards nurture

1. **Qualify and organise leads.** You can't start nurturing until you have a base of clean and organised data to engage with.
2. **Build a content portfolio.** This is not about volume of content – it's about having the right content, so no matter what kind of buyer it is, no matter what stage of the journey they're on, you're ready with relationship-building information to move them towards a sale.
3. **Develop insight.** The better you know your leads the easier it is to respond with appropriate messaging and the greater the chances of conversion. With good understanding your sense of timing will be better too. Sending content without context isn't nurture – it's spamming.

Content for the buyer journey

A well-thought out lead nurturing strategy is one way to connect more effectively across all phases of the buyer journey. That means using the right content at the right time

1 LOOSENING STATUS QUO

1. Analyst research
2. Articles on trends
3. Feature articles about new technology

Example: Forrester Total Economic Impact of Windows Server 2012, white paper

2 COMMITTING TO CHANGE

1. Challenge lead content and research
2. Technology opinions
3. Case studies

Example: Enterprise Mobility + Security Petrinovich Pugh, Case Study

3 EXPLORING SOLUTIONS

1. Product literature
2. Product reviews
3. Case studies

Example: Office 365 Datasheets

4 COMMITTING TO A SOLUTION

1. Analyst reviews, comparisons
2. Product reviews, opinions
3. Product demos

Example: SQL 2016 Closer Look at Advanced Analytics Demo

5 JUSTIFYING THE DECISION

1. ROI tools
2. Product testing, reviews
3. Case studies

Example: Customer Lifetime Value Model

6 MAKING THE SELECTION

1. ROI and assessment tools
2. Vendor directories/comparison
3. Product demo

Example: Secure Cloud Development Environment Demo

7 ONBOARDING

1. Welcome packs
2. Getting the best from guides
3. Implementation

Example: Excel 2016 Application Guide

You need marketing automation

Why? Because you'll need to track the interactions you're generating and monitor their behaviour, using that insight to drive the relevance and personalisation buyers are looking for.

"Businesses with one to two early-stage nurturing campaigns configured in marketing automation estimate the volume of quarterly qualified leads increased an average of 120%"
[Gleanster, 2015]

1 **Automated actions**
Personalising a communications journey for each individual would be too time-consuming.

2 **Lead scoring**
You'll need to recognise when a lead engages to the right point for them to be passed to sales.

3 **Automated integration**
Sales-ready leads can be passed automatically into CRM systems.

Here are some examples of popular marketing automation tools:

Tool	Blog/ Website	Facebook	Google+	LinkedIn	Twitter	YouTube
Buffer https://buffer.com/		✔	✔	✔	✔	
Hootsuite http://hootsuite.com/	✔ (Wordpress Plug-in)	✔	✔	✔ (post to profiles, company pages and groups)	✔	✔
HubSpot https://www.hubspot.com/	✔	✔		✔	✔	
SocialPort www.rfact.com.com						
Marketo https://www.marketo.com/	✔	✔		✔	✔	
Meet Edgar https://meetedgar.com/		✔		✔ (post to profiles, company pages)	✔	
Sprout Social https://sproutsocial.com/		✔	✔	✔	✔	
Tweetdeck https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/					✔	
Tweet Jukebox https://www.tweetjukebox.com/					✔	
Wistia https://wistia.com/	✔					

But beware. You can't automate marketing you don't have.

So many organisations are sold on the conceptual ideals behind marketing automation and think it will be marketing's panacea. But different marketing automation platforms meet different needs – and of course, results will only be as good as the preparation, data, interpretation and execution that go into them.

To get ready for marketing automation, you'll need to:

- **Personalise the experience** – you'll need to gather data to track all your marketing activities through the platform – everything from email to social to advertising and landing page conversions.
- **Develop audience-specific content** – you'll need plenty of information to share with people, but only when the time is right for the audience in question. All that content has to be ready for the automation to kick in.
- **Build email and campaign assets** – you'll need more than a few email newsletters. You'll need to use templates to industrialise your marketing efforts at scale.
- **Define leads and processes** – you'll need to know how and when to alert sales to a lead that meets your and their criteria.

Here are a few examples of marketing automation platforms:

eloqua™

Oracle Eloqua offers lead and campaign management tools enabling marketers to develop personalised campaigns across multiple channels including email, display search, web, video and mobile

HubSpot

Many smaller organisations use HubSpot. It offers marketing, sales, and customer relationship management modules that can be used discretely or in combination

Campaign Monitor

Campaign Monitor is a scalable email marketing solution offering mail templates, report functions and more

act-on

Act-On is a comprehensive marketing automation tool offering email marketing, website visitor tracking, lead management, social media management, reporting and analytics, as well as integration with webinar and event planning

Marketo®

Marketo is designed for organisations all the way up to enterprise level. It offers solutions for every digital marketing need, including lead management, email marketing, mobile marketing and much more

Planning your nurture with a content audit

Planning a nurture campaign will take some time and effort. Creating a content audit or inventory allows you to see what you've got so you can align it to different buying stages and personas. That way, when it comes to planning the communications for prospects or customers you've got a clear view of the content and assets at your disposal.

1 2 3 4

Creating a content audit in four steps:

- Create an Excel spreadsheet with the following columns for your inventory: format, title, description, creation date, audience.
- Then use the seven stages of the buyer journey (as above) each as a column to the right.
- Now, list each content asset in turn, completing the cells for each item.
- Then consider the content item and at what stage of the journey it would be useful. Remember that some larger pieces of content might span multiple stages of the buying journey. Shade the relevant columns to show the span of usefulness for each piece.

Once you've got your spreadsheet completed, you can use the sort function to organise the entries to show you the content you have aligned to each stage, each audience group or indeed each content format.

Check out our **Essential Discovery Marketing Package**. It presents you with four cost-effective ways to find new customers such as: Direct Outbound; Digital Media; Content Lead Gen or Event In a Box. Make use of the existing Microsoft campaign templates and the automation tool.

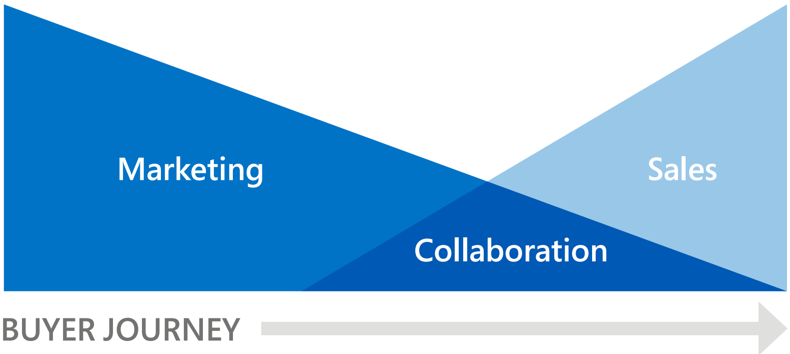
Marketing Transformation

7 How sales and digital marketing can work together to help buyers

What's the challenge?

"Companies with aligned sales and marketing generated 208% more revenue from marketing". (MarketingProfs)

B2B technology buyers are increasingly sophisticated in their use of digital technology to find what they need to know – so salespeople need to increase their own use of digital to collaborate, to meet buyer expectations and to turn leads into sales.



60 to 70% of the buying journey is done without sales interactions

- Buyers need more than generic sales pitches.
- They expect salespeople to understand their business, their needs and objectives.
- They want to understand how you're going to help them achieve their objectives.

Find out how the **Marketing Concierge Packages** below can help you sell more – just download our catalogue.

- Champions of change sales floor days – page 29

Download the **Marketing Concierge Catalogue** here >>

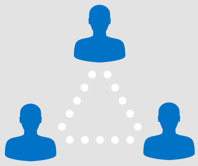
Buyers are disappointed with sales engagement

"31% of sales reps are not prepared with even a basic level of Web available information" (IDC)

Even worse, buyers think salespeople actually slow down their buying process...

For instance, salespeople may not have...

...tracked the buyer's journey using available information.



...done their online homework on the buyer organisation's profile, the purchasing process and the decision-maker's background.

...framed a way to sell that matches the way people want to buy.

...considered that they, their collateral and demos are forced on them out of sync with their buying process.

Marketers should use feedback and track online comment to gauge where buyer expectations aren't being met to equip salespeople with the information and leads they need to succeed.

What does the new sales experience look like?

What buyers value:

- Insights
- Unique, valuable perspectives on the market
- Help in navigating alternatives
- Ongoing advice and consultation
- Help to identify and avoid potential landmines
- Education on new issues and outcome

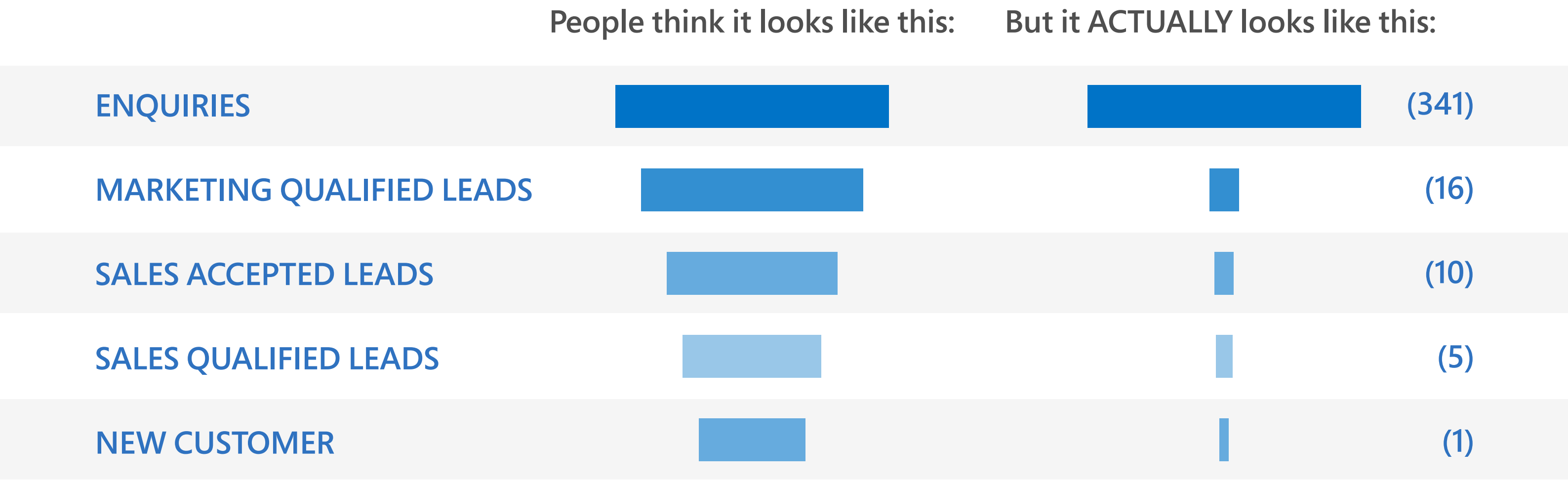
Enabling the salesperson: your checklist

Marketing people should start conversations with sales teams to ensure they have what they need. Here's a checklist:

- Understand the customer's marketplace and issues.
- Help the buyer envision solving their problems using your products and services.
- Frame the buyer's evaluation criteria so that competitors are at a disadvantage.
- Help the buyer 'champion' sell within his/her organisation.
- Overcome objections raised by the buyer.
- Manage conversations about business value to cross, up-sell and renew.
- Respond to tough questions immediately and with credibility.

What kind of lead should we be generating?

The answer to this question is one that causes a lot of friction between marketing and sales organisations. It's all too easy to mistake volume as an indicator of effort and therefore to regard smaller numbers of leads as inadequate. But there's a big difference between quantity and quality, as this conversion funnel shows:



Based on the average conversion rates, you'll need **341.4 enquiries** at the top of the funnel to create one customer at the bottom.

Here's a quick guide to types of lead:

NORMAL LEADS

Led by your business's demographics, these will be organisations ticking obvious boxes: for instance, in your region, in a sector you serve, the same size business as your current customer base. It's quick to build long lists of these, but they're low quality and generate a lot of work for the sales team with low likelihood of success. It's effectively cold calling.

MARKETING-QUALIFIED LEADS (MQLS)

These aren't only more measurable – they're more promising. These are people who may not yet be ready to buy, but who have shown interest, for instance by clicking through several times from email campaigns and occasionally downloading information. It's down to you to decide on the metrics. If you put MQLs into the funnel above, the conversion rate will be much higher. Quantity only gets salespeople so far: marketing can give them quality MQLs and save them time and effort while also increasing chances of success. OK, it's harder to get ten MQLs than ten normal leads, but planning, insight and help from marketing automation tools can significantly reduce the legwork.

SALES-QUALIFIED LEADS (SQLS)

These are further along in the process. They've shown interest and now they have some specific questions. This may be because they've done their own research and have arrived with you ready to talk, or it may be because your marketing team has spent time nurturing them. Either way, they're solid prospects.

Create a sales and marketing SLA

If sales and marketing functions worked together they could deliver a seamless experience to prospects and customers. **Here's what a combined marketing and sales SLA might look like:**

1. **WHAT DOES A "LEAD" LOOK LIKE?**
   Set your own metric. For instance, to be an MQL your prospect might need to click through from three mails and download one piece of content.

2. **ARE THERE DIFFERENT KINDS OF LEADS THAT NEED A DIFFERENT APPROACH?**
   Even if your leads tick your MQL box you might need to use different approaches. For instance, a public sector MQL may have specific procurement processes.

3. **HOW MANY MQLs WILL MARKETING BE EXPECTED TO CREATE?**
   It would be easy for marketing to make a case for lower numbers using the quality-over-quantity argument – but that shouldn't be an excuse for low ambition. Your organisation should set a target, aim to reach it and only then judge how realistic it is.

4. **WHAT DOES MARKETING EXPECT SALES TO DO WITH A LEAD?**
   If marketing is going to be measured by MQLs generated, sales should respond with a clear process for handling them. Nurturing and developing leads needs an agreed process, probably involving incremental contact eg., through telemarketing to a full sales call.

5. **WHAT TIME FRAME THEY SHOULD DO IT IN?**
   Lead development doesn't just need an agreed process. It needs an agreed schedule too. Response times may need to reflect where you are at any one time in your sales cycle.

6. **WHAT HAPPENS TO A LEAD THAT DOESN'T CONVERT?**
   A good SLA covers even unwelcome outcomes like this. A lead that doesn't convert isn't necessarily a lost cause: a mechanism should be put in place to keep it within your nurture campaign.

7. **HOW CAN WE ALIGN MARKETING ACTIVITY TO SALES OUTCOMES?**
   Look at MQLs that did and didn't convert. There may be exceptions, but over time patterns will emerge. They will tell you when to pursue prospects in your traditional markets, and how you've converted prospects in new ones. These are useful lessons – and you learn them not just by looking ahead to your next sales targets but by looking backwards, by working together and by using the analytical insights provided by marketing automation.

Check out our **Champions of Change Package**. Drive sales and increase confidence in positioning Microsoft products and solutions within the channel. Create a 'One Microsoft' experience in a fun and memorable way.

To find out more, download the Marketing Concierge Catalogue here > >