How to Optimize Your Web Presence for Lead Generation
How to Optimize Your Web Presence for Lead Generation

Introduction

B2B Buyer behaviour is changing. In “Four B2B Buyer Behaviour Trends Changing Business” we identified and explored four key trends that B2B Marketing must meet head on. None of the trends are particularly shocking, but companies that don’t adapt quickly are at grave risk of having their sales pipelines run dry.

Adapting to changes in B2B buyer behaviour should be swift - but doesn’t have to be painful. Plus - as with any other business challenge - each of the four trends holds opportunity.

Fortunately, you can optimize your web presence to adapt to the trends in question. Your web presence is the sum total of everywhere your brand exists on the web, including search engine results, your website, blog and social channels - as well as anywhere anyone is discussing your brand online.

An optimized web presence is the product of three interdependent strategies: search marketing; content marketing; and social media marketing.

Search Engine Marketing

Commercial search engines are where approximately 80% of B2B customers begin their path to purchase. Search engine marketing - positioning your company's content in plain view of B2B customers when they begin looking for solutions to solve their most pressing business problems - is therefore crucial to your digital marketing success. It is most often the first opportunity to capture the awareness and imagination of a potential customer - and to draw them into the top of your marketing funnel, seeking more information about your solution.
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Getting found in “organic” search engine results depends on publishing content that has been optimized for the keywords your marketplace is searching for. The more competition there is for those targeted keywords, the more optimized content you will need to publish and promote. Search engine optimization relies on on-page optimization - and off-page optimization, which is best described as obtaining diverse keyword-optimized backlinks from a variety of other websites. Optimized digital news release distribution, influence marketing and even social media updates all send signals to search engines about the relevance of your content to targeted keywords.

Pay Per Click (PPC) Search Advertising

PPC search advertising can be a highly effective strategy for promoting campaign landing pages quickly, when the volume and structure of optimized content is not yet proving sufficient - typically early in a campaign. PPC campaigns also provide an excellent tool for testing keywords for how well they convert - allowing your digital marketing organization to narrow its focus on positioning top performing keywords - a far more efficient and effective use of resources. Perhaps the most exciting development in search advertising is “remarketing” - advertising that targets anyone who has engaged with your content, served up as they criss-cross the web.

Keyword targeting and research

There can be exceptions, but - generally - the segment of your target audience that already knows the name of your company, or its solutions, shouldn’t have any trouble finding you on page one of any major search engine.
Getting Started in B2B Search Engine Marketing:

1. Conduct keyword research, choose a handful of keywords to target
2. Benchmark your current ranking for those keywords, track your keyword positioning
3. Search optimize a campaign landing page for each target keyword
4. Set-up goal funnels in Google Analytics for each landing page, to track conversions and identify your best converting keywords
5. Set up social tracking in Google Analytics

Content Marketing

We touched briefly on “content” a few times above while discussing search engine marketing - because well-planned, well-structured keyword optimized content is instrumental in getting found in search engine results. Let’s remember, however, that getting found in search is just the first step in each B2B customer’s path to purchase.

About each B2B customer’s “path to purchase”

Just so that we don’t leave you under any illusions, the B2B customer’s path to purchase isn’t the straight-line direct path to purchase that most of us would like to imagine. No, each customer’s journey is going to meander all over the world wide web, criss-crossing as they self-educate, seek out informed opinions from their peers and loop back to consult credible subject matter experts.

Your first job as a content marketer: Quality

Your job is to plan, produce, publish and/or share content that is so insightful, so helpful, so educational about how to solve the market’s “killer” problems of the day... that the customer is constantly referred to your content by his/her peers and leading industry experts. Stop to imagine the powerful potential of great content: No matter where any potential customer is in his or her buying cycle, they discover your
content, and it actually helps them take one step closer to solving their most pressing business problem. Above all quality content drives engagement, builds your authority as a trusted subject matter expert - resulting in social sharing and inbound links.

**How to plan, produce and publish quality content**

Know your audience - not just as a monolithic “whole” but well enough to be able to develop a buyer persona for each of the four individuals (according to research) from each potential customer who is likely to be involved in the purchase. Understand the questions each might want answered (and their pain points) at each stage of the buying process. Use those questions to develop your content plan, and to identify keywords themes for research and targeting. Develop an editorial calendar and allocate the necessary resources to publishing like a machine.

**Getting Started in B2B Content Marketing**


- Research your audience, personas, and their buying process. Your best customers are your best resource.

- Your primary publishing platform will be a blog. Make sure that your blog and content is optimized for mobile devices and that social sharing is easy and encouraged.

- Develop an operational plan for your blog that covers workflows and permissions, comment moderation and engagement, conversion pathways and resource allocation.

- Plan your content. Start with a content audit (what newsletters, brochures, guides, etc. are already in your possession? How can you recycle them into web content?). Remember that content can take many forms - written blog posts, to ebooks, to videos and infographics, even slide decks. Today, visual content tends to drive the most engagement.
Here at Digital Giants, some of us secretly wish that “Social Media” could get a “do-over” starting with the name “Social Media”. Unfortunately, this emerging digital marketing media attracted an inordinate amount of “hype” early in it’s life-cycle - and the word “Social” made it sound distinctly unattractive to senior leadership and management in most B2B businesses.

**B2B Marketing Use Cases for Social Media**

From a business-to-business standpoint, “social media marketing” is best understood by use cases for social media channels:

- Content distribution and customer engagement
- Customer relationship management, including customer service
- Sales lead initiation and opportunity advancement (“Social Selling”)
- Networking and Influence marketing
- Gathering customer, competitor and market intelligence
- Off-page SEO (Commercial search engines interpret social signals as “currently relevant”)

**Choosing social channels**

We often get asked questions like “Do we need to be on twitter?”. Our answer is always the same: “That depends. Where are your customers active online?”. So let’s start with that question: The first step is to set-up a listening post - to monitor social channels (including blogs) for mentions of your company/brands, your primary competitors/brands, your target keywords. Wherever there is activity, there is potential opportunity.
In the worst-case scenario, you may not find much customer activity anywhere - yet. We view that as an opportunity. If you’re an early adopter in your industry/niche it you’re more likely to get discovered as a credible source by being there first. Broadcasting content to multiple social channels, simultaneously, each time you publish new content or share quality content you’ve found - is practically effortless.

Here’s a quick rundown of the major social media channels to consider:

- **LinkedIn** - Business people, there to network and do business with other business people. Leads initiated on LinkedIn also convert at a rate twice that of Facebook and Twitter combined. Worth noting that LinkedIn's search engine use is approaching 6 billion searches annually.
- **Slideshare** - Owned by LinkedIn, great for SEO - and an excellent platform on which to demonstrate your thought leadership.
- **Twitter** - Think of twitter as a combination of real-time news and speed networking
- **Facebook** - The biggest social network, more suited to consumer marketing, with exceptions. Are your consumer facing customers active on Facebook? What opportunities does that create for you?
- **Google+** - Now the second largest social network by number of registered users, but most users are rarely active. Authorship authority - weighting relevance of content published and shared by each author is already affecting Google search results.
- **YouTube** - Second only to Google in search volume. Video garners engagement and social sharing - and lends itself well to anything requiring visual demonstration or explanation.
- **Blogs** - Blogs are a kind of “home base” for social media marketing - if not yet for you, probably for other thought leaders in your marketplace (vendors, customers, analysts, etc.).
Getting Started in B2B Social Media Marketing

1. Set up a listening post and start listening

2. Identify influential bloggers in your industry and target markets, follow them on twitter and LinkedIn, and learn from them. Read their content, share it on both networks, comment when you can add value or insight

3. Optimize your profiles on LinkedIn and Twitter.

4. Optimize your profile and claim your authorship on Google +

5. Start sharing your own content, and/or curate and share content from within your industry. Promote your network connections by sharing their content

Lead Generation

Search engine marketing and social media marketing exist to aid prospects and customers in discovering, engaging with, and sharing your content. Because you have so carefully planned their pathway to conversion, they will inevitably find themselves on one (or more) of your landing pages - eager to obtain a piece of premium content and faced with a decision. Are they ready to self-identify and self qualify as a sales opportunity?

If you’ve done your job well, by providing insightful, educational, helpful content - if you’ve built trust and positioned yourself or your company as a credible subject matter authority, the results will speak for themselves. If they’re not ready yet, they will be back.
Thank You For Downloading

Who We Are

We craft digital marketing solutions that inspire action, deliver profitability and create limitless opportunity. We are vibrant, open, fun, and fearless. We are connected.

Follow: @bedigitalgiants

What We Do

We are a full service digital marketing firm. We work with our clients to create and develop their online brand. We strengthen their brand image and web presence by providing four key services:

Digital Strategy
Social Media Marketing
Content Marketing
Search Marketing