A B2B Marketing Guide

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B2B Marketing



The Evidence

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Not a crystal ball, but the next best thing

Marketing, and B2B marketing in particular, has always been about results. You can create all the pretty pictures, beautiful brands and compelling content you want, but ultimately if the campaign or programme doesn't meet your objectives, it's all in vain – or at least it can seem that way when you come to report back to the powers that be.

Consequently, B2B marketers have always been searching for that elusive Holy Grail – a sure-fire way of taking the guesswork out of marketing, and being able to accurately predict what results they can expect from their investment.

Sadly, no one as yet has invented a time machine, and predictions from crystal balls remain highly unreliable (if not entirely fantasy). So in their absence, we asked ourselves, what's the next best thing? Where can you find clear and quantifiable results from a range of highly successful B2B marketing campaigns, from a range of brands in various different industries? Or, to put it another way, where can you find the evidence of what works in B2B marketing?

Almost certainly the best source of this kind of evidence available anywhere in the world right now comes from the B2B Awards. Each year, we receive almost 500 entries from inhouse marketers and agencies alike detailing their most effective and successful campaigns of the year. The authors of this report have taken the shortlisted entries from some of the most vigorously contested categories and used them to answer some of the toughest questions that practitioners are currently trying to answer.

The result is not, unfortunately, a silver bullet for guaranteed success for your B2B marketing. Given the fickleness of fashion and human nature, it's unlikely this will ever exist. In its absence, this report is the next best thing, and contains some invaluable information, advice and lessons on how to improve your B2B marketing, understand the environment better, and give you a significantly better chance of success.

As an author of one of the sections, I found it fascinating and highly enlightening to research and write. As a reader, I hope you find it similarly insightful and useful.



JOEL HARRISON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
B2B MARKETING

"B2B marketers have always been searching for that elusive Holy Grail of being able to accurately predict what they can expect from investment"

About B2B Marketing

B2B Marketing is the comprehensive information resource for B2B marketers. Its mission is to provide practitioners with the information they need to perform better and achieve more, whatever sector of the B2B space they are operating in.

Launched in 2004 as *B2B Marketing* magazine, it has since evolved into a multi-faceted resource, delivering a broad range of content in a variety of different forms and formats.

Its key products are:

Magazine: The essential monthly guide to B2B marketing, with a key focus on best practice guidance, plus monthly features looking at current trends, regular research and profiles.

Awards: The showpiece event for brands and practitioners, attracting over 800 people. Former winners include a host of top-tier B2B brands, including Cisco, Dell, Fujitsu, IBM, KPMG, Nokia, O2, Oracle, Orange, SAP, Thomson Reuters, Vauxhall UK, and many more.

Research and reports: A library housing the best in B2B practice, in-depth practical guidance and research into specific channels or industry issues.

Training: Comprehensive, integrated and flexible training programmes enabling client-side and agency marketers to boost their skillsets and confidence, improve their effectiveness and increase impact on their brand.

Events: Highly-focused events and training sessions aimed at helping marketers hear and learn first hand from the experts in order to hone their skills.

Membership: Become a member and receive all research and reports for free. You will also receive exclusive invites to members-only networking events, get discounts on training seminars, workshops and conferences and receive a subscription to the monthly magazine.

For more information on any of these products or services go to b2bmarketing.net or call +44 (0) 20 7438 1370

Contributors' biographies

Andy Bargery



CEO
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Andy has worked in marketing and communications since 1998 when his career started at Digital Equipment Corporation. Since then, he has worked for many of the world's largest, and some of the smallest, B2B and consumer brands, both inhouse and at agencies including Pleon and Ketchum. He is currently CEO of Klaxon, a B2B marketing agency in London. Klaxon is the hub of a network of highly skilled and experienced marketers. It provides strategic marketing consultancy and execution services to clients including O2 Telefónica, Oracle and Xerox among others.

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Joel Harrison is founding editor of B2B Marketing and editorial director of Silver Bullet Publishing. He oversees all of the company's editorial and content activities, including *B2B Marketing* magazine, the B2B Marketing Awards, the website, research and reports, events and training. Joel is a regular speaker at events across the B2B space, and commentates on issues relating to marketing, publishing, media, branding and social media.

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Pete Jakob



Owner and principle consultant
Purple Salix

Pete Jakob is a business-focused marketing leader with a passion for driving change and linking marketing to the broader business. In 2012, he established Purple Salix, an independent marketing consultancy that helps clients and agencies transform their marketing. Prior to this he had a 28-year career at IBM, which saw him lead major transformational initiatives around marketing automation, contact database strategy, lead nurturing, telemarketing, digital marketing and sales/marketing alignment. Pete is also an active member of the IDM B2B Marketing Council, and has been involved in judging the B2B Awards for several years.

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Steve Kemish



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Steve is an multi-award-winning marketer who started client-side and has worked in digital marketing since 1997. Prior to helping build B2B specialists Cyance, he was on the board of email marketing company, Adestra. Over the years he has worked with many global brands including Motorola, Cisco, Skype, British Airways and Oracle, and has been invited throughout the world to talk about, and share thoughts on, digital marketing. Steve is also past chair of the IDM Digital Marketing Council, a guest lecturer at Oxford Brookes University, Business Super Brands judge, and sits on the Future Proofing Advisory Group of the DMA.

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Nicola is a passionate metrics-driven marketer who has been involved with digital marketing since 2000. Having worked at AKQA and Proximity London on global B2B and B2C brands including Sky, Coca-Cola, BT and Eurostar, in more recent years Nicola has turned her focus to technology businesses. She is now the co-founder of Modern Media, a fast-growth B2B marketing agency working with software and IT businesses. Modern Media provides strategic marketing consultancy and services for high growth, international technology businesses capitalising on bringing new products to market, new business models (SaaS) or widening marketshare in complex marketplaces.

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Jade Tambini



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Jade Tambini, marketing manager of DS Smith's recycling division and vice chair of the Chartered Institute of Marketing (Wales Board), is a results driven strategic B2B marketer with a passion for how brand can be used to ignite a marketing-led organisation. Responsible for the marketing and brand strategy across Europe for DS Smith's recycling division, Jade has 10 years' B2B experience starting from root level in telesales through to leading international brand strategy.

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James Trezona



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James Trezona is managing director of Harte Hanks' marketing agency Mason Zimbler. He has almost 20 years' experience working with innovative companies – pioneering what's possible while delivering what works. With a diverse background, the key theme has been a love of disruptive change. Whether it was launching the world's first online self-service HR portal in the 90s, wrestling with technology adoption in Australian banks, or being part of Tesco's evolution past a paper-based grocer in the noughties, he's been fortunate enough to be part of successful companies' reinventions throughout his career.

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Luan Wise



Marketing consultant

Luan has both agency and client-side marketing experience, and has worked for clients of all sizes, such as Hilton and the University of Cambridge. As marketing manager for a B2B organisation in the marketing services sector, Luan supported sales growth from £3 million turnover to £60 million turnover over five years (featuring in the Sunday Times' Virgin Fast Track 100 two years running). She is an active member of the Institute of Direct and Digital Marketing and the Chartered Institute of Marketing, where she chairs the Gloucestershire team and sits on the South West board. Luan also sits on the West and Wales regional council of the Direct Marketing Association. In addition, she acts as a judge for the annual Direct Marketing Association Awards and the Customer Experience Awards.

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In the last 20 years Graham has covered most industry sectors, across B2B sales, marketing and general troubleshooting. That includes several turnarounds, some venture backed businesses and a couple of global corporates. He has helped establish two B2B-focused agencies, and his projects have been shortlisted for the B2B Awards on numerous occasions (except in 2011 when he was a judge). In 2012, Graham conceived and authored *The Evidence* report with Peter Young (chairman of the judges) and B2B Marketing. In 2013, he joined AppNexus, the company that powers the advertising and the internet, to build the EMEA marketing function for a business that is rapidly transforming online and mobile advertising.

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appnexus

SECTION 1

Multichannel marketing

The question
How can I best use multichannel marketing?

The context
As marketers we strive to achieve the best possible results from what we do, what we spend and what we are tasked with. The question around multichannel marketing is perhaps one of the easiest to answer as instinctively we know that to achieve these goals we can't be lazy, complacent or assumptive. That means we know just one knock at the door is not going to be enough. For me that's why this question isn't: 'Should I use multichannel marketing?' instead this is a given for B2B marketers, regardless of industry, market and territory. But if it's as simple as that then why ask the question?

In a world of fast-moving, time-poor prospects, customers and marketers in the same boat, it is bewildering to know where to start. We know we should always apply more than one channel but how do we ensure we get them right, in the right order at the right time? With the continuing growth of digital, we have more platforms within those channels that leave the lines blurry and us stuck in the maelstrom; trying to do our best to be innovative and progressive, but not risk too much and not hit the targets and goals we are set or strive for. We wish for the silver bullet but know in reality that it's a case-by-case basis, that other factors mean what works for one may not work for another. More frustratingly still, we know what worked for us once might not work a second time. Surrounded by all of this confusion and frustration it's important we don't lose sight of that one truism: multichannel is for all of us, but which channels in what order and when? That's what this chapter seeks to give some clarity and relief on.

The answer
The author's note for this section requests circa 100 words to answer this. Perhaps this insight from the editors who know a straightforward two-word answer that instantly springs to my mind is not going to satisfy that thirst above. The answer, 'It depends' won't help us move forward so let's try a little harder. First and foremost it's about insight; about understanding your audience. Then understanding what they will want to hear, in what format and in what order and then mapping that to the myriad of marketing channels and selecting the right number to help satisfy this insight and your budget. So easily typed, but so difficult to achieve, right? Not so, if the following examples of real-life campaigns are to go by, it can be done and it can be done with aplomb.



STEVE KEMISH
MANAGING DIRECTOR
CYANCE

"With the continuing growth of digital, we have more platforms within those channels that leave the lines blurry and us stuck in the maelstrom"

The evidence

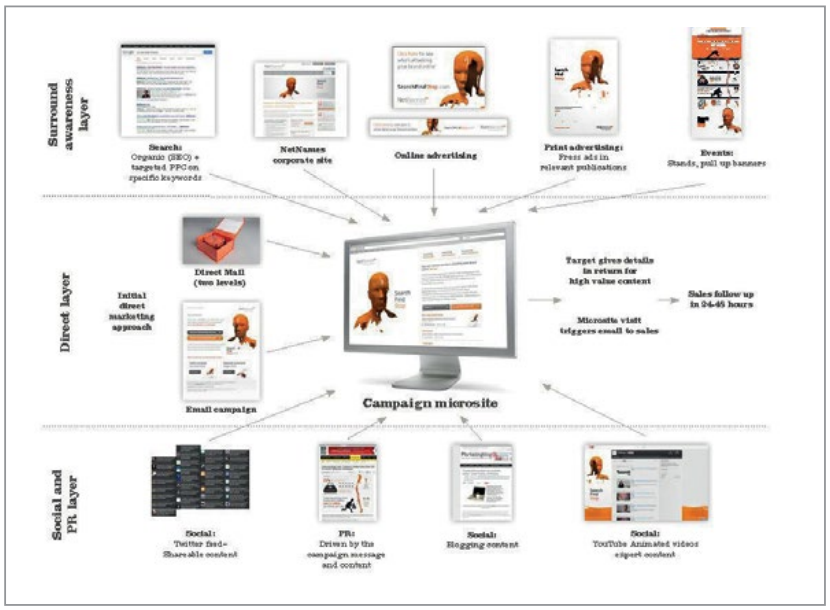
So, where to start? Well, where we always start is with objectives. One of the traps marketers too often fall into is to get lured by the tactics before settling on what they are aiming to achieve. I blame the web. Some of the newest platforms are achingly cool and good looking with wide appeal. A site like Facebook that boasts 1.5 billion registered users is hard to ignore. As such too often these are the starting steps of a planning journey for a new marketing campaign. But why? Why would your B2B audience want to hear from you on Facebook? More than that, would they then want to engage with you and do what you ask of them? Perhaps.

"One of the traps marketers too often fall into is to get lured by the tactics before settling on what they are aiming to achieve. I blame the web"

But we must always first establish what it is we are trying to achieve and who it is we are trying to achieve it with. Then we can start to think about which channels, and platforms within those channels, will be the best fit.

Data can always unlock a lot of this insight for us. It isn't just the list we draw up of the audience but it tells us so much more. It helps us to segment, draw up messages of relevance and helps us to know (by looking at previous actions, interactions and conversations) what our audience needs to know in what order.

Let's look at an example: the 'Search. Find. Stop' campaign for NetNames by Earnest. Data and insight were the foundations of this campaign and not only did that inform the creative and the channels, but it allowed for a precise level of personalisation too often overlooked. NetNames is Europe's largest domain name management and online brand protection specialist – helping to protect and grow its clients' businesses and brands online.



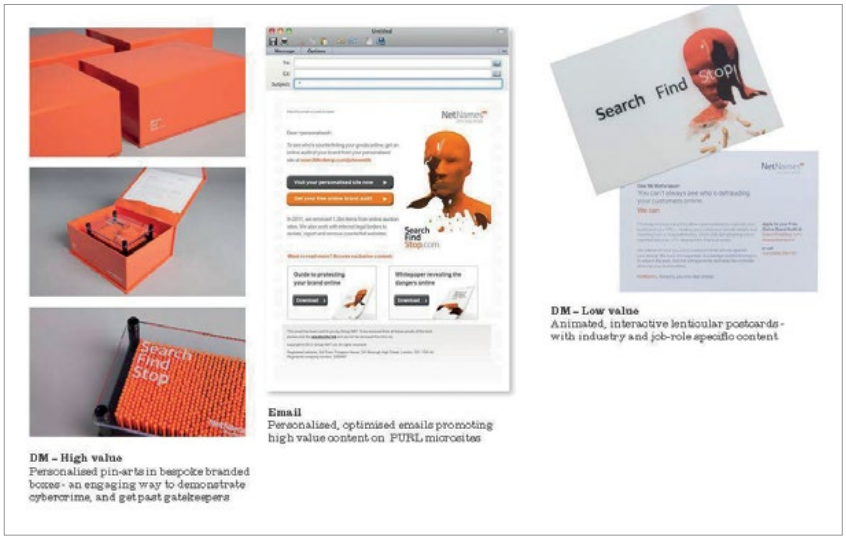
The different layers of the 'Search. Find. Stop' campaign for NetNames

It is already a renowned leader in domain name strategies, but there was still a lot of opportunity to grow within the online brand protection space.

However, initial research showed many brands weren't even aware of the threats from cyber criminals, and decision makers can come from a wide variety of job roles.

The 'Search. Find. Stop' programme therefore needed to not only illustrate the criminals themselves, but also educate on the threats damaging digital equity, brands and, ultimately, profits – showcasing NetNames as thought leaders within the sector. So, firstly you not only need to unlock the target organisations but the roles and functions of the various contacts at each organisation that need to be communicated with.

To further aid this, personas were developed for each and every target audience (by job role and industry sector). Messaging was then segmented accordingly – matching higher-value prospects with higher-cost channels. A neat trick: we can't always afford to send the same piece to all so find a way to rank your prospects.



High and low-value DM and email from the 'Search. Find. Stop' campaign

A personalised online experience at the campaign site (searchfindstop.com) aggregated relevant content assets through a marketing automation platform and gave contacts the opportunity to request an online brand audit that could be presented at a sales meeting.

"You not only need to unlock the target organisations but the roles and functions of the various contacts at each organisation that need to be communicated with"

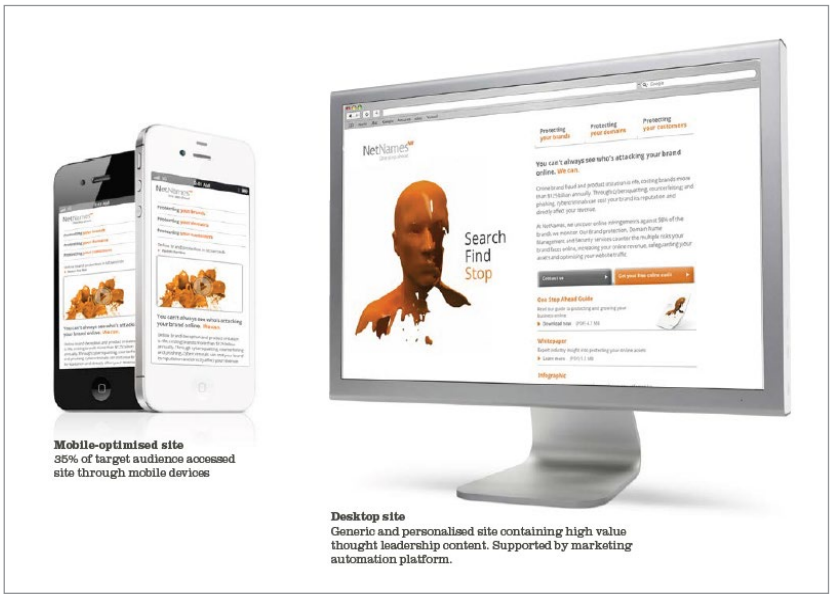
Engaging content to drive inbound leads was key to the campaign designed to educate and stimulate the audience, wherever they were in the buying cycle. Content included:

- An infographic with key statistics and facts.
- Animation brought to life statistics and data, illustrating the value NetNames brings.
- *One Step Ahead* – a guide to the threats and opportunities online.
- Thought leadership papers.
- Video and written case studies showcased blue-chip brands already using NetNames' services (including Unliever, Vans, Aviva and ASOS).

This was supported by search and social media activity (including blogs and Pinterest etc) to increase the opportunities for potential customers to see and engage. Best-fit technology was then used to ensure an automated experience:

- Lead Forensics – to measure all inbound activity.
- Radian6 – to measure social interaction and sharing.
- Bespoke PURL platform – to ensure a personalised experience and help tracking and follow-up.

"Bespoke PURL platforms create a personalised experience, and help tracking and follow-up"



The NetNames mobile and desktop sites

The big idea (pinpointed and verified by both data and insight) meant each prospect had their own narrative. This was a logical and timely journey that balanced creativity with highly-relevant information based on their roles. The results back this up – with a 14 per cent direct mail response rate, 72 meetings booked and an overall ROI of 14:1.

"The digital marketing explosion has made it easy for us to drop and forget more traditional channels, and assume everyone is best contacted via the web"

The digital marketing explosion has made it easy for us to drop and forget the more traditional offline channels and assume that the whole world is always best contacted via the web. Not unlike my earlier point about the assumption that as 1.5 billion of us are on Facebook and therefore we can't not use it, we can easily assume that only the new will work.

It's really heartening to see that insight helped inform the 'Taking the guesswork out of the EU gender directive' for LV campaign by Moreish Marketing. LV (trading name of Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society) is a financial provider of insurance and retirement solution services. Founded in 1843, LV is now the UK's largest provider with more than five million customers.

An integrated marketing campaign targeting independent financial advisers (IFAs) maximised the insurance sales opportunity created by legislation changes. From December 2012 an EU ruling meant insurance providers were no longer able to take gender into account when calculating premiums, resulting in a significant impact in the pricing between males and females. Financial advisers needed to be aware and educated on these changes to provide best advice to their clients and maximise the sales opportunity.

The approach ensured advisers were aware of the changes and their impact by providing them with all the information and tools they needed to maximise the opportunity. It delivered a unique guarantee that provided complete certainty that quoted prices were 100 per cent guaranteed.

A strong creative theme to engage the audience and hold all the campaign elements together is apparent and executed consistently. The 'No more guesswork' visual identity achieved this, parodying the 'Guess Who' board game to arrest the audience, normally used to more dry and dusty corporate material, while LV easily and simply guided them through the changes. Adding value in terms of knowledge but also helping the audience achieve commercial gains.

The series of 10 advertorials containing unashamed use of innuendos to draw advisers' attention to the campaign, intelligently debated the issues and encouraged further conversation with the LV experts and were placed in highly relevant trade publications.

A microsite provided a dedicated hub for all the content they needed. Information on the impact of the changes across different products and client segments plus elements such as the interactive 'Income at risk calculator' highlighted the potential loss of income from lost sales/lack of action. A free live webinar outlining the key issues, adviser sales aids and transparent provider comparisons was co-promoted via an industry publication, and then recorded and added to the campaign website to extend the reach and length.

"Smart planning enabled UPS to establish sponsorship credentials earlier than other sponsors, then use the run up to the Games to drive engagement"

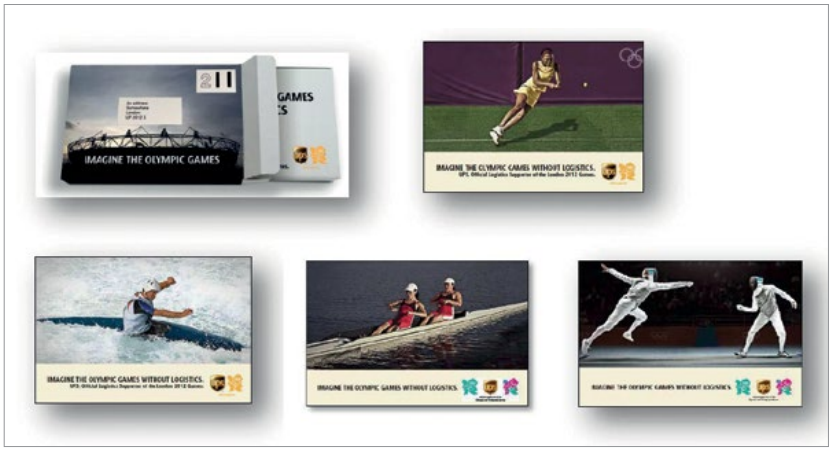
The offline to online programme exploited the best channels to initially engage financial advisers. It then sought to move them to the web, where tools and content could enable interactive value-add that built on the initial messages and information. The activity attracted hundreds of new financial advisers to do business with LV, generating more protection business than any other month in its 170-year history, with a year-on-year increase for the month of 25 per cent.

As well as seeking out new ways to talk to our audience, sometimes larger events occur that naturally give us this opportunity to ride on its wave. The 'UPS Olympics' campaign by Ogilvy London made full use of the halo effect that the 2012 London Olympic Games offered it.

UPS is a global B2B 'super brand'. It is the largest package delivery company in the world and one of the world's most admired B2B brands. Every day UPS manages the flow of goods, funds and information in more than 220 countries and territories worldwide. So its sponsorship of the London 2012 Olympics, and this campaign's communications, built that connection with UK decision makers in the very large UK SME market.

Timing was essential. Smart planning enabled UPS to establish sponsorship credentials earlier than many other sponsors, then use the run up to, and period during, the Games to drive consideration and engagement. The complex rules and restrictions laid out by the organisers had to be taken into account, a parable for the many markets, where restriction and governance have to be courted and creative has to comply with.

This campaign best embraces the true breadth of multichannel. It exploited a heady mix of both on- and offline channels, at three distinct campaign stages, to drive the brand home with the target audience and seek engagement and new opportunity for UPS with this market.

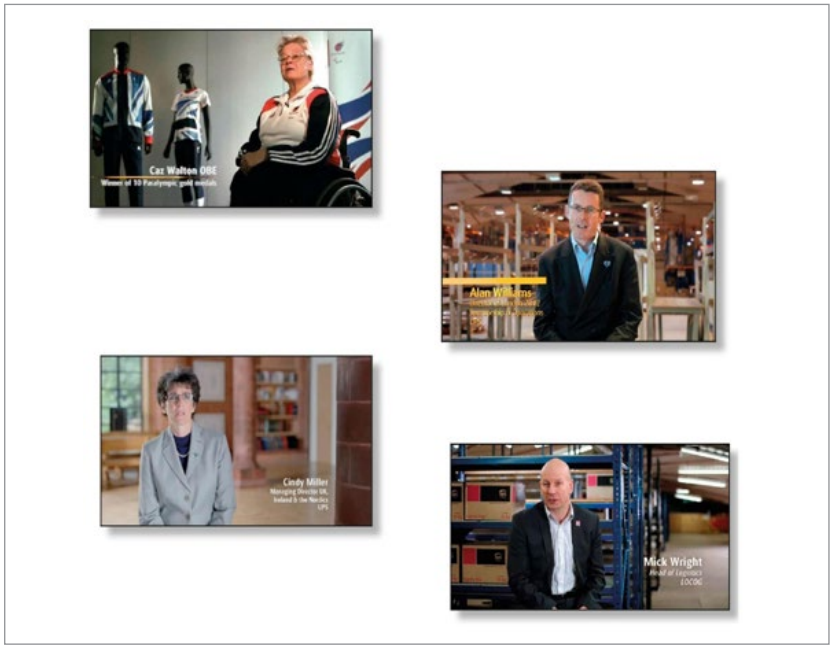


Stage five – the direct mail element of the Olympics sponsorship

"Use of digital media gave the campaign a longer tail and the ability for the audience to interact with UPS for 12 months – far longer than the event itself"

The mix of wide-reaching traditional channels such as TV and radio allowed for the brand to be positioned in front of a wide number of SMEs, albeit in a less direct or interactive way. But the use of digital media and video content gave the campaign a longer tail and the ability for the audience to interact with UPS for 12 months – far longer than the actual period of the event itself.

This is a key lesson for event-based marketing: the opportunity to turn a time-bound event into a much longer vehicle is always there. It is an interesting discussion for another time as to whether the pre, during or post event activity is most vital, but foresight to maximise something like the investment UPS made by becoming London 2012 sponsors is evident through all of the content.



Video case studies from the UPS campaign

Harnessing the far wider coverage and buzz leading up to and after the event is in places blazon (widespread digital media and TV slots) but also subtly inspired, for example the use of the stark pink London 2012 logo on all UPS trucks. Insight-driven thinking is again in the evidence, but perhaps this can be argued to be just common sense (a virtue too often missing in our industry) where an outdoor media takeover was planned for Stratford railway station. Why? Well as the nearest overground and underground railway station to the Olympic park, it was always going to have the largest concentration of Olympic visitors, so was the perfect place to use scale to further widen the UPS message, but delivered in a consistent tone and style to the rest of the channels.

"For your next campaign try something different. Different to what you have done before and different to what your competitors might appear to be doing"

These three campaigns help to inspire, as well as give clues as to how to weave multiple channels together, be them on- or offline, mass media or niche. But where does that leave you? It's unlikely many of you have the opportunity (and accompanying budget) to tackle something as audacious as UPS, but that's not the point. All of these campaigns have at their heart two key principles:

1. Multichannel is the right way to conduct a marketing campaign.

2. The decision on which channels in which order is unique to each campaign.

The last marketer will always go for the lowest common denominator – the way we have always done it or, worst still, the way everybody else seems to be doing it. But that's very risky as well as lazy. Instead, one should focus on setting rock solid objectives and then invest time and budget in insight and research. Use data to help you better understand the particular attributes of your audience, build up a picture of who they are and how they behave, and then apply the channels within your marketing toolkit that you think best. If in doubt then you always have the ability to test in the early stages and adapt, a trick too often missed.

So for your next campaign try something different. Different to what you have done before and different to what your competitors and the wider marketing community might appear to be doing. You never know, you might just surprise yourself and find your work in similar pages to these in a year.

Further reading

Best integrated or multichannel campaign
Winner: 'Taking the guesswork out of the EU gender directive' for LV by Moreish Marketing

Runner up: 'Search. Find. Stop' for NetNames by Earnest

Shortlisted: 'UPS Olympics campaign' for UPS by Ogilvy

More information available at b2bmarketing.net/awards

SECTION 2

Thought leadership

The question
What does best practice in thought leadership look like?

The context
US business expert and author Joel Kurtzman is widely credited with coining the term 'thought leader' during the 90s. He was referring to cutting-edge thinkers of the day – successful businesspeople renowned for pushing boundaries with alternative viewpoints.

Two decades later, the concept has broadened in scope. Some would argue that true thought leadership is still about unconventional, breakthrough thinking. However, in a B2B marketing context it is more often associated with identifying emerging issues that could alter the course of an industry, then using them strategically as a platform to enhance a brand's reputation.

Entire organisations – not just individuals – actively seek to align themselves with the notion of thought leadership. They want to be perceived as occupying a seat at the forefront of the action, having the insight and acumen to accurately gauge where the industry, the economy or technology trends are heading. The goal is to implicitly position their products, services, or expertise as the superior choice for customers dealing with the issues of the day. Implicitness is key here. However broad or narrow your interpretation of the term thought leadership, a core defining factor is that it should never involve a direct 'sell'.

Ten years ago thought leadership strategies were almost exclusively the domain of public relations professionals. But it is increasingly embraced in its broadest sense across the wider marketing mix, and the lines between thought leadership and industry leadership are blurring. Any form of leadership status still needs to be earned. But the ways in which this can be achieved have evolved. There are now examples of paid media being used to convey thought leadership messages and this can arguably achieve excellent results. What's more, some brands achieve leadership positioning by identifying emerging trends then simply creating the space for other industry players to debate the future implications.

The answer
Thought leadership best practice hinges on the paradox of avoiding overt sales messages while making a tangible commercial impact. Successful brands expertly walk this line by understanding the goal of thought leadership is respect and recognition. It cannot involve a direct sell. But it can facilitate new relationships, or enrich existing ones, providing an entry point for appropriate pre-sales conversations. The best examples



JAMES TREZONA
MANAGING DIRECTOR
MASON ZIMBLER
(A HARTE HANKS COMPANY)

"However broad or narrow your interpretation of the term thought leadership, a core defining factor is that it should never involve a direct sell"

are fully aligned with a business' commercial objectives but take a judicious and creative approach to deliver closed revenue. Strategies need to look at the full picture, encompassing bridge building between marketing and sales as well as establishing thought leadership itself. Thought leadership cannot sell, but once you have begun a thought leadership conversation, high-quality sales conversations can follow. So it is essential that sales teams are on-board to ensure thought leadership doesn't stop when the sales conversation starts.

"It is essential that sales teams are on-board to ensure thought leadership doesn't stop when the sales conversation starts"

The evidence

1. Identify a platform

Thought leadership strategies need to be rooted in something that really matters to the target audience, even if they don't realise it yet. It typically involves an emergent industry threat or opportunity that gives scope and potential for your organisation to take a position of authority as it unfolds. Get it right and you can build a campaign with reach, substance and longevity that can significantly shift and enhance your reputation with target audiences.

Royal Bank of Scotland's manufacturing and industrials sector team demonstrated this with the high value engineering (HVE) strategy, crowned winner of the 2013 B2B Awards' 'Best use of thought leadership'. In 2012, the UK government underlined its belief that HVE is the most important UK sector to drive economic recovery, opening the first UK HVE Technology and Innovation Centre. RBS saw potential for a three-way win with an HVE-focused thought leadership strategy: growth for its business, the sector and the British economy.

The team didn't simply identify a window of opportunity – they threw it wide open. They recognised the need to take decisive action to position RBS as the thought leader among banks when it came to HVE. Strategically, the team wanted to help HVE companies identify key drivers for growth in the coming decade, enabling them to plan future investment strategies more effectively. The ultimate aim was to ensure the bank was front-of-mind for directors looking to finance these well-informed growth strategies.

Fleetness of foot often plays a vital role in the success of thought leadership activity. It is about seizing the moment and being in the right place, saying the right things at the right time. This was evidenced in financial service brand LV's campaign surrounding an EU directive on gender discrimination. From December 2012, a Euro ruling meant insurance providers were no longer able to take gender into account when calculating premiums. This was set to result in a significant, potentially disadvantageous, impact on prices for individuals. LV initiated an educative marketing campaign to ensure independent financial advisers were aware of the legislative changes and the opportunities presented.

The goal was to position LV as the true protection expert on this complex issue, and the strategy involved educating IFAs about the changes as well as providing advice on how to maximise the sales opportunity. However, thought leadership doesn't have to be linked to new external developments that are entirely beyond the control of the brand. Swedish telecommunications company, Ericsson was recognised in the 2013 B2B Awards for creating its own thought leadership platform within the established field of mobile broadband.

"Develop an idea with the flexibility and longevity to achieve a tangible commercial impact"

The telecommunications market is in a period of transformation, with more players, price wars and product commoditisation than ever before. Within this context, Ericsson developed 'Mobile unplug', an innovative strategy to reinforce its status as the inventor and thought leader of mobile broadband, and to differentiate itself from competitors. This was a long-term, multiphase campaign aimed at encouraging the brand's telecomm operator customers to make bolder investment choices. Each phase was designed to encourage operators to rethink mobile broadband and see it as a whole new way of doing business.

A critical success factor of thought leadership is strong foundations. It is worth investing time to pinpoint a core concept that will resonate with target audiences, then developing an idea with the flexibility and longevity to achieve a tangible commercial impact. In circumstances like those identified by LV there might be a tightly defined window of opportunity. But in other scenarios, thought leadership can lead to an enduring virtuous cycle where a brand's industry reputation and status continually improve over time.

2. Invest in something with substance

Recognising an opportunity to position itself as the HVE thought leader among banks, RBS carried out an in-depth study that underpinned a meaningful and constructive thought leadership report. Initial desk research identified what information was available from government and competitor sources to support HVE companies in their strategic thinking and decision-making. It transpired that little existed. This presented a unique opportunity to play an active role helping HVE companies identify key drivers for growth and plan their future investment strategies.

To achieve this, RBS published a research-led thought leadership report titled *The Future of UK High Value Engineering* and based the campaign around it. Ultimately, this added value by helping position the bank as a HVE thought leader, making the brand synonymous with the sector, as well as demonstrating commitment and support. By investing in quantitative and qualitative UK-wide research split by region, RBS ensured the findings were directly relevant to specific geographical segments of the target audience. This maximised newsworthiness of the findings across regional as well as national business publications. Other commentators focused on current HVE sector performance, but didn't

look at how it might develop 10 years from now. In contrast, RBS' report focused on new and game-changing technologies that will transform existing production techniques and create entirely new industries to revolutionise manufacturing.

With an understanding of these growth drivers, HVE companies could make informed decisions regarding both their short and long-term investment strategies. This created a high-value blueprint for HVE companies to identify factors that would help them achieve competitive advantage both domestically and internationally, paving the way for long-term growth in the HVE sector.

Honing in on a specific sector or tranche of your broader target audience can enable investment in more effective, relevant activity. Lloyds Bank achieved this when it turned its attentions to the often overlooked mid-sized businesses. Recognising that these firms account for a third of UK GDP, the bank realised that the market represents an important driver for economic turnaround. Rather than investing in a physical asset such as a whitepaper for this audience, Lloyds Bank sought to position itself as a thought leader by creating 'FD Gameplan'; a web-based resource and community for mid-market financial directors (FDs). The online space represents a supportive hub of news, articles, debate, knowledge sharing, research and expert opinion.

"Honing in on a specific sector or tranche of your broader target audience can enable investment in more effective, relevant activity"



The FD Gameplan website

FD Gameplan's development was rooted in an understanding of the challenges and pain-points facing FDs. Unprecedented market uncertainty means pressure has shifted onto FDs to pre-empt market changes and ensure the business is well placed to weather the next economic storm. The aim was to 'hand-hold' FDs through their rapidly changing role and market uncertainty – to be an invaluable source of market insight as well as support, resources, tools and information.

In addition to creating the hub itself and encouraging knowledge sharing among participants, Lloyds Bank gathered and shared valuable market insight from across the globe. The aim was ensure the platform was authoritative and credible while making information easily accessible and digestible. A unique blend of advice, guidance, news and analysis of emerging trends was provided, both from the bank's own experts and highly regarded independent sources. This helped FDs adapt to the challenges of today's volatile markets, enabling them to find fresh perspectives for the future and unlock their business ambitions with the help of expert advice.

"Maximising impact in thought leadership requires strong, strategic, subtle approaches to secure audience attention"

3. Be strategic and creative

Maximising investment in thought leadership requires a strong, albeit subtle, strategic approach that works creatively to secure the attention of target audiences and enable cohesion between marketing and sales teams.

The LV 'G Day' initiative powerfully blended strategy and creative to generate an escalating sense of urgency as the date of the EU gender directive approached. Focusing on the business audience of professional advisers, rather than consumers, was the masterstroke of this campaign. It meant activity was magnified, enabling the budget to go much further. What's more, some of the unashamedly innuendo-led executions probably achieved far greater standout and clout in this context than they may have done in mainstream media.



The advertorials used by LV to get advisers' attention

Activity launched five months before the gender directive deadline and involved a clear sequence of events to encourage financial advisers to take advantage of the opportunity sooner rather than later. The marketing team identified that IFAs' preoccupation with the demands of the Retail Distribution Review and other business-as-usual activities could be a major barrier to success. In this context, the aim was to make IFAs sit up and take notice, then maintain a continual presence with

different visuals, hooks and tools to engage different adviser segments. A strong creative theme engaged the audience and held all the campaign elements together. For instance, the 'no more guesswork' visual identity immediately conveyed that LV could easily and simply guide IFAs through the changes.

"If due diligence has been paid at the outset, it should be possible for the core idea to remain constant. The secret is to not lose sight of it – allow it to evolve"

Likewise, the success of RBS' HVE report took a well thought-out strategic and creative route encompassing a carefully selected blend of channels. Internal comms played a critical role: ensuring over 1800 employees understood and talked about the report provided a sound bedrock for the activity. Similarly, engaging the sales team facilitated a joined-up approach and helped to naturally pave the way for quality conversations. Strong links with major industry publication The *Manufacturer* – including launching the key report findings at its annual Manufacturers Directors Conference – ensured the report became a talking point, adding a further layer of integrity and credibility.

The long-term nature of some thought leadership initiatives can present a real challenge in terms of both strategy and creative development. However, if due diligence has been paid at the outset, it should be possible for the core idea to remain constant. The secret is to not lose sight of it, but allow it to grow and evolve, ensuring it remains relevant and engaging to the target audience at different points in the sales cycle. This involves identifying capability gaps that could potentially cause activity to run aground, and finding ways to bridge them to achieve cohesion between all relevant parties for the duration.

Ericsson's two-year 'Mobile unplugged' campaign was precisely orchestrated to enable the brand to continuously drive and shape the mobile broadband agenda. It was devised with three key phases, each with a different perspective on mobile broadband and accompanied with tailored content and collateral. The aim was to encourage operators to rethink mobile broadband and see it as a whole new way of doing business:

- 'Business logics' sought to claim the thought leadership territory surrounding monetisation of mobile broadband – a primary concern for many operators. The solution was to create a set of new business logics, inspired by other industries, and spark a dialogue about how these can be applied by operators. The logics were given original names and packaged into a structured workshop framework supported by presentation material, infographics and films.

- 'Network capabilities' shifted in focus from business to technology asking 'what does it take to unplug?' The answer was to emphasise the requirements and capabilities needed to realise new opportunities with mobile broadband. These were illustrated via interactive spaces on the campaign site alongside case studies, testimonials and solutions.

- The last phase considered why some operators are more successful than others when it comes to turning data growth into revenue growth. Ericsson identified the common denominators instrumental to their success and called these factors 'growth codes'. These insights, placed on the campaign site, were turned into presentation material, discussion papers and infographics.

Each of these themes was communicated to the regional Ericsson offices and to customers, as a way of influencing customer investment decisions much earlier in the process than ever before.

4. Extend credibility and reach

Being inclusive when it comes to the input and intelligence of third parties demonstrates attentiveness and an open mind. Brands that are not too precious about monopolising thought leadership status could add a further layer of credibility to their own activity. RBS' strategy undoubtedly benefitted from the involvement of leading UK HVE academics. They helped deliver insights that significantly influenced the innovative thought leadership report. Furthermore, collaborating with trade bodies and making sure the report was freely accessible to all played a critical role in its success. It underlined the importance of the findings and helped stimulate broader debate rooted in the report. Maximising the scope of the debate also aided relationship managers as they sought to initiate quality conversations with mid-corporate HVE companies across the UK. The benefit of this open, appreciative philosophy was also evidenced in FD Game Plan, where the core credibility and value was rooted in the fact the content was not solely generated by Lloyds Bank.

5. Don't sell anything

Thought leadership target audiences are probably the most sophisticated crowd a business will ever try to influence. They absolutely understand the insights they are benefiting from come from a commercial firm that has an interest in their business. However, trying to slip in an overt sales message is a sure-fire way to undermine your activity. You will quickly turn a receptive audience into an audience of sceptics. In fact, you may lose your audience altogether. It was perhaps an awareness of this that persuaded Lloyds Bank to deliberately avoid using the brand name in its FD Gameplan initiative.

Every stage of a thought leadership strategy, and each associated piece of creative, needs to take a wide berth from any direct sell. Instead, activity should work intelligently, striking the right notes to help decision makers reach their own conclusions about the type of service or support their business might need. If the ideas you have conveyed are valuable and persuasive enough, your business will almost certainly be at the top of their list when they need to address issues associated with your thought leadership campaign.

"Trying to slip in an overt sales message is a sure-fire way to undermine your activity. It will quickly turn a receptive audience into an audience of sceptics"

In this vein, thought leadership is a complex form of pull marketing to drive inbound enquiries. By waiting until you are invited to elaborate on how you would help a firm deal with the issues at hand, you create a warmer environment for sales conversations. Consequently, cohesion between the marketing and sales team is crucial. You may not be able to sell in thought leadership activity itself, but if the sales team are well-briefed on the core ideas they can continue the thought leader conversation at an appropriate level as it shifts gear into a sales conversation.

"The choice of thought leadership platform, and the way the campaigns are executed, have natural synergies with the brands' products and services"

Each of the campaigns outlined here cleverly side steps the need for overt sales messages. Instead, the choice of thought leadership platform, and the way the campaigns are executed, have natural synergies with the brands' products and services. This approach enables customer decision makers themselves to make the connections between their business needs and potential solutions from the thought leader brand.

Further reading

Best use of thought leadership campaign
Winner: 'Supporting UK higher value engineering to deliver economic growth' by RBS Manufacturing & Industrials Sector Team (M&I)

Runner-up: 'Unplug: Let's rethink mobile broadband' for Ericsson by House of Radon, Rewir

Shortlisted: 'Taking the guesswork out of the EU gender directive' for LV by Moreish Marketing

Shortlisted: 'FD Gameplan – establishing Lloyds Banking as the champion of UK businesses' for Lloyds Banking by Editions Financial

More information available at b2bmarketing.net/awards

SECTION 3

Return on investment

The question
How do you maximise commercial returns for your B2B marketing?

The context
Few of us these days are able to label a campaign successful simply because the senior leadership liked the creative. Our digital world means we can now measure success more than ever before and B2B marketers are expected to be able to demonstrate financial impact from the marketing investments they make.

Across most campaign plans the approach to measuring the commercial returns is pretty lamentable. Frequently results and forecasts assume that marketing's only role is to generate leads, rather than revenue-generating leads, leading to outlandish ROI claims. While in B2B there's often a challenge around campaign length versus the length of buying cycle, it needs to be recognised that few commercial leaders are interested in any campaign results other than the revenue or profit that was attributable to it.

However, simply being able to measure doesn't guarantee a successful outcome. What does it take to design a commercially successful campaign – from planning, targeting and engagement to follow up and measurement?

Using examples from industries as diverse as IT support, insurance and cement, some clues emerge that can help us build stronger campaigns with greater returns that might even pick up a few awards along the way.

The answer
Every successful campaign is built upon a combination of thorough planning, compelling execution, insightful monitoring and an element of good fortune. B2B marketers need to be completely clear on who they are trying to reach and what problems they can help them solve – the more segmented B2B marketers can become in this, the more likely they are to create a conversation that resonates. Creativity and quality of execution is as important as it ever was, but marketers also need to ensure that it is delivered via the recipients preferred channels over a sustained period. Winning campaigns don't end with the launch. The smart marketer is constantly measuring the signals to see what is working and what needs adjusting. And as for luck, while it can't be controlled, an old golf adage comes to mind: 'The harder I practice, the luckier I get.'



PETE JAKOB
OWNER AND PRINCIPLE CONSULTANT
PURPLE SALIX

"Winning campaigns don't end with the launch. The smart marketer is constantly measuring the signals to see what is working and what needs adjusting"

The evidence

Contrary to popular belief, it's not just technology companies with big budgets that are leading the way. You don't need a budget to think and plan. This section will highlight examples from some less than glamorous industries, as well as some of the so-called pace-setting sectors:

- Lafarge Tarmac is the market leader in the manufacture of cement-based products sold via builders merchants (e.g. Travis Perkins) and retail outlets such as B&Q. For this campaign they partnered with McCann Manchester.

- Comms-care provides support services (on-site, online and phone) for other IT companies – effectively becoming the 'doctor's doctor' by selling only to other channel IT companies. It assists over 500 channel partners who in turn provide support to over 7000 end users. The campaign referred to here was developed in conjunction with Purestone.

- In 2012, Keystone was a new brand with a compelling cloud-based project management system (KeyedIn Projects) for SMEs in the professional services industry. It turned to Marketing Options International (MOI) to help drive brand awareness and start to generate leads and sales pipeline.

- Xuber was formed in 2012 when Xchanging – a global provider of business process procurement and technology services – underwent a strategic rebranding/repositioning of its insurance software arm. Its componentised software is designed to meet the needs of groups such as insurers, reinsurer brokers and managing general agents (MGAs). Working with Birddog, its objective was to establish a new brand in the risk-averse commercial insurance market and to generate demand.

"With the combination of digital techniques, strong analytics and automation, target groups of one are increasingly becoming the goal"

1. Identify precise target groups

There is overwhelming evidence that segmented target groups with differentiated messaging deliver stronger results. With the combination of digital techniques, strong analytics and automation, target groups of one are increasingly becoming the goal.

Sometimes target groups are very clear and well defined. For example, when Xuber was looking to rebrand its commercial insurance software brand, its core targets were all centered on the City of London. Armed with this, it was able to build a campaign that leveraged the very fact that the core targets all worked within a very addressable physical space.

Other considerations

The smaller and more focused the target group, the more likely you are to be able to develop a compelling message for them. Investing in the quality of your data and the insight that can be derived from it beyond industry, organisation size and job title can pay back many times over. Digital activities are generating significant amounts of behavourial insight that needs to be harvested to improve targeting.

"Investing in the quality of your data and the insight that can be derived from it beyond industry, organisation size and job title can pay back many times over"

2. Walk in your customer's shoes

While your existing data can provide a lot of insight about the market you are trying to serve, some focused research can really help bring to life the segment you serve. It doesn't have to be expensive or time-consuming, but provides an opportunity to test your concepts before you go to the much more costly production stages.

Most of us may not associate innovation with products for the building trade. However, Lafarge Tarmac has introduced several innovative packaging offerings primarily targeting general/jobbing builders. Working with McCann Manchester, it was looking to extend this approach in to further segments. Propositions were developed for two new segments: infrequent purchasers of cement (e.g. plumbers and electricians) and DIYers. However, the team had limited understanding of the specific needs of these groups so research was needed.

A combination of focus groups, supported by 150 quantitative interviews, was conducted to identify pain points among infrequent users. Several areas were identified but the research suggested there wasn't a current product proposition that addressed all these pain points. A second stage of the research then carried out with equal numbers of infrequent users (professionals and DIYers) to test several new packaging and messaging propositions.

B2B marketers have a product or service to sell. But that doesn't mean it should dominate all the thinking and execution as it is unlikely to be the best way of resonating with your intended customer. Many organisations are undergoing this shift from a product-centric to a customer-centric approach to their marketing and it has far reaching consequences across the organisation.

Armed with the research evidence, Lafarge Tarmac developed new packaging and messaging propositions it was confident would be valued by its target segment. These directly addressed the challenges faced by infrequent users of cement-based products such as the wastage caused by damp, half-used cement bags, and the difficulty of mixing sand and cement together in the right ratios without creating a dusty mess.

Pain Point	Value Proposition
Paper bags prone to damage/water ingress	Plastic tubs: much tougher and waterproof
Usage quantities	Range included 2.5Kg, 5Kg and 10 Kg tub sizes
What to do with left over material	Different pack sizes available and/or material can be stored in tub if not used for mixing
Dust	Plastic tubs are air tight with no dust leakage
Getting the right ratios of cement and sand	Premixed material supplied
Mess from mixing	Mixing can be done in-situ in tub

Lafarge Tarmac value propositions for tubs

"Campaigns are more likely to succeed in generating revenue if sales and marketing agree on what constitutes a 'good' lead"

Other considerations

Think about the language used internally when talking about customers. Does it imply respect or disdain for them and their challenges? While this may seem a trite point of etiquette, if your internal behaviour demonstrates empathy with your customer it is likely to bleed into everything you do. Would it be valuable or somewhat awkward if a customer sat in your campaign planning meetings and heard how you talk about them?

3. Partner with the sales team and share measurements

While we probably don't talk and think about customer alignment sufficiently, the topic of sales and marketing alignment continues to be discussed within B2B marketing communities. It's undoubtedly true that campaigns are more likely to succeed in generating revenue if sales and marketing agree on what constitutes a 'good' lead, and there is a mutual understanding of what each party is going to do.

An important component of this is measurement alignment. In the case of KeyedIn, while marketing had a target of generating 500 marketing-qualified leads, it was also measured on the resulting sales pipeline that was loaded onto the CRM by the sales team. This is a healthy approach as it ensures marketing focuses on generating leads that are valued by sales, rather than thinking that lead generation is an end in itself. It also encourages an increased focus on nurturing early-stage leads that are not yet ready to pass to the sales function.

Other considerations

For each campaign, work with the sales team to define what constitutes a sales-ready lead and what capacity they have for such leads. Agree what the handoff point will be between sales and marketing and define what each party will do, and in what timescale. How will you review performance with the sales team and what will marketing do with leads that do not meet the sales qualification threshold?

4. Integrate your message across all channels consistently

We live in an omni-channel world where a purchase decision is likely to be influenced by multiple interactions across multiple channels over an extended period of time, and so consistency of delivery is essential. In the Lafarge Tarmac campaign, press, email, online display and direct mail were all employed to maximise the opportunity to reach the target audience in their preferred methods of consumption. However, each channel communication was delivered in the same tone of voice and the creative design was consistent and mutually reinforcing.

"We live in an omni-channel world where a purchase decision is likely to be influenced by multiple interactions across multiple channels – consistency is key"

Similarly, successful marketing programmes spread the storyline over a sustained period – particularly when raising brand awareness is a core objective. In the KeyedIn campaign generating brand awareness for this new entrant on the project management software market was a core objective. Its agency, Marketing Options International, designed a six-month campaign centered on monthly themes (e.g. control, visibility, effectiveness etc) delivered through multiple channels in order to maximise reach, impact and recognition. Thus each month represented a new opportunity to engage and an additional opportunity to reinforce the brand. Channels included mobile-optimised emails, personalised DM packages, web and print advertising, trade exhibition support and social media all leading to a campaign-specific microsite.



Marketing Options International developed new conversation topics every month in a consistent format

Other considerations

For many, having fewer total campaigns but running each one for a longer duration reaps rewards in both efficiency in the marketing department and effectiveness in the marketplace. Consider developing a small number of permanent 'always-on' campaigns for the most significant conversational topics using a nurturing approach. This will help shift the marketing focus from one of new campaign design to an approach that focuses on how to attract new entrants into permanent 'black box' conversations.

"Just because you have a product to sell doesn't mean there needs to be pictures of it at every opportunity. What is the emotional response you're trying to create?"

5. Don't be boring

Just because a company has a product to sell doesn't mean there needs to be pictures of it at every opportunity. What is the emotional response you are trying to create? In most cases, develop creative where the reader/viewer sees their world and aspirations (or challenges) reflected. Imagery and copy that has this empathy is more likely to have impact.

Lafarge Tarmac chose to commission a photoshoot that created pictures of real life on-the-job scenarios – such as a 'before and after' depiction of a plumber's van. On one side of the van you could see the dusty, messy environment created by split, opened bags of cement. This contrasted with a clean aspirational side where the dusty products were contained within tough, stackable plastic tubs. This helped prospective customers see themselves in their current messy environment and also picture themselves in a cleaner aspirational environment.



Lafarge Tarmac's print advertisement

Similarly, IT support can be perceived as a very dry topic. It can be hard to get noticed and make an impact. Sometimes this can involve taking calculated risks. In the case of Comms-care, Purestone created a visually impactful and provocative set of materials that would stand out and arouse interest within an otherwise stale landscape of messaging.

"Purestone created a visually impactful and provocative set of materials that would stand out and arouse interest within an otherwise stale landscape of messaging"



Comms-care used provocative imagery to create standout

Every now and again, clients and agencies get the opportunity to do something more unusual than an email campaign linking to a website. In the ultra-conservative world of commercial insurance, Birddog proposed a high-profile, predominantly offline approach to campaign execution – driven partly by the heightened impact that such an approach could achieve, but also by the opportunity of having the majority of the campaign targets working within a single square mile.

A bus was repainted in the new Xuber branding and driven around the City for three days. A media takeover of Bank underground station was also executed, and baristas served fresh coffee on the streets to target clients. Such an approach takes bottle and budget, but it certainly created impact, and 220 people ended up attending their launch event – three times the target. And while direct correlation to financial results is always more challenging in such offline strategies, the early signs are promising and significant new deals have been signed.



A Xuber branded bus was used to create impact in the City

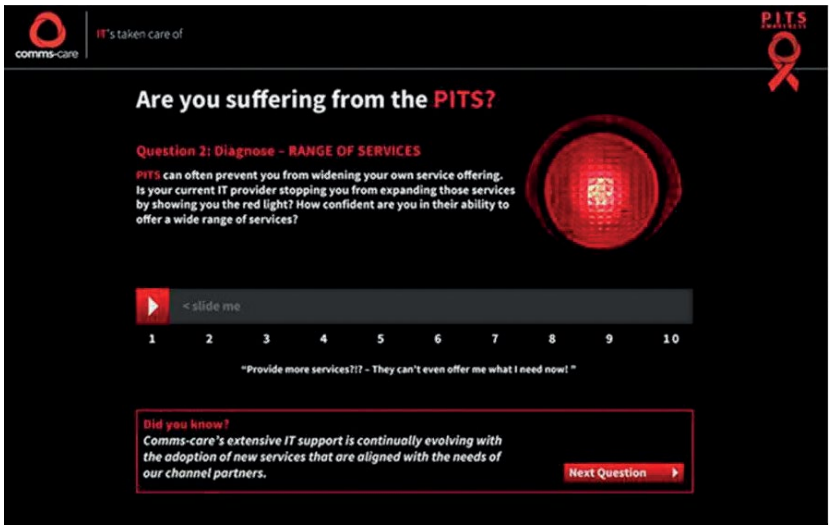
"Creative expression needs to be an authentic expression of the current or intended brand values – otherwise it risks coming across as a misguided gimmick"

Other considerations

While we all love to see exciting creative ideas, enthusiasm needs to be tempered with the fact that creative expression needs to be an authentic expression of the current or intended brand values – otherwise it risks coming across as a misguided gimmick.

6. Design for client interaction

Various forms of self-assessment tools are an excellent way of gauging the degree of interest of a prospect as well as gathering significant and specific insight. For Comms-care an email campaign drove prospects to a campaign microsite hosting a tool that posed questions and then used the targets' responses to tailor subsequent questions. All this data was captured and passed across to the CRM so it could be followed up and used in future campaigns. The output was also consolidated into a personalised DM pack and sent to the client.



Comms-care leveraged an online survey to gauge interest

Social channels such as blogging and Twitter lend themselves well to interaction. For instance, KeyedIn built a blog with expert advice on improving project management techniques. Having built an audience they leveraged an online survey in their blog as a simple means of soliciting insight for future content.

Other considerations
Think about how you could build in opportunities across your campaigns for prospects to demonstrate a degree of commitment that could be used to help score and prioritise responses. Webinars, surveys, events, live chats are all simple tactics that allow prospects to send signals about their level of interest.

7. Focus on the human handoff
Not all responses created by a campaign are ready to pass to the sales team – indeed, when marketing teams make this mistake they universally find that sales stop valuing the 'leads' and don't engage with them. But what happens to those that aren't yet sales ready?

It doesn't have to be over-complicated. Keyed-In took a relatively straightforward approach of applying a rudimentary scoring approach to each lead and passing high-scoring leads directly to sales and qualifying medium-scoring leads via Marketing Options International telemarketing services. These might be people who had interacted with the website or had received the DM piece. Leads that expressed interest but were not ready to buy were re-entered into the campaign.

Other considerations
Successful B2B marketers go a step beyond straight qualification and nurture initial responses over time (digitally and/or via telemarketing) with incremental valuable content.

"Think about building opportunities across your campaigns for prospects to demonstrate a degree of commitment that could be used to score responses"

8. Measure to understand and improve, not just to report

How will you know what success looks like unless you set yourself an objective? In the case of Lafarge Tarmac the new tubs were launched at the beginning of 2012 with annual revenue and share targets established through to the end of 2014 (exact numbers are confidential). This would also result in a substantial profit contribution.

When it comes to measurement of a campaign, a balance is needed between two areas; commercial results and in-market measurements. At the end of the day revenue and profit are the ultimate measure of success, and the attributable contribution that marketing made to that achievement. But there will be a significant time delay between launching the campaign and capturing the revenue. So, we also need to measure the engagement with our marketing activity to help us feel confident that we are creating sufficient opportunities to convert.

"When it comes to measurement of a campaign, a balance is needed between two areas; commercial results and in-market measurements"

The cement-based products that Lafarge Tarmac launched are sold via third-party distribution channels (builders merchants and retailers), at low unit cost, and each tub sale does not go through an extensive purchase cycle – it's essentially a retail experience with the marketing playing a role of making the prospect aware of the proposition. However, traffic to the tubs corporate page and DIY cement site doubled during the campaign period, and the banner ad placements drove five times the number of clicks compared with the industry average.

For the Comms-care email campaign an open rate of 47 per cent was achieved across 7000 emails – implying good data targeting as well as a strong proposition. Impressively, 322 engagement tools were completed on the website and passed to the sales team for follow up. So clearly the approach resonated with the target audience. It will be interesting to follow how successful the sales team is at converting that to revenue over the next months, but they certainly have an insightful set of client data to start their conversations.

KeyedIn measured a rich set of top-of-funnel indicators (email opens, downloads, banner clicks, meetings emanating from exhibitions, survey completes etc). This all fed into its lead-scoring approach. Of the 3890 decision makers who interacted with elements of the campaign, this scoring approach yielded 933 marketing qualified leads (MQLs). After these had been telequalified this converted to around 100 sales qualified leads (SQLs) and a pipeline of nearly £400,000.

Measurement is our friend, not just a stick with which to beat us up. Successful campaigns have a philosophy of testing and in-market adjustment baked into the campaign execution philosophy. Comms-care used split testing to help improve the performance of email creative, and used regular reporting to gather insights and make campaign adjustments based on seller capacity and feedback from their prospect engagements, as well as leveraging the insights from the campaign data.

Other considerations

There's a lot of nonsense talked and written about ROI. The measurement is simple, hence its appeal, but it is frequently used over-simplistically and can lead to poor decision making. Think about the insights your ROI measurements are really providing. ROI for campaigns into new markets is likely to be lower than those where you already have a track record. Ensure your measurements take account of the complexity of the buying situation. A low ROI for a telemarketing activity may indicate poor performance on the part of the telemarketing function – but equally it may signal weaknesses in data selection, messaging, timing, sales follow-up or a failure to take account of the other channels that play an influence in the purchase cycle. Take the time to understand what insight the ROI measure is really providing.

"ROI for campaigns into new markets is likely to be lower than those where you already have a track record"

Further reading

Most commercially successful campaign

Winner: 'Lafarge Tarmac tubs' for Lafarge Tarmac by McCann Manchester

Runner up: 'PITS awareness 2013' for Comms-care by Purestone

Shortlisted: 'Xuber Launch' for Xuber by Birddog

Shortlisted: 'KeyedIn PSO launch campaign' for KeyedIn Solutions by Marketing Options International

More information available at b2bmarketing.net/awards

SECTION 4

Targeting decision makers

The question
How can you best target corporate decision makers?

The context
Decision making in large or enterprise level organisations (250-plus individuals) is often a complex process, involving multiple people. Large budgets and sophisticated projects require careful research, consideration and evaluation, then there is budget approval and a well-defined procurement process, all of which increase the buying timeframe. Many people are involved in making these decisions, and all have different needs and concerns. The task for marketing and the sales team is therefore to decide which members of the buying centre (users, influencers, deciders, buyers, gatekeepers) have to be reached, and with what messages. The long timeframe means marketers also need to nurture leads carefully.

More often than not the marketing campaign opts to go 'straight to the top', to the decider, to the C-suite.

However, this audience is often time-pressured, hard-to-reach and protected by gatekeepers (and some other members of the buying centre). Reaching the corporate decision maker presents the ultimate marketing challenge. There are multiple decision makers within organisations; some of the different roles that exist include:

- **Users:** those that actually use the service.
- **Influencers:** those that help define the specification and also provide an input into the processes of evaluating the available alternatives.
- **Deciders:** depending on the involvement of the financial decision – might be individuals or a management team.
- **Approvers:** authorise proposals of deciders and buyers.
- **Buyers:** have the authority for the selection of suppliers and negotiating purchase terms.
- **Gatekeepers:** have control over the flow of information and may be able to stop you from reaching others within the buying centre.



LUAN WISE
MARKETING CONSULTANT

"The task for marketing and sales is to decide which members of the buying centre have to be reached, and with what messages"

The Evidence © B2B Marketing 2014

The answer

The very basics of marketing, and business success, rely upon understanding your customer. The C-suite is hungry for information, and if you can provide it in a compelling and credible fashion, you'll have a much better chance of putting your product or service in front of this elusive audience.

"The C-suite is so bombarded by messaging that they're not listening anymore. They have unique qualities that make them tough targets for marketing"

There are no quick wins. It is not a numbers game. The over-arching strategy and tactical planning requires research, insight and attention to detail. Organisations need to share new information with the C-suite, something they don't already know. There is a need to use multiple communication channels and varying content formats to break-through and get them to listen.

To stand out and be noticed, marketing communications need to demonstrate value in a clear and concise manner. It's about opening doors with high-quality initial contact, which must be personalised. Their pain points need to be addressed.

Organisations need to 'show' rather than 'tell', and discuss 'how' not 'what'. Most importantly, they need to demonstrate empathy, gain trust and engage business leaders in conversation, rather than shout out sales messages. C-suite executives don't have to be hard-to-reach, but it is difficult to get their attention.

The evidence

The C-suite is the ultimate decision maker in any organisation. Because of their buying power and clout, every savvy marketer is trying to get their message heard at CXO-level.

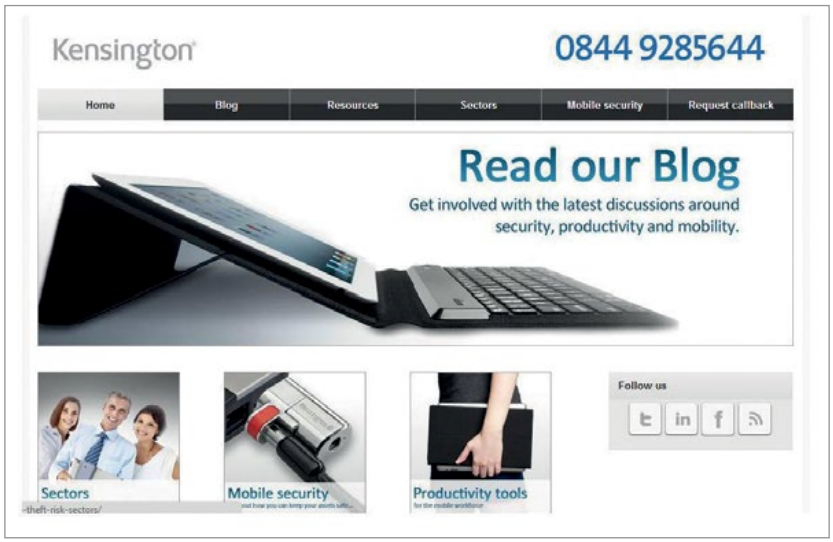
In an environment with more communication channels and more noise than ever, it's hard to get anyone to pay attention, let alone pressured senior executives. They're so bombarded by messaging – at home, in the office, and on-the-go – that they're just not listening anymore. The C-suite also has unique qualities that make them tough targets for marketing. Gatekeepers protect them by filtering messages and scheduling their time.

1. Understanding the C-suite

The need for knowledge within business is acute. Senior executives need the very latest information to stay ahead. Relentless schedules and the need to achieve high-level business objectives make them very focused on outcomes. The C-suite relies heavily on the advice and thoughts of their peers and those they perceive to be credible experts (this may include other members of the buying centre). They know the information they need and want, they know how to cut through message clutter and do not want to waste time.

The 2013 B2B Awards revealed many great examples of how best to target corporate decision makers. These examples are not limited to the 'Best corporate decision maker-targeted campaign' category, and evidence across other award categories includes: 'Best use of customer insight', 'Best use of content marketing' and 'Best B2B lead generation'.

"The 2013 B2B Awards revealed many great examples of how to best target corporate decision makers"



Kensington's lead generation 'hub'

Aylesbury-based Kensington is a leader in hardware locks and offers a range of laptop, tablet and smartphone solutions. Despite this, brand awareness across Europe was low. In the UK, an average of 14 laptops are stolen from every company each year, yet just 12 per cent of companies use anti-theft technology, believing encryption to be sufficient protection. Kensington wanted a targeted B2B lead generation campaign to create demand in healthcare and education verticals and the IT channel across EMEA.

Kensington had a high-lead plan but little idea of target job roles, which geographies had the most potential, or what messaging would stimulate sales. To address these challenges, Cyance carried out qualitative research, that showed Kensington needed to increase its reach beyond the initial contact – the IT buyer – to higher up the organisation, targeting board members instead.

Many big brands, including Santander, Sony and Pfizer, have suffered adverse publicity due to security issues. As a result, data security is now on the agenda of European corporate boards. By adapting the message from the need to buy a physical product, to a board-level discussion about company-wide threats and solutions, Cyance planned to maximise the value and volume of leads and boost the client's credibility.

Cyance worked hard to understand the needs and pain points of the new target audience, and developed tailored messaging to raise awareness, incorporating a customised content approach.

2. Targeting begins with data

Buying in a list would be far too easy. Finding the right business – and the right person within that business – takes time and effort as well as money. There's no substitute for good planning.

"Finding the right business – and the right person within that business – takes time and effort as well as money. There's no substitute for good planning"

While there are many research tools available for marketers, the shortlisted campaign entries do not evidence this part of the process in any detail. It is likely that prospect databases were already available for interrogation and selection. Data is only the starting point, however, as demonstrated by the following case study.

AXA Wealth supplies investment solutions to consumers through independent financial advisers. The company decided to be one of the first organisations in a compliance-focused industry to shift the balance back towards helping advisers grow their businesses. AXA appointed The Marketing Practice to help it achieve this goal.

'Elevate business development' involved consolidating existing data from a range of AXA sources, comprising over 30,000 integrated contacts and one million records.

Its next step was to enhance this data with customer research, including perceptions of AXA, priorities and attitudes to communications, characteristics of the best customers, details of the sales process, how to identify the hottest leads, and the steps that prospects go through before buying. It also carried out wider research into pressures in the market and competitor activity.

Based on the findings, The Marketing Practice developed a segmentation model that grouped prospects according to behaviour and demographics. It used these insights to develop a matrix of the key messages to share with the different segments as they moved through the buying cycle.

Kerri Wells, direct producer, AXA Wealth, says: "Sorting out your data is like flossing your teeth: you know you should do it daily, but there's never the time. Six months on and it's clearly paid off. We wouldn't be anywhere near reaching our targets, let alone exceeding them, without it."

3. Shifting awareness

Changing the positioning of a product/service/organisation in the mind of your prospect, particularly at the C-suite level, is a huge challenge. It requires a different way of thinking and a very clear messaging plan. O2 Enterprise achieved just this with its 'Flexiday' campaign. O2 Enterprise was established in 2011 to provide ICT products and services to large private and public sector organisations.There is growing demand for services to support flexible working programmes within large organisations. Such arrangements have been proven to boost employee productivity while reducing costs such as office space overheads. Gartner estimates the market to be worth over £5 billion, and growing by 10 per cent each year.

This trend is a perfect fit for O2 Enterprise's new propositions, yet the company was perceived as offering purely 'traditional' mobile and landline services, rather than the broader ICT services.

In 2012, declining margin from the historic mobile services meant the company needed to increase revenue from the newly established ICT service areas. But O2 Enterprise was starting from scratch in terms of building a reputation, customer base and revenue stream.

Usually, O2's Enterprise campaigns are targeted by industry sector. For the 'Flexiday' campaign (when the company closed its head office in Slough for the day to demonstrate flexible working in action) the data and messaging were segmented according to job role, IT, HR, C-suite and finance, highlighting the benefits for each group.

IT people wanted to know how the systems held up, the HR audience was interested in the cultural aspects, and the board and finance teams wanted numbers – savings, productivity, carbon footprint etc.

4. You must have a plan

The following campaigns – winner and runner-up in the B2B Awards 2013 'Best corporate decision maker-targeted campaign' category – demonstrate how a clearly defined and integrated marketing communications plan is essential when trying to target corporate decision makers.



The annotated annual reports formed Canon Europe's 'Aiming higher' campaign

Canon Europe helps large organisations change the way they manage information to become more efficient and improve customer experience. Many businesses still think Canon justs manufactures printers. Its 'Aiming higher' campaign needed to change this perception and to raise awareness and interest in Canon's strategic services offering.

"O2's Enterprise campaigns are targeted by industry sector. It's 'Flexiday' campaign segmented data and messaging according to job role"

'Aiming higher' was created to start strategic conversations and create first appointment leads with a C-level audience in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands. The programme kicked off by selecting key target accounts (based on propensity to buy and proposition fit) and building a comprehensive messaging framework. Pre-calling to PAs ensured the target contacts were correct and aware that a piece of direct mail was on its way.

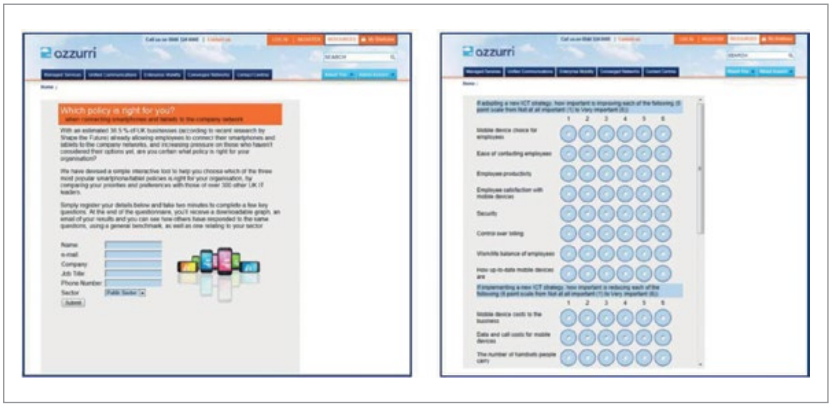
"The marketing mantra 'right person, right time, right message, right place' should never be forgotten"

Each target received extracts from their latest annual report, marked up with Canon Europe proof points that aligned to their objectives and addressed the major issues of each organisation. Recipients would immediately recognise their own annual report.

The main call-to-action was a peer-to-peer discussion with Canon Europe's managing director for their country. An additional DM was sent as a follow-up, going into more detail about Canon Europe's proposition. Keeping contacts 'warm' and driving greater interest. The programme exceeded sales lead targets and repositioned Canon Europe's offering with large businesses. The approach is now being applied across more European markets.

Adam Poole, European & UK marketing business strategy director, Canon Europe, says: "The results from 'Aiming higher' have been fantastic. It has really demonstrated the value of creating a strong peer-to-peer communication that addresses key business challenges and backing that up with a clear plan to get the message in front of them. It is also a testament to the potential benefits of centrally managing Europe-wide marketing programmes."

Bring your own device (BYOD) – which enables employees to connect mobile devices to company networks – was one of the technology industry's hottest topics in 2012. Azzurri Communications believed that the idea all too often presented a grave security risk, which should be avoided.



Azzurri's app was re-created on its website

While industry giants such as Cisco carried out research into how to implement BYOD, Azzurri's 'Opinion exchange' campaign was the only one that dared to ask: 'Should you implement BYOD?'

By cleverly focusing on opinion sharing rather than simply shouting at the marketplace, this interactive and persuasive multichannel campaign successfully made IT leaders sit up and take action.

This campaign not only changed opinions, it opened doors to these senior decision makers. With two major deals already being secured as a result, it has delivered a campaign ROI of 125:1 – and much more is in the pipeline.

Influencing media coverage to reset buyer perception was highly successful for this campaign. 'Before and after' examples (see below) demonstrate great use of research-led marketing and how credible insight relevant for the busy corporate decision maker can be employed successfully.

Publication	Perception before	Perception after campaign
Comms business	'Considerations and best practices for BYOD'	'Choose your own device revealed as the best fit'
Comms dealer	'BYOD drives mobile device management market'	'Choose your own device found to be best option'
Mobile news	'RIM banks on BYOD to help win back share'	'Azurri: firms hesitant about adopting BYOD'

5. Content and effective distribution

We have seen how campaigns need to involve multiple phases to gradually 'nurture' decision makers towards a sale. All of the campaigns featured in this section involve significant content creation, and content that can be used again and again in different formats.

Content has also been distributed across multiple channels – including direct mail, email and telephone. Surprisingly the use of social media, while present, is absent of any real detail in the campaigns reviewed; perhaps this forms part of the 'always-on' marketing activity of an organisation and is not necessarily deemed to be campaign-specific.

'Public perspectives' for Vodafone by Base One, shortlisted for 'Best use of content marketing', demonstrates the successful use of content for targeting corporate decision makers. It nicely summarises the challenges of reaching the C-suite and the importance of influencers. When you have diligent research, real insight and clearly targeted communications, there is no real gatekeeper preventing you from reaching the C-suite. They will sit up and take notice if it's relevant. The marketing mantra 'right person, right time, right message, right place' should never be forgotten.

"When you have diligent research, real insight and targeted comms, there is no real gatekeeper preventing you from reaching the C-suite"

6. Public perspectives
Research shows that public sector decision makers would rather listen to their peers than their suppliers. The aims Vodafone set out to address were, first and foremost, to challenge preconceptions that it was just a mobile network provider, and secondly to position itself as a facilitator of change for public sector organisations throughout the UK.

"Research shows that public sector decision makers would rather listen to their peers than their suppliers"

It also wanted to educate decision makers and influencers on the range of services it provides under an approved framework, and to start engaging decision makers around specific issues before demonstrating how Vodafone can help to solve them.

Base One created a content-led campaign, with a theme of public services reform, covering issues that leaders look to solve through technology, and exploring what it is like to deliver public services today. The hero content consisted of video interviews of public sector leaders talking about their challenges. Supporting content included emails, how-to guides, resources round-ups, articles, case studies, PSN manifesto, infographics, advertorials, online display ads, live online Q&As, research and an online survey.

The content was also tailored to each of the four vertical segments: healthcare, local government, central government and police; and addressed key issues identified in leaders' interviews. The challenges to appeal to this audience were primarily based on selecting the best channels for maximum exposure and reach.

Further reading

Best corporate decision maker-targeted campaign
Winner: 'Canon Aiming Higher' for Canon Europe
by The Marketing Practice

Runner up: 'The Opinion Exchange: Turning Back the BYOD Bandwagon'
by Azzurri Communications and Boost Marketing

Shortlisted: 'Flexiday' for O2 Enterprise by The Marketing Practice

Best use of content marketing
Shortlisted: 'Public Perspectives' for Vodafone by Base One

Best use of customer insight
Runner up: 'Elevate business development' for AXA Wealth
by The Marketing Practice

Best B2B lead generation campaign
Highly commended: 'Generating EMEA-wide leads in challenging verticals'
for Kensington by Cyance

More information available at b2bmarketing.net/awards

SECTION 5

Internal marketing

The question
How do you align and guide the brand internally?

The context
When it comes to employee engagement the lines between HR and marketing are blurring in a big way, and more than ever B2B marketers are being asked to ignite an emotional connection between the brand and its ambassadors. Whether to achieve consistency across sales and marketing or to instil the brand values into the mind space of a wider employee base, the common themes throughout the entries for the 'Best internal audience' campaign category stand out by a country mile: collaboration, inclusion and dialogue. When you think about it, this is just marketing like we've always known it; we just haven't been very good at seeing our colleagues as a target market with needs, desires and interests that have to be satisfied in return for engagement. As marketers, we don't blame the target market if an external campaign goes wrong, we improve how we're responding to insight from the group of people we're targeting. As soon as we start to view our colleagues as a target audience with rational and emotional needs we can begin to communicate with them in the way they will respond to. Gone are the days of the iron fist, and the 'they just don't get it' grumbles won't wash any longer.



JADE TAMBINI
MARKETING MANAGER
DS SMITH'S
RECYCLING DIVISION

"It's marketing's role to ensure behaviours across the internal audience reflect the brand"

The answer
There are four key stages to achieving internal brand activation that, when executed well, will take a B2B brand from misalignment and confusion among its employees to solidarity and consistency aiding successful delivery of the brand promise.

The evidence

1. Determine desired behaviours
The key difference between our role as marketers and that of HR's when it comes to employee engagement is where our focus lies. Our behavioural change targets need to be focused on what will enhance the brand and we can only achieve this by setting clear objectives to motivate employees to deliver on the areas of the brand promise that apply to them. Engaging employees in the company vision and values to achieve the overall business strategy can see our efforts as marketers morphed into a HR force and our key focus diminished. The brand strategy is there to deliver the business strategy. HR's role is to deliver towards the business strategy and ensure employees are delivering on the company values. It's marketing's role to ensure behaviours across the internal audience reflect the brand, so you can see why these two areas are so easily mixed up.

The Evidence © B2B Marketing 2014

That's not to say internal brand activation won't deliver positive by-products including increased morale and motivation, but if there is no link back to the brand strategy we can end up wasting our time and effort as a marketing resource.

DirectionGroup's entry for Fujitsu's 'Fill the pipe' campaign had clear objectives that linked back to the brand strategy from the start. The aim was to get its sales people and account managers to include a new partner solutions offering in its sales process and customer interaction. It set out to achieve this by enthusing its internal audience through the differentiators of the new offering in the marketplace. Fujitsu sales people and account managers were traditionally focused on selling technology–based products and not solutions, and so instilling that change was the key challenge for the campaign. Fujitsu achieved a sharp increase in sales opportunities as a result of keeping all activity tightly linked to the brand strategy and through setting out the desired behavioural changes for its employees at the start of the programme.

The winning entry, 'Step up communications programme' for Unilever Food Solutions Global by Torch B2B was also born from a marketing focus: 'The challenge was to help UFS promote and launch a training programme focusing on stepping up the impact of their channel and category marketing communications worldwide.'

By having a clear vision of what needed to be achieved, the campaign achieved 90 per cent participation across its 54 marketing teams across the globe – no easy task.

2. The big long idea

Setting the behavioural changes we want and actually getting them is where the fun really starts. We need to provide structure to ensure the consistent delivery of the desired brand impression to our internal audience. Treat your internal audience as you would your end user; a purchase decision in the B2B space isn't an immediate one. It takes time for your B2B buyer to come to a final purchase decision and act on it. In the same way your internal audience will take time to reach a state of brand championship.

B2B brands need big long ideas that stay powerful and engaging right the way through the external buyer journey. From grabbing attention at awareness, to getting more technical around the offering in the desire and action stages, the big long idea has to have the strength to remain compelling enough to nurture. The big long idea needs to encapsulate the differentiating factor that sets the brand apart. This then needs to be supported with a strong creative platform to bring the idea to life.

"Treat your internal audience as you would your end user; a purchase decision in the B2B space isn't an immediate one"

Internal brand activation is so important because it can prove dangerous to skip straight to execution of the big long idea externally without getting it in the mindspace of the organisation first. Your internal audience will go through a number of stages to reach full championship of the brand and an understanding of the behaviours they must instil and live by in order to deliver the brand values is where an employee journey map will support your process. Map out the key stages your internal audience will go through toward engagement as you would the external buyer journey. Once this is defined you can align the right messages, delivered in appropriate content formats and plan to deliver them at the right times as they move along this journey.

"Creatively engaging employees with the big long idea is different from forming a creative way to motivate employees to achieve in their respective roles"

This is a big area where the lines between marketing and HR become fuzzy once again. Communicating and creatively engaging employees with the big long idea is different from forming a creative way to motivate employees to achieve in their respective roles towards the overall business strategy – this is HR's role.

Fujitsu turned its mission 'to use its experience and the power of ICT to shape the future of society' into an external big long idea; 'Reshaping ICT, reshaping business' supported by the positioning: 'At Fujitsu, we continue to harness the power of ICT to enable our customers to meet new challenges and to build a more prosperous future for all'. From this, its 'Fill the pipe' campaign was an internal activation of the brand featuring the big long idea – a perfect example of integrating the brand into the mind space of employees to deploy a big long idea in parallel with marketing activity. By launching the new offering to the sales and account management teams first, Fujitsu could be confident the big long idea would resonate with the target employees so marketing activity would seamlessly integrate with the sales and customer service processes. The programme saw healthy results that proved the effectiveness of the operation.

3. Deploy and motivate

Create a clear, simple and motivational understanding of the brand strategy and communicate this across the business by mapping out activity, content and channels to support the different stages of the employee journey to engagement. From this, deploy ambient materials that clearly communicate at a glance the brand strategy and required behaviours.

Winning entrant, Torch B2B helped Unilever Food Solutions (UFS) achieve a 90 per cent participation rate in an internal brand activation programme aimed at its 54 marketing teams across the globe.

The 'Step up communications programme' consisted of three learning modules mapped out against the employee engagement journey. Featuring a spoof agency called 'The Big Star Agency', the first module featured a series of 'mockumentary' videos that showed good and bad marketing practice that later encouraged the marketers to collaborate and guide the agency toward a positive output in module three.

UFS, along the employee engagement map, used a variety of engagement tools including a social media avatar named Frank Brand and an email campaign to measure effectiveness of the programme on its completion. One of the UFS marketers said: "For me, this course helped me to become more confident in speaking up and sharing ideas with the others. Also, the videos were very good and motivating", this statement shows engagement and motivation go hand-in-hand and demonstrates how successful Torch B2B and UFS were in the deployment of the programme.

"Communicate a clear understanding of brand strategy across the business by mapping out activity and deploying materials with required behaviours"

It's a good idea to embrace both structured and organic development, and get employees to collaboratively build the internal change through their own creativity, knowledge sharing and learning.

Berghind Joseph for the 'Tate & Lyle values' campaign aimed to create a dialogue and level of interaction with the values of the business to maximise employee engagement. Using postcard drop boxes, interactive features on the intranet and by showcasing employees within the organisation who were living the values the campaign was made accessible and relevant. A spokesperson for Tate & Lyle commented on the programme: "This has really helped to cultivate a culture based around our values, and has subsequently improved performance." This shows that working to motivate through inclusion will always give a more positive end result.



Postcards and posters from the Tate & Lyle campaign

Engage brand ambassadors across the business, tasking them with motivating their teams and promoting the required brand behaviours. Momentum helped UPS, the world's largest express carrier and package delivery company, achieve active participation of over 10 per cent of UK employees in Olympic-related activities as part of their London 2012 sponsorship initiative. This created a natural base of employee advocates, achieved using channels that were both fun and engaging for measurable improvement, including their 'Adidas fit for 2012' programme and the appearance of Olympics 2012 Ambassador Denise Lewis for 'warm up at work' sessions as part of staff briefings.



Olympians Louis Smith and Denise Lewis motivated UPS employees

A final note on successful deployment of internal brand activation is around leading by example and achieving endorsement from the top of the organisation down. Unfortunately, communications that come directly from the marketing department can get overlooked or even sent to the delete folder. Research who the communication should come from to get the attention of your internal audience.

Fujitsu's 'Fill the pipe' campaign was launched with a communication pack from the sales director to all sales managers, instantly giving the programme relevancy to the target internal audience.

"Research who the communication should come from to get the attention of your internal audience"



FCC Environmental's 'Roadmap to success' flyers

Similarly, Pelican's entry for FCC Environmental saw it create a new brand and set of values through employee workshops. These were launched through a chief executive roadshow followed by 'Roadmap to success' flyers being sent to break down the business strategy into digestible chunks. Results of an employee engagement survey showed staff understood the aims and objectives of the business far more after the new brand and values had been launched. This can be attributed to its inclusion right the way through the process, as well as the support literature created using good employee journey mapping.

4. Reinforce and set guidelines

Encouraging collaboration and inclusion doesn't mean you'll lose control of the brand. In fact, it is important to shape on-going discussions on the big long idea and to support training on brand guidelines to keep your internal activation programme from derailing.

"It is important to shape on-going discussions on the big long idea and to support training on brand guidelines to keep your internal programme from derailing"

Unilever's Twitter avatar Frank Brand acted as a great advocate for reinforcing the brand strategy. By playing the role of a participating colleague who facilitated debate and knowledge sharing, the avatar got into the mindset of the target audience on a level that enabled them to readily relate to the programme. Forty-five per cent of the respondents to an email sent out to measure the effectiveness of the programme had followed Frank Brand on Twitter, which proved the character was a powerful component of the campaign.

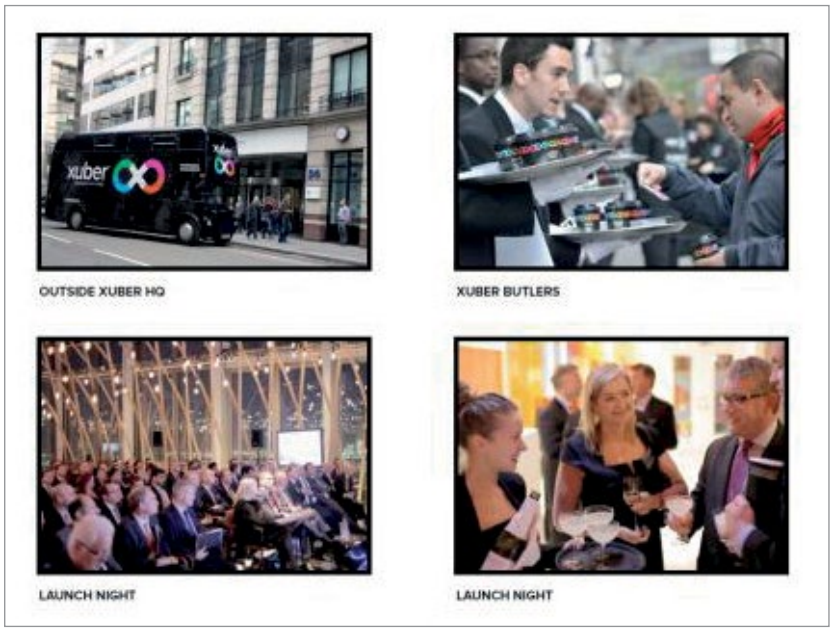
"Encouraging senior managers to have a voice in the business is also a great way to achieve on-going strategy reinforcement"



Frank Brand: Unilever's fictional Twitter character reinforced brand strategy

Give your colleagues a guide to communicate the importance of working together to deliver your brand promise aligned to the business strategy and objectives. Encouraging senior managers to have a voice in the business is also a great way to achieve on-going reinforcement.

Xuber's 'There's no place like home' campaign, delivered by Birddog, had three senior staff members host a series of internal launch events to cover the vision of the business, insight into the new brand and an overview of marketing activity that would take place, including online/offline advertising, PR, emails, guerrilla marketing and a unique City launch event. Senior staff members also engaged with employees through Twitter, which led to a newly established social presence named the 'Xuberians' by staff themselves that enabled them to interact with their peers and leaders, giving staff a voice they never had before. The execution of this approach is admirable as getting senior staff to dedicate time to this sort of activity is no easy task, but when it works it delivers fantastic results.



Xuber's unique City launch event

"Don't stop communicating the brand promise and desired behaviours. Promote the brand promise internally to keep your employees engaged"

Whatever you do, don't stop communicating the brand promise and desired behaviours. Plan for internal communications and activities throughout the year on an on-going basis that will promote the brand promise and keep your internal audience engaged. Just as you would create brand guidelines to guide your external communications and consistent communications aligned to your brand, you should endeavour to do the same for your internal audience.

Further reading

Best internal audience campaign

Winner: 'Step up communications programme' for Unilever Food Solutions Global by Torch B2B

Runner up: 'Tate & Lyle Values' for Tate & Lyles by Berghind Joseph

Shortlisted: 'Fill the pipe' for Fujitsu by DirectionGroup

Shortlisted: 'UPS London 2012' for UPS by Momentum

Shortlisted: 'There's no place like home' for Xuber by Birddog

More information available at b2bmarketing.net/awards

SECTION 6

Building an effective marketing team

The question
How best can you build a dynamic and effective B2B marketing team?

The context
The last 10 years have witnessed a revolutionary shift in marketing. Cast your mind back to 2004; no social media, no mobile responsive sites, no email automation tools, no analytics; the list goes on. One thing has remained true through the years however, and that is marketing's main function is to drive revenue for its respective organisation.

It's the businesses that invest in change that differentiate; those that see the shift before we've even shifted. They gain the extra inch, yard or even mile on their competitors, and marketing sits at the forefront of this journey. The marketing leadership needs to differentiate through innovation, to influence key stakeholders but, most importantly, build and motivate a team for success. But where do you start?

The answer
I have broken my evidence and thoughts down into three categories: knowledge, innovation and specialisation. All are equally important when building a dynamic and effective B2B marketing team and none of them can afford to be overlooked.

The evidence

1. Knowledge (and its three dimensions)
Having spent the last 15 years rolling my sleeves up and learning the functional side of marketing the hard way, it's only now I can truly see the benefit of understanding the grass roots. Throughout my career, I've worked for organisations with limited or no budget – within small teams expected to transform a business with no agency support – and in global, multidiscipline marketing teams with budgets to envy. What has struck me in the larger companies I have worked for, is the lack of knowledge in the marketing leadership. Now, I need to clarify what I mean by knowledge in this example, as this could be easily misinterpreted. The first dimension looks at hands-on knowledge. Knowing how, or at the very least, exactly what is involved in delivering the tactical elements of a marketing plan and strategy. Building websites, creating a social media presence, designing a brochure, creating an animation, writing thought leadership articles, managing complex agency relationships, placing articles in the media, producing SEO-friendly copy, creating, managing and reporting on PPC campaigns, developing email automation campaigns and understanding print specifications.



GARETH CASE
GLOBAL MARKETING DIRECTOR
XCHANGING

"One thing has remained true through the years however, and that is marketing's main function is to drive revenue for its respective organisation"

The Evidence © B2B Marketing 2014

The list is endless. But it's also very important. If, as a leader of a marketing team you don't understand every one of my previous examples, how can you effectively build and then manage a team to deliver them? How can you accurately select the best agency for the job? And more importantly, how can you properly budget for it? It's not about being a graphic designer or web developer, but more about understanding what's involved. In my opinion it's fundamental, not optional. And what's more, your team will have a greater level of respect for a leader that understands what they do, over one who blindly dictates.

"Your team will have a greater level of respect for a leader that understands what they do, over one who blindly dictates"

But knowledge doesn't end with the specific disciplines within a marketing team (we'll come back to this later) and it certainly doesn't end with just the 'leader' of the aforementioned team. Marketing is ultimately responsible for the outbound message of its respective organisation. To be able to accurately portray the business, the marketing team needs to intrinsically understand it. Here is the second dimension: knowledge of your business.

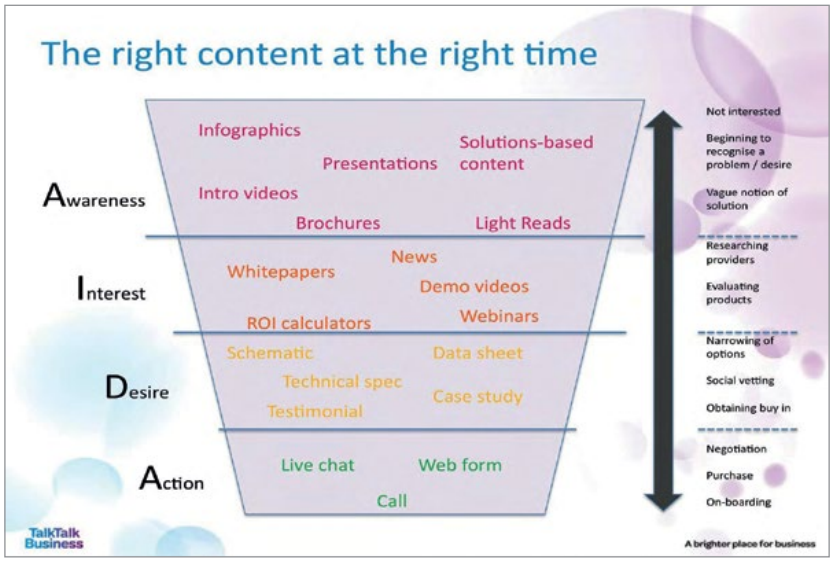
There will always be subject matter experts within a business and more often than not they will know more about the area they focus on than any member of the marketing team could wish for. What's important though, is that the marketing team has a base level of understanding across all products and services, so that it's able to build relevant, engaging campaigns and communications. Marketing teams must make it their business to interact and engage with the knowledge rich communities that surround them in the physical and/or virtual workplace and it's the marketing leadership's responsibility to ensure that happens.

The third dimension of knowledge that is vital for any marketing team is the understanding of the market. The challenges our customers and prospects face should shape the way we market our products and services. It's down to the marketing management to explicitly understand not just those we sell to or could sell to, but also the competition and the growing number of influencers in any given market. As a leader of a marketing function, you should understand these aspects in great detail and impart that knowledge to the relevant members of the team.

TalkTalk Business is a great example. It completely reorganised its marketing function in the wake of the rebrand from Opal Telecom, under the leadership of Paul Higgins. Central to this was an ethos of learning and mentoring, which was permeated from the top of the organisation downwards, throughout the whole team. The basis of the transformation was a migration to customer-centric thinking, with channel managers comprehensively examining and reviewing their respective market segments. As a result, propositions were better targeted, messaging refined and buyer personas created, to enable team members to better understand needs.

This is an excellent example of how a marketing team understands its own business as well as the ever-changing dimensions in their customer markets. TalkTalk Business applied this knowledge seamlessly to its content creation strategy and produced a framework for creating and delivering specific types of collateral based on the level of engagement and the stage the prospect was at in the buying cycle.

"TalkTalk Business created and delivered specific types of collateral based on the level of engagement and stage the prospect was at in the buying cycle"



TalkTalk Business targetted various buyer personas with content to suit their needs

Catherine Green, marketing and communications director at Mace displayed a similar strategy and developed a marketing planning framework to track buyers' journeys designed to support the business in winning work. Green led the creation and launch of a content archive, aimed at assisting marketing and facilitating better pitches closer aligned with client's briefs. None of this was possible, of course, without a detailed understanding of the business and customer segments. Green's framework can be seen below:

Find	Deliver	Convert
Positioning What is your position in the market?	**Buyer's journey** How do your customers purchase from you?	**Product/service** What is your product/ service offer?
Resource What marketing resource do you have?	**Communications** Your brand, language and message	**Client relationship management** How do you manage your client relationships?
Channels How do you get out to market?	**Starting a conversation** How do you measure sales and pipeline?	**Client service** How do you care for your clients?

2. Innovation

As business gets more competitive, carving out a niche becomes more difficult. Marketing is often responsible for the first touchpoint a prospect has with an organisation. Innovation in terms of developing a leading edge and unique product offering is great, but how do businesses influence the markets they sell to? Take a look at Apple, a company that prides itself on product innovation. It is also a company that uses ingenious marketing campaigns and strategies to affect buying behaviour of consumers. It has shifted from being a product-led organisation, to an agile, innovative, marketing-led business. It creates desire so strong that cost becomes secondary or tertiary in the buying cycle. It's at the front of the business they differentiate, and this is absolutely key.

"Innovation doesn't have to be game-changing, subtle changes in marketing strategy can have dramatic effects"

So, how do we lead marketing teams to become more innovative? To help them differentiate their businesses from the competition? To become a marketing-led business instead of one that leads with products and services?

This can be achieved by promoting an openness within the team. Personally, I task my team with producing and detailing innovative ideas as part of their bi-weekly reporting process, I also encourage an innovation session at the end of each monthly meeting whereby they can pitch ideas of how we can push the boundaries of conventional marketing and, more importantly, how we can differentiate our business.

Innovation doesn't have to be game-changing, subtle changes in marketing strategy can have dramatic effects. For example, Dell focused on demonstrating that a rapid response had an impact on lead conversion rates and also believed that putting customers first and in charge would increase revenue. Through its new strategy, it demonstrated that sales acceptance was 300 per cent higher, conversion to qualified sales opportunity is 300 per cent higher and conversion to revenue was 1200 per cent higher. This subtle change in marketing's behaviours had a dramatic impact.

Dell also embarked on a massive business marketing reorganisation, merging four business units into one global organisation, within two quarters, at the same time improving processes and reducing costs. A year after this process was completed, the combined team is processing 69 per cent more leads than a year before; processing this increased volume 63 per cent faster than before, and at the same time reduced operating expenses by 61 per cent. Innovation in this example was about not being scared of change. The greatest innovators are typically fearless. Those willing to take a risk for great reward. Dell took a strategic risk and by explicitly understanding the scope within the global marketing team and the skills it had within it, it was able to maximise efficiencies and reduce cost by driving a significant structural change programme.

Innovation means different things to different businesses. Where some organisations think they are driving innovative strategies, others will see these changes as obvious improvements to business processes. A good example of the former is how O2 Enterprise, in 2012, went on a mission to ensure its 150 sales personnel and 20 marketers worked together as a single integrated team. Marketing's role was the supply of 240 sales leads for enterprise-level ICT implementations. O2 was eager to demonstrate the benefits of its offering (flexible working in particular) first hand, so the team closed the Slough offices for a day, resulting in 2500 people working remotely. This initiative directly generated 46 sales qualified leads and 285 longer-term prospects.

"To build innovation into your marketing team you need to allow them to express themselves while keeping your finger on the pulse of the latest tech developments"

Mace took innovation to CSR and promoted its focus on corporate responsibility with the launch of the Mace Foundation, centred on three distinct campaigns: 'Volunteer week' (which saw 600 employees working across biodiversity projects); 'Burns Night Supper' and 'Time to Shine' (sponsorship of a disability initiative for young people).

Of course, innovation can be achieved and promoted in many different ways. As a marketing leader I am always looking for the leading edge tools and ideas that can make my campaigns stand out. I remember using QR codes before I'd even seen them in the UK having read an article about their exponential growth in the Asian markets. I adopted the use of personalised digital print and executed multiple B2B campaigns having only ever seen them used in the B2C space previously and ran a number of successful campaigns using PURLs, again, having never seen them in the B2B market previously. The danger of using these tactics in isolation is that you are relying on your audience to be early adopters too. That's why innovation in this sense needs to be taken in small steps. Build it into your campaigns rather that leading with it as a campaign itself. As an example, all DM campaigns I execute contain a QR code to the landing page. Only six to eight per cent of respondents use them but they represent the highest conversion rate of all campaign responses. Likewise, PURLs return a greater number of website hits than traditional URLs and personalised digital print increases open rates.

To build innovation into your marketing team you need to allow them to express themselves while keeping your finger on the pulse in terms of the latest technological developments.

3. Specialisation

The marketing mix has existed for many years as a blend of specific disciplines that enable an integrated marketing strategy. But I see so many senior marketing leaders not grasping the specialisms when it comes to recruiting members of their team. Time and time again I encounter marketing teams, headed up by someone with a broad set of marketing skills and experience (which is necessary as I alluded to earlier) who recruit junior versions of themselves to support them. The result? A team of marketers that don't explicitly understand any part of the mix in detail, that lack technical capability and one that will continue to rely on expensive agency support. So, what's the answer?

Well, if you're the person heading up the team then the first thing you need to do is look at your marketing strategy and build a team around the demands on your team, minimising the need for external support and making your team more efficient and effective by in-sourcing more of your run-rate marketing activity. My current marketing team consists of 38 people, spread across the world geographically, but each focused on a specific marketing discipline or a specific customer market. The 'generalists' in the team consist of marketing managers and marketing executives. The fact is, they are not generalists at all. While I have hired them for their broad knowledge of the marketing mix and ability to effectively manage their plans, they are in fact domain specialists with an in-depth understanding of the vertical market(s) and product and service lines they support.

"If you're heading up the team, look at your marketing strategy and build a team around the demands on your team to minimise the need for external support"

Take a look at O2 Enterprise, it recognised the need for vertically aligned marketing teams, local government particular, with head of vertical sector marketing Mark McCluskey achieving significant traction with a series of targeted initiatives – including a promotion to win £250,000 worth of consultancy services. Sound proof that vertical focus is fundamental.

The 'specialists' within my team all fall into the following categories; social media, digital marketing, internal comms, external comms and PR, email and automation, brand and content. The marketing managers and execs have access to these specialists and can effectively utilise them as if they were an internal agency. This means when we need to produce a piece of content, or integrate a social media element into a campaign, the person responsible is native to that discipline and not just doing it as part of a much wider remit. This provides focus, speed and efficiency.

Mace integrated its marketing team in 2012, with the combined department delivering across five disciplines: marketing, communications, public relations, bid management and customer satisfaction. Each discipline has a strategy owner managing a team of skilled individuals, and a part of the recruitment strategy is to challenge what added value each individual contributes to ensure a dynamic mix of thinking. Team communications are transparent and regular, with weekly department updates on email, weekly strategy owner meetings, functional and quarterly meetings, brainstorms, training clinics, and 'lunch and learn' sessions. A great example of how large, multidiscipline teams can collaboratively work as one.

Dell is another great example, it actively encouraged individual members of the marketing team to become thought leaders in particular areas or disciplines, and to reinforce that status by conducting what it called Town Hall lectures for other stakeholders in the business. Topics for these lectures included: 'The importance of fast lead turnaround'; 'Reporting enhancements to marketing campaigns' and 'Best practices in lead management'. This is a great example of how sharing internal knowledge across different teams can enhance customer facing staff's ability to talk about their product and service offerings competently.

TalkTalk Business brought in specialists and upskilled its existing marketing team to make them more customer-centric in the aftermath of its rebrand from Opal Telecom. This resulted in greater focus of individual specialists of all members of the team, including the marketing communications manager to be more focused on creative work and media planning, and the content manager to produce content better focused on different elements of the buyer journey. This refocusing, together with the implementation of marketing automation, resulted in a 25 per cent increase in sales-qualified leads and a 25 per cent reduction in marketing costs.

So, in summary, building a dynamic and effective B2B marketing team is simple. It requires a leader with a broad, yet detailed, understanding of all aspects of marketing. You also need an open working environment that embraces innovation and creativity, and supports a marketing strategy that isn't afraid to push the boundaries. And last but not least, you need a team skilled up to cope with the most demanding requirements across the full marketing mix.

"Building a dynamic and effective B2B marketing team is simple. It requires a leader with a broad, yet detailed, understanding of all aspects of marketing"

Further reading

B2B marketing team of the year
Winner: Mace

Shortlisted: Dell Global Marketing Operations

Shortlisted: O2 Enterprise Team

Shortlisted: TalkTalk Business

More information available at b2bmarketing.net/awards

SECTION 7

Marketing on a limited budget

The question
How do you maximise your effectiveness with a very limited marketing budget?

The context
Budget (or perhaps more precisely lack of budget) is one of the key factors that differentiates B2B marketing from B2C. Marketing budgets have always been under greater pressure in business sectors, for a variety of reasons. Among the most prominent are: the limited size of the target audience for any B2B product or service (as compared with the typical B2C product) which consequently limits the potential sales revenue which can be generated from it; and secondly the limitations on access to relevant decision makers or budget holders – who may be isolated, aloof or simply inaccessible. Consequently, because of these and other reasons, B2B marketers have always had to work hard to make their budgets stretch, and to justify any investment to a typically sceptical management board.

The last five years has seen a new set of issues impacting on B2B marketers, and have only served to exacerbate their budgetary challenges. In particular, business buyers have become increasingly reliant on search engines as their primary information gathering tool when investigating products, services or suppliers, and as a consequence are no longer dependant on outbound communication sent by vendors at a time of their choosing to make decisions. The impact of this cannot be overstated, as it represents a fundamental shift in power between the buyer and the seller. In essence, the rules have changed, and business brands have had to raise their game to stay competitive.

Arguably, therefore, the question 'how do you maximise effectiveness with a very limited budget?' is the ultimate one facing B2B practitioners.

The answer
Given the many different circumstances in which marketing takes place (e.g. different industries, different target audiences, different resources available etc.) it's not really possible to provide definitive answers or hard and fast rules which are applicable in all and any situations. There are no quick fixes or silver bullets.

It is possible, however, to provide some general tips and best practice guidance on how to stretch a marketing budget, maximise effectiveness and to allow a B2B brand with limited resources to punch above its weight in terms of awareness and results.



JOEL HARRISON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
B2B MARKETING

"B2B marketers have always had to work hard to make their budgets stretch, and to justify any investment to a typically sceptical management board"

Given the solutions referenced to write this section, taken from the shortlist for the B2B Awards 2013, it is likely that getting the best out of a limited budget will often rely on marketers thinking and acting relatively tactically. Those seeking out opportunities for partnership and being pragmatic, rather than planning grandiose standalone initiatives or activities, which are inevitably dependant on larger budgets to be effective will benefit most.

"Marketers recognising and exploiting opportunities as they emerge, stand to reap significant rewards in terms of personal cache within their organisation"

Juggling the tactical and the strategic can be tricky, and risks distraction from core objectives and misalignment with the rest of the organisation. If a marketer can achieve this, recognising and exploiting opportunities as they emerge, they stand to reap significant rewards in terms of personal cache within their organisation, and all round respect for marketing.

A word of warning: what marketers must never do is confuse tactics with strategy. A well-executed tactical campaign can never be a substitute for a robust and centrally aligned marketing strategy.

Cutting down on distribution is an obvious way of making your marketing budget stretch further – and therefore allows you to be more effective with it – and to reduce costs. Traditionally, the biggest cost in marketing is distribution and getting the message out to your target audience.

Marketing channels such as direct mail, print advertising and events can be very effective means of reaching business buyers – particularly if used in isolation. The digital age, however, has revolutionised the means of distribution of marketing messages, enabling business audiences to be accessed more quickly and cheaply, and potentially in a more resonant and engaging way, with messages that are more personalised and compelling.

All of the campaigns shortlisted in the 'Best limited budget' category at the B2B Awards 2013 rely on digital techniques and channels to enhance and speed up distribution of messages – albeit in some cases in conjunction with traditional activity, through a multichannel campaign. If your distribution costs can be minimised, then logically there will be more budget to invest in other aspects of a campaign.

Below is an examination of the different tricks and techniques used by the shortlisted campaigns from the 'Best limited budget' category to tackle the distribution challenge and achieve success.

The evidence

1. Bring your audience to you

If B2B marketers can make their customers come to them, rather than the other way around, they will have created a significant shortcut and have a corresponding impact on marketing budgets. Inbound marketing, based on producing and exploiting excellent content, is an increasingly popular way of achieving this.

"Compelling content doesn't require the most sophisticated technology or the biggest budget"

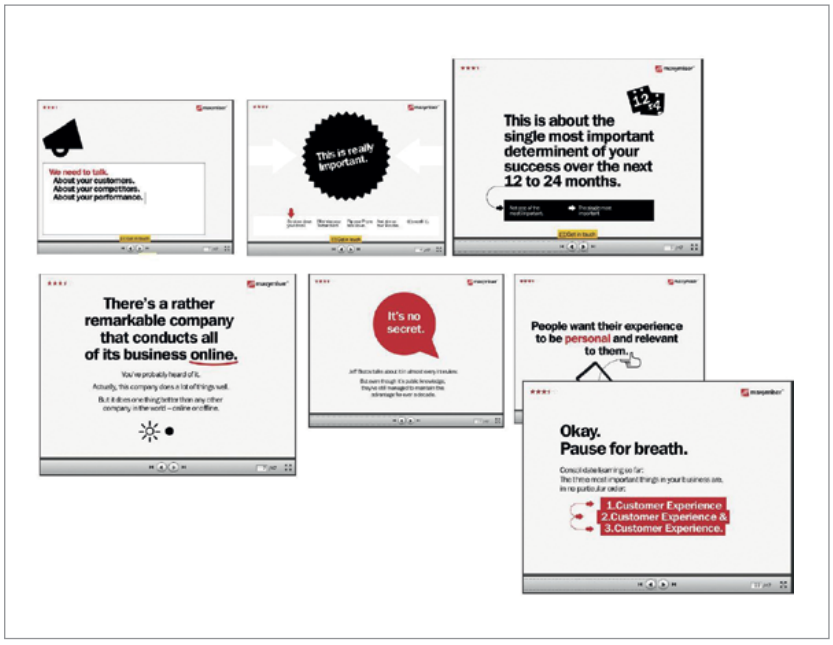
Web analytics software brand Maximyser wanted to convince CMOs that they needed to profoundly change the way they view website metrics – in particular focusing on excellent customer experience ahead of more tactical objectives. The company worked with specialist content agency Velocity to develop what was designed to be a simple, highly compelling piece of content that would resonate powerfully with the target audience, but on a limited budget.

In order to meet the brief and limited budget, Velocity developed something it described as: 'A Slideshare experience'. It featured simple but highly engaging graphics, stats and soundbites that were highly visual in structure, designed to be compelling and quickly absorbed. However, given the restrictions of the platform, there was no sound, animation or interaction included.

It was posted on the Slideshare platform, embedded on the Maximyser website and shared by email and on various social channels. It also featured in blogs and became the topic of modules for live presentations, extending its life and reach across the brand's sales and marketing activities.

By the time of the B2B Awards submissions deadline (mid-June 2013) it had been viewed almost 50,000 times. By January 2014, the number of views had risen approximately 125 per cent to 123,000.

Lesson: compelling content doesn't need to be expensive or complex. As a result, it doesn't require the most sophisticated technology or the biggest budget. A simple idea, that is expressed clearly, can have the most resonance, and the longest-lasting benefits.



A selection of slides from the Maxymiser campaign

2. Talk to your audience where they feel comfortable

As previously discussed, business buyers are increasingly taking control of the dialogue and information exchange around potential purchases, and only engaging with brands on their terms. This typically means at a time and place to suit them. Increasingly one of the best 'places' to engage business buyers is on social media, where they are able to manage their involvement and get access to messages at a frequency and depth to suit them.

"One of the best 'places' to engage business buyers is on social media, where they are able to manage their involvement and get access to messages to suit them"

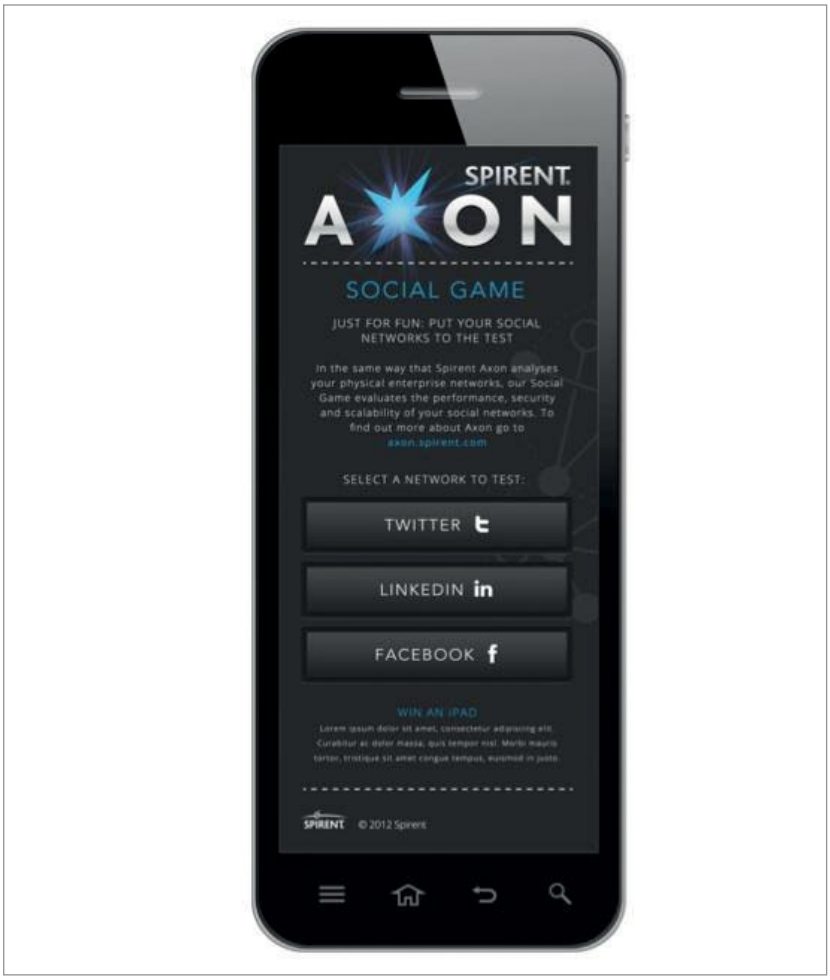
Telecommunications testing software vendor Spirent relied heavily on social media in its campaign to launch its new field-based Axon solution, targeted at a new audience of enterprise level organisations and field service deployment engineers employed by systems integrators. The campaign was developed by agency Mason Zimbler.

Based on insights into this audience, activity was spread across the three primary B2B social media channels (LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook) to generate awareness, engagement and buzz, tying in with its sponsorship of the Cisco Live 2013 event in London. This allowed the campaign to leverage the significant social activity surrounding the event, and the existing relationship with the event's parent brand Cisco had with the target audience.

In particular, social activity focused on an online social game, available on mobile devices, which was designed to demonstrate the core benefits of the Axon product through sharing with contacts in the industry.

The campaign ultimately generated over 600 leads, a quarter of these from the game itself, and an ROI in excess of 300 per cent.

Lesson: social media is an excellent, cost-effective way to engage with a target audience group, particularly where there is the additional leverage of a partner relationship or an event with associated buzz. But beware the indirect costs, in terms of time and resources committed to creating real traction, and that you have to have some kind of content or hook (such as the social game, in Spirent's case) to provide a focus or point to the campaign. Ultimately social is just a channel, or a means to an end, rather than an end in itself.



The Axon social game

"The poor quality of B2B data has been the downfall of many brands' attempts to use direct mail for highly targeted high impact communications"

3. Laser-focused targeting

Without question, one of the biggest causes of marketing budget wastage is paying to target the wrong audiences with your messages. Accurate and precise targeting is one of the perennial problems for marketers in all sectors – it was soap magnate Lord Leverhulme who coined the well-known phrase: 'I know that half of my advertising spend is wasted… I just don't know which half.' However, as previously identified, the challenge is more acute in B2B markets, where mass-market communications (such as those used in Lord Leverhulme's day) are simply not an option. The poor quality of B2B data has been the downfall of many brands' attempts to use direct mail for highly targeted high impact communications, but where good quality data exists, across multiple channels, such integrated campaigns can be highly effective.

Fujitsu utilised high impact direct mail to a highly targeted list of only 80 technology decision makers as the core component of its 'Storage first' campaign, devised by DirectionGroup. The campaign was designed to promote Fujitsu as a leader in the IT storage space, demonstrate its innovative approach as compared with competitors and deliver a multi-million sales pipeline.

Working on a tight budget, DirectionGroup delivered an integrated campaign, including email activity, a landing page, campaign ebook and a high impact video DM piece to an elite audience. The video mailer features a miniature screen, which is activated upon opening, playing a compelling message that the recipient may not otherwise have seen. The videos were also made available on the campaign website, which was promoted to less prominent targets via email activity.

A portion of budget (one sixth of the total) was also allocated to sales enablement, ensuring that sales people had as much information as possible in order to maximise their chances of success in delivering meeting their targets.

The campaign achieved an ROI of 210:1, hitting its pipeline target, and has been rolled out across Fujitsu's global regions.

Lesson: ensuring you send the right message at the right time is always key to success in B2B marketing, but particularly when targeting C-suite decision makers. While expensive, video mailers are still relatively novel, and can significantly increase your chances of getting a compelling message in front of time-poor individuals. However, they will never work in isolation, and must feature as part of a balanced multichannel campaign. Data is always the Achilles heel of any DM campaign, and becomes critical for such an elite audience.

"While expensive, video mailers are still relatively novel, and can significantly increase your chances of getting a message in front of time-poor individuals"



Fujitsu's DM piece

4. Get personal

Personalised communications are always more resonant than generic unpersonalised ones, and this was knowledge Comms-care sought to exploit through its 'PITS awareness 2013' campaign. Designed by agency Purestone to help position the vendor as 'The IT support services provider for IT support service providers' (the 'doctor's doctor'), the campaign focused on engaging key individuals through successive one-to-one dialogue to break down scepticism and build trust.

"Print costs for variable DM can be prohibitive. If the data is wrong at any element it will undermine your relationship with the customer"

Highly personalised creative took the style of a health support group or service, but designed to be tongue-in-cheek, and to demonstrate to the prospect that the vendors understand their issues. Once a personalised diagnostic evaluation had been conducted on each individual, a variable digital print edition book was created and mailed to each individual, featuring over 500 variable data fields of information provided by the prospect. A total of 322 of these books were sent out, and a PDF version could also be downloaded. The campaign generated an ROI of 150:1.

Lesson: personalisation can be a powerful tool to drive deeper levels of engagement, but can be time consuming and expensive to achieve. Comms-care was lucky in that the personalisation element of the campaign was inherent in its structure, making it easy for the brand to look clever and insightful. The print costs for variable DM can be prohibitive, and if the data is wrong at any element it will negate any areas where it was accurate, and even undermine your relationship with this customer.



The personalised DM pack Comms-care sent to prospects

5. Use research to drive unconventional approaches

Business decision makers are often bombarded with commercial messages during their working days, to the extent they can typically tune them out. So one relatively novel but highly potent way of reaching them is to target them outside of strict business hours, with a message which is not strictly business related.

"Business decision makers are working harder than ever, and mobile devices enable communications outside the traditional working day"

Collaboration and productivity platform Mindjet took this approach when seeking to target a brand new audience of team leaders and managers in the creative, technology and marketing industries. Research by the vendor demonstrated the majority of this audience worked significantly longer than the average working week – 25 per cent work at least 60 hours a week (resulting in working days of over 12 hours) and only four per cent do not work weekends ever.

The online advertising campaign exploited this in a bid to drive free trials of the Mindjet software, taking a lighthearted theme to highlight the work/life inbalance of this audience – the message being 'Mindjet gets you home on time' – it was designed to be emotive and resonant, not depressing. Stylistically it was based loosely on the TV series Mad Men, using domestic retro and glamorous images.

Using industry news websites as advertising platforms, which research demonstrated these individuals refer to regularly, the campaign served up different executions of the ad regularly from 17:30 to 20:00, becoming increasingly hard-hitting at 15-minute intervals. Each ad reminded them of what they were missing at home or in their social life by working late. A final execution was served at 22:00, and was aimed to be seen once the individual had returned home, was less distracted and therefore more likely to download the trial.

By using ad space in business media in an off-peak time slot, the campaign created significant awareness for a reduced price – the final ad was shown consistently to be the most effective. It achieved a cost-per-lead 25 per cent lower than that which had been targeted, and has since been extended in timeframes and geographical reach.

Lesson: there has always been a blurred line between work and leisure time, and in the current climate – with business decision makers working harder than ever and longer hours and mobile devices enabling far better access out of hours – there are greater opportunities for B2B communications outside the traditional working day. Mindjet demonstrated that through clever targeting this can result in cost savings for online advertising, but these savings may not be so profound when using other channels, where the premium for buying prime time exposure is not so pronounced. Without research and insight into the target audience, this clever and low budget campaign would not have been possible. Ironically when budgets are low, investment in research is often the first to get cut.



Creative for the 'Mindjet gets you home on time' campaign

6. Partner up to increase your reach or resonance

When budgets are limited, getting traction with an audience (particularly a new or unfamiliar one) can be extremely difficult. Often bigger brands throw money at the problem, but where this is not possible partnership in various forms is a good alternative. These partnerships are unlikely to be free, but the cost involved may be lower than the alternative means of generating the equivalent traction.

In the case studies that we've seen in this section, there are various models of partnership outlined, all of which have different merits and create different opportunities.

Spirent used its existing sponsorship relationship with Cisco Live to boost awareness of its Axon launch, leveraging the event's greater social presence and all round buzz to increase momentum around the campaign. The agency behind the campaign, Mason Zimbler, also used research from Aberdeen Group to validate and justify their approach.

"Often bigger brands throw money at the problem, but where this is not possible partnership in various forms is a good alternative"

Lesson: partners can have a broad range of benefits for any B2B campaign, but they will rarely come for free. Spirent was lucky in that it had an existing relationship with Cisco Live. In other instances B2B brands may have to be willing to provide other benefits to secure meaningful partnerships.

Creative thinking is the key

These five case studies from the shortlist of the B2B Awards 2013 low budget campaign category all demonstrate extremely different approaches to meeting a marketing challenge on a (relatively) low budget.

But while none of these campaigns uses radical concepts or extremely innovative ideas, each demonstrates the value of creative thinking in developing this approach. And typically this highlights the role of the agency in this process. Agencies were involved in all of the campaigns shortlisted here, and while it's certainly not impossible to have creative ideas without an agency, it is generally easier for an individual from outside the organisation to be able to generate ideas that deviate from 'business as usual'.

Therefore, while all these campaigns demonstrate clever ways of reducing the cost of campaign message distribution, they offer further proof of the value of agencies in this process. They suggest that this may be one cost that it will be harder to remove, no matter how small your budget.

"It's not impossible to have creative ideas without an agency, it is generally easier for an individual from outside the organisation to be able to generate fresh ideas"

Further reading

Best limited budget campaign

Winner: 'Maxymiser 'rant' Slideshare' for Maxymiser by Velocity Partners

Runner up: 'Mindjet gets you home on time' for Mindjet by Zeta

Shortlisted: 'PITS awareness 2013' for Comms-care by Purestone

Shortlisted: 'Axon, Network Testing' for Spirent by Mason Zimbler

More information available at b2bmarketing.net/awards

SECTION 8

Sales and marketing integration

The question
Why does sales and marketing alignment matter, and how do we create it?

The context
It is now widely accepted that buyers have taken control of what was once the sales process. Empowered by choice in markets that typically offer two or three 'good enough' solutions, and with access to 20 times the market information they had only five years ago, the modern buyer is a force to be reckoned with.

But let's not imagine that means the death of sales, or even the long hoped for rise of the marketing department's stock in the modern B2B enterprise. Instead, research consistently shows that CEOs continue to question the value of marketing while pushing ever harder on sales.

That said, after years of pressure on pipeline numbers and an ever-narrowing focus on marketing as 'lead-gen' there are signs that things are changing. The combination of enlightened sales teams that recognise the value they deliver is shifting; with marketers bold enough to forge a new relationship through action rather than words, is having a dramatic effect. Aligning sales and marketing makes both more efficient and more effective.

The answer
Successfully engaging today's empowered buyer is a team sport, creating differentiation at each stage of the buying process. A lack of alignment leaves business opportunities undeveloped, allows buyers to focus only on price and is an enormous waste of the skills in both teams. The companies that win today are those where the old rivalries are forgotten and a new, shared vision drives the business. And if that doesn't describe your business, it probably describes your leading competition.

The evidence
Last year I reviewed over 60 finalists from the 2012 B2B Awards to produce the first *Evidence* report. I noted at the time how few of the entries even made mention of sales, so I was delighted to see the 2013 awards included a dedicated category to showcase the best in sales and marketing alignment.

It's a phrase that has become so worn over time that it's easy to miss the scale of change happening in some of the most forward-thinking



GRAHAM WYLIE
MARKETING DIRECTOR, EMEA
APPNEXUS

"Successfully engaging today's empowered buyer is a team sport, creating differentiation at each stage of the buying process"

organisations today. In 2013, there was more reference to sales in the award entries across categories. There was also a growing maturity to the way sales and marketing alignment is being achieved. In the first *Evidence* report I noted five stages in alignment. This year, while those stages remain relevant, I am encouraged to see more of the award entries working at the higher levels.

"This year, I am encouraged to see more of the award entries working at the higher levels"

Level one: Delivering 'emotional wins'

"I've just left a meeting with a prospect and he loved the approach, calling it the best marketing he's ever seen." Tola Omotayo, UK practice lead sales manager at Canon Europe.



Canon's campaign microsite

'Aiming higher' was a creative-driven campaign to reframe the way C-level executives in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands perceive Canon. At its heart was the understanding that the target audience already has a full agenda and this was unlikely to include decisions around their print equipment. The campaign put the buyer's agenda at the heart of the conversation, by aligning Canon's message to the key issues debated in the target company's annual report. The outreach wasn't about how Canon's products could help, but rather how meeting Canon's country MD could help the C-level executive better deliver against their own objectives. Well packaged and delivered in tight alignment with both country management and wider sales teams, the campaign delivered 31 leads and 67 opportunities to nurture from 193 accounts. At each stage, the insight of the marketing and sales teams was central to target selection and message development; resulting in a shared win for both teams that is now being rolled out to other European markets with a 49 times predicted ROI.

The emotional win was also part of the live event launch of Xuber. This was a fully integrated rebrand that had a heavy digital and social focus, but the team didn't forget customer relationships are owned and managed by a team of sales people. On launch day and among all the marketing activity on the ground, Xuber customer relationship and account managers were part of the live event; taking fresh coffee to individual key customers and prospects. This generated excellent customer feedback and social media interaction. Thus, the sales teams were directly engaged and had a clear sense of ownership for an activity that could perhaps have been easily dismissed as 'not their job'.

"At IBM, technology is being used to activate the social sphere with marketers providing training and content, allowing sales reps to nurture social leads"

Level two: Technology enabled

At IBM, technology is being used to activate the social sphere with marketers providing training and content that allows the individual sales reps to develop and nurture their own socially identified leads. A detailed analysis of social media activity among the professional IT community revealed that conversations regularly involve language that can be aligned with BANT (budget, authority, need, timescale) criteria for sales-lead qualification. IBM sales reps were trained and equipped to listen and contribute to social conversations, identifying and progressing potential leads. Activity fell into three stages:

1. Monitor the social sphere to identify hot topics

Areas of focus included customer questions on Twitter and LinkedIn, industry themes being discussed, challenges and pain points. This underpinned development of customer understanding, particularly the role of social channels in decision-making. As a result, the teams were able to develop a social framework and toolkit to address specific customer needs, drawing on IBM's depth and breadth of expertise.

2. Join social conversations (two-way dialogue)

Reps were equipped with relevant and timely posts and links to valuable content (the social media toolkit) via HootSuite. This enabled them to respond to questions, join debates, make recommendations and share relevant content that went beyond sales-led messages.

3. The technology platform drove leads to each sales rep's personalised digital page

The rep could shape the discussion by sharing relevant content and information about the solution they were selling. As a result of the close collaboration between marketing and sales to deliver the initial programme, 11 per cent of visitors to the reps personalised pages clicked through to commerce sites at a significantly lower than normal acquisition cost. In addition, the professional profile of the IBM sales team was elevated through increased stakeholder engagement. The team shared over 2000 personalised links, saw a 55 per cent increase in their Twitter following and a 1.5 times increase in LinkedIn connections. In a world where the sales rep needs to be perceived as an industry expert, the programme helped build a sustainable advantage.

Cheryl L. Mikovch, senior marketing manager, channel marketing cloud computing, IBM, says: "This progressive social media strategy has led to better cohesion between sales and marketing. The first phase enabled sales reps to build stronger personal networks. They are now fully engaged and participative in online conversations of target audiences. This is leading to a tangible increase in sales directly attributed to social media conversations."

"In 2012, Dell's global marketing operations team went through reorganisation. Today the team processes 69 per cent more leads than a year ago"

Level three: Long-term shared objectives

Technology also played a significant part in improving sales and marketing alignment at telecomms company EE, with over 300,000 data field enrichments each year. However, just as important has been consistency of objective over time. The business has worked with the same outsourced telemarketing partner since 2004, targeting more than 8000 leads per year. In 2012, the business achieved a 94 per cent acceptance rate on qualified leads passed to sales, delivering almost £20 million in new business. This sits in stark contrast with data from other case studies where the migration from marketing qualified lead to sales accepted lead is 10 per cent or less.

Level four: Integrated processes and behaviours

At Dell, the global marketing operations team went through a massive reorganisation in 2012. The company merged four business units into one global commercial organisation, integrating all legacy operations into one standard lead management process. As you might expect, the process was full of challenge but within six months the team had retired multiple systems, embraced marketing automation and implemented new standardised processes. Today the global marketing operations team is processing 69 per cent more leads than a year ago and doing it 63 per cent faster. All this, while reducing operating costs by 61 per cent.

The new organisation is built to drive global lead management standards, while also supporting regional needs:

- **Regional lead intake managers:** onboard marketing teams to lead management processes; captures regional requirements to drive global changes; supports region specific requirements.
- **The core team:** delivers leads to sales in under 36 hours; supports ad-hoc CRM requests.
- **Online lead concierge:** follows-up with online leads in under two hours; delivers leads to sales.
- **Reporting:** tracks and maintains marketing accountability.

The team that delivered this change did so under the motto: 'Customer first, sales second, marketing third.' Initially, the marketing teams feared that putting customers in charge would result in lost revenue. On the contrary, it has been realised that allowing customers to manage contact has resulted in the generation of very high quality leads. Indeed, those handled by the online lead concierge have a far higher conversion rate than traditional offline leads, which were once dominant.

"Marketing at O2 Enterprise doesn't stop at awareness. It runs end-to-end, right through to educating the sales team"

By actively engaging with the regional teams and across sales and marketing the Dell team continues to evangelise improvement through alignment, pointing to the benefits of the customer first philosophy:

• A three per cent increase in sales acceptance on leads.

• Three times increase in conversion to qualified sales opportunity.

• Twelve times increase in revenue from closed leads.



A3 'chat mats' from O2 were used for informal discussions with prospects

The 2013 award for 'Best integration of sales and marketing' was won by O2 Enterprise. For this business, alignment began with a new approach to marketing 'campaigns'. Today, marketing doesn't stop with awareness activity and lead generation. Rather it runs end-to-end, right through to educating/enabling the sales team and providing chances to nurture and accelerate specific opportunities.

"While many of the award entries focused on 'more', it was refreshing to see at least one business recognise more may not always be more"

The change kicked off with joint planning sessions in which marketing objectives were set in alignment with the sales targets for new customer acquisition, pipeline and contract value. Furthermore, new service level agreements were developed where sales took clear responsibility for the speed with which leads are followed up, while marketing was responsible for the number and quality of leads generated. Teams developed into 'vertical practices' around specific propositions that aligned with the sales team compensation and bonus structure. The lead process was managed and supported by an 'inside sales' function that was owned by marketing rather than sales.

Steve Norris, managing partner for O2 criminal justice and emergency services, says: "The marketing team within O2 is an extension of my team. They sit within my practice and attend meetings, attend calls, and understand what sort of direction we want to take, what sort of priorities we have, and look to support us in our short, medium and long-term objectives and create a plan that we can work within the practice to execute."

From a standing start with new propositions, by the end of 2012 O2 Enterprise had secured over 50 new blue chip customers. At first glance there is nothing radical here – marketing talking to sales as part of the planning process, sales taking accountability for following up leads. But these are the things that teams so often get wrong.

Entries from several other companies highlighted how a commitment to new ways of working can be transformative. At McAfee, shared processes were deployed across 19 countries to tackle an endemic lack of faith from sales in the quality of leads being generated by the marketing function. In a situation many will recognise, marketers felt they were generating well-qualified leads, but sales would never follow them up. In 2012, with the deployment of a new marketing automation platform, the business integrated its email, telemarketing and inbound content syndication process into one consistent lead flow. This created real visibility and tracking into the process. Marketing was now able to engage potential buyers throughout the path to purchase, and thus was able to drive a better quality of lead in a more timely fashion. Spend was for the judges' eyes only on this campaign, but it directly delivered 280 per cent ROI.

That same ambivalence from sales to marketing-generated leads was recognised by Microsoft as the critical obstacle to business growth. In this instance the situation was complicated because many of the leads were being passed to third-party sales teams that worked for channel partners. The approach taken by Microsoft continued to rely on BANT criteria, but deployed marketing in new ways. The strategy focused on 'dynamic nurturing', using propensity modelling to target the most positive opportunities and then using intelligent telemarketing to cultivate leads over the sales cycle, until they met the newly defined sales-ready criteria. In a further sign of alignment, the calling agents are tightly

integrated with sales and have access to all internal company systems which provides a rich view of accounts. This helps to inform calling and ensures accounts aren't called if there is a customer service issue or recent contact has been made. The Microsoft award entry is particularly notable for the inclusion of partner testimonials:

- "The leads look really good. The quality of the information passed on has been fantastic." Rosie Donoghue, marketing and co-selling manager, Content and Code.

- "So far we've had one appointment and closed one piece of business which is a great ratio." Robert Hutchison, director and owner, Exactive.

- "The quality of the opportunities that we have received so far from has been excellent. Please give us more." Caroline Harvey, strategic business manager, Trinity Expert Systems.

- "The leads have been relevant (in terms of size of company we would work with and opportunities within these companies). It's down to me now
to try and close these leads." James Fleming, Ultima Business.

While many of the award entries focused on 'more', it was refreshing to see at least one business recognise more may not always be more. After all, when a sales team is being pushed hard by leadership to deliver the number, sales often doesn't have the capacity to handle more leads. Recognising this, SAP reduced the number of delegates at its 2012 Forum by almost a third, yet held lead volume almost steady while increasing the sales acceptance rate from 45 per cent to 67 per cent. Combined with a fivefold increase in average lead value, the 2012 programme resulted in €2.4 million revenue against €415,000 in the previous year.

Warren Daniels, head of solution marketing UK & Ireland, SAP, says: "The Quantum team smashed the revenue targets for the SAP Forum 2012, and helped us achieve maximum value from the event. Their integrated approach deserves to win an award as it formed an essential bridge between our sales and marketing teams and really set the benchmark for future campaigns."

Level five: Engaging the wider business

Sometimes the issues of sales and marketing alignment are so deeply rooted marketing has to go beyond what others are doing to literally redefine the role they play within the business. It's a brave marketer who leads such reform as the stakes are high, and radical change must always be balanced with continued operational effectiveness. Despite many CEO's doubts about marketing effectiveness, no business can afford to simply shut things down while they rework them. Like many major change programmes, reinventing the marketing function to transform its

"Reinventing the marketing function to transform its engagement with sales and the wider business is akin to changing the engine on the aircraft while in flight"

engagement with sales and the wider business is akin to changing the engine on the aircraft while in flight. A commitment to achieving such transformation and the results achieved are why Paul Higgins at TalkTalk Business was voted 'B2B marketer of the year'.

"We need to open the kind of conversations sales can close, and equip them to do it better than their peers"

Higgins is a challenger of convention. In the past three years as head of marketing at TalkTalk Business, he has taken the brand on a mammoth journey. Unhappy with the relationship that marketing had within the wider organisation and its invisibility at board level, he set out to turn TalkTalk Business into a marketing-led company. This was no easy task. With a fragmented, disparate department and outputs, Higgins had to completely shake up the way TalkTalk Business approached marketing. This saw the brand set out on a path to closely align sales and marketing, implement a sophisticated web architecture that supports marketing automation, and tailor content across individual user journeys. The results achieved with Higgins' help speak for themselves. Revenue performance at TalkTalk Business has increased to see the team generate a 40 per cent uplift in revenue directly related to marketing spend, while achieving a 25 per cent reduction in total marketing cost.

Andy Hollingworth, director of direct sales, TalkTalk Business, says: "It goes without saying that sales and marketing should stay close. But the reality is – or should I say was – that we'd be operating in silos. Now we 'get' the vision and support Paul's team in taking us to where we want to be. The marketing department's efforts are evident in the quality of leads that are coming through to sales."

Conclusions

It's encouraging to see an increased focus on sales and marketing alignment across the B2B Awards. However, there is still clearly a lot to be done as these examples are by definition the exception – the best of what B2B marketers have achieved.

As we accelerate into the always-on, digitally connected and real-time economy, take a moment to consider how this changes sales. Ten years ago the sales rep held all the cards. Buyers needed to engage in the 'solution selling' process to achieve their objective. Now, they turn to the web for that information and actively defer meeting the rep until they have defined the problem, identified at least three effective 'solutions' and are ready to talk price. So, if we are to avoid sales becoming the 'order-taking function' marketers need to bring a stronger sales mindset to early buyer engagement. We need to open the kind of conversations sales can close, and equip them to do it better than their peers. In turn, sales needs to accept that they need help, that the world has changed and their role is changing with it. Where both sales and marketing embrace this change, aligned teams can be transformative. Where they stubbornly refuse to engage, they will be overtaken by the competition that already figured it out.

I'll leave the last word to Anna Holness, managing partner at O2 Enterprise Passenger Services Practice: *"Our sales and marketing teams work as one. It doesn't feel as though marketing are talking about one thing while I'm trying to engage customers about something completely different. Sales is providing on-the-ground insight to marketing, and marketing can support by opening doors and starting conversations."*

Further reading

Best integration of sales and marketing
Winner: 'O2 Enterprise team' for O2 Telefonica by The Marketing Practice

Shortlisted: SAP Forum UK & Ireland demand generation by Quantum Marketing Group

Best use of live event marketing
Winner: 'Stirring the City' for Xuber by Birddog

Best corporate decision-maker campaign
Winner: 'Canon aiming higher' for Canon Europe by The Marketing Practice

B2B marketer of the year
Winner: Paul Higgins, head of marketing, TalkTalk Business

Best use of social media
Shortlisted: 'Social selling' for IBM by Mason Zimbler

Best lead generation campaign
Shortlisted: 'McAfee EMEA demand generation' for McAfee by Kingpin

Best lead nurturing programme
Shortlisted: 'Invictus: connecting marketing and sales' for Microsoft UK (Enterprise) by Harte Hanks

B2B marketing team of the year
Shortlisted: Dell

Most commercially successful campaign
Shortlisted: 'Leading the way' for EE by Astute

Books
To Sell is Human by Dan Pink
The Challenger Sale by Matthew Dixon and Brent Adamson of CEB

More information available at b2bmarketing.net/awards

SECTION 9

Metrics

The question
How do I know if marketing is working? Which data and metrics should I use?

The context
The time of marketing being an 'art' is long gone; it's truly a science now. Science progresses through conjecture, measurement and refinement. It is that 'measurement' element that has redefined the role of marketing in the modern organisation. Marketers are able to measure more than ever before, allowing even the minutia of detail to be tracked and reported on.

To avoid drowning in a sea of data, the canny marketer needs to identify clear metrics to interpret campaign performance. Marrying this insight with the agility of digital marketing, campaigns become truly dynamic – better serving both the audience and business objectives behind the campaign.

This challenge of defining the right metrics to determine campaign performance, particularly with newer channels such as social media and in the context of long buying cycles, is significant. We are not simply expecting to see the right things measured in the best way, but a clear alignment between overarching business objectives (hard metrics such as sales and pipeline value).

It is this greater alignment between marketing and sales moving marketing from a cost-centre to a revenue-driver, empowering the CMO to inform business strategy and create more intelligent, marketing-led businesses.

The answer
The 2013 B2B Awards showcased an impressive set of high ROI campaigns. Social metrics are becoming deeper and more detailed with new ways of assessing campaigns coming to the fore. Marketers aren't just settling for quantity, they're seeking different ways of assessing engagement, leads delivered and pipeline contribution. With lead generation and nurture activity, the language used to describe results has a more sales-oriented feel to it than previous years, with a clear distinction between the 'soft' metrics of awareness and engagement through to the 'hard' metrics of pipeline value and sales.

In some cases clear distinction is given to marketing qualified leads, return on marketing investment (ROMI) as well as pipeline versus delivered sales. The harder, more sales-aware language used to describe results is



NICOLA RAY
MANAGING DIRECTOR
MODERN MEDIA

"To avoid drowning in a sea of data, the canny marketer needs to identify clear metrics to interpret campaign performance"

The Evidence © B2B Marketing 2014

an important point to note. This is also a reflection of the closer alignment between marketing and sales departments as teams work closer, and report together. The only way this is being done successfully with a more complete view of campaign activity is through the use of marketing automation software that tracks interactions at depth. When coupled with integrations into call management and CRM, the measurement can easily be extended to sales performance.

"As marketing becomes more able to express results, marketing leaders are better placed to influence product strategy and organisational reform"

As marketing becomes more able to express results in such a way (driven by an understanding of the metrics to report on), marketing leaders are better placed to influence product strategy and organisational reform – validating their recommendations in terms that relate to business growth.

The evidence

1. Deeper social metrics come to the fore

With social media taking a more pertinent role in the demand generation process, it's clear there is a need to monitor performance more precisely and utilise metrics specifically tailored to a campaign to assess performance. There have been several instances where campaigns have used non-standard forms of metrics that are well thought through to closely monitor campaign performance. Immediate Future's campaign for IBM Tealeaf is a worthy example of how to effectively assess the performance of content used for lead generation in a social media context.

Upfront, Immediate Future defined metrics to assess group effectiveness for the campaign. Relevant groups were identified and assessed for group vibrancy (calculated from discussion and membership) and relevancy (calculated from function, seniority and topic). Groups were only included if they met specific criteria in order to ensure effectiveness. Once underway, campaign performance was assessed by referrals, clicks, average clicks-per-referral, marketing-qualified leads and conversion rate.

Immediate Future went a step further to assess the relevancy of the social media platform upfront and apply appropriate metrics customised to assess the real effectiveness of the campaign. By creating second-order metrics such as clicks-per-tweet or clicks-per-LinkedIn post, and potential reach, it ensured it was able to constantly monitor the activity so that it remained highly relevant in such a connected environment.

An additional key metric for the campaign was awareness, where unique visits, clicks from social content, reach and influencer status were all tracked and measured to determine the success.

What this shows is the need for more thought and consideration to bespoke metrics to a given campaign in order to assess relevance and effectiveness. Ultimately, this campaign wasn't just measured on the social metrics, it was tied to hard numbers, with marketing qualified leads generated being the pinnacle.

With more tools available for social media integration, it's also possible to do deeper analysis of the audiences engaging with brands through social media. For example, Avaya's 'The power of collaboration' by DirectionGroup assessed the performance of its activity not only on impressions generated and participants in live debates on Twitter and in the dedicated LinkedIn group, but by audience breakdown. It was as much the 'who' as the quantity of participants that was important. This deeper metric ensured the campaign was focused on attracting those that are most relevant and most engaged in the product or brand. This was a further nod to the importance of 'quality' (of interactions, audience and participants) over 'quantity' in the sphere of social media.

"Next year there will be even more specific metrics applied to social rather than the simple measures of fans, followers or referrals to the campaign website"

I would envisage that next year, there will be even more specific metrics applied to social rather than the simple measures of number of fans, followers or referrals to the campaign website. While these measures are still important, they don't provide insight into engagement, attributed channel value, levels of influence or contribution to pipeline – which many marketers need to demonstrate more than ever.

2. Email metrics, scoring and nurturing early stage leads

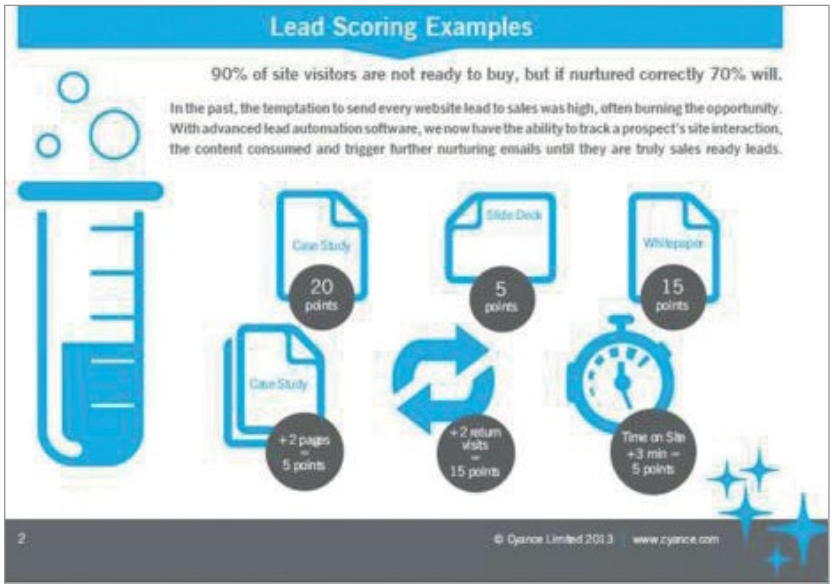
Email is still an essential part of most B2B campaigns, especially within the nurturing prospects prior to qualification criteria is met. With regard to metrics, there has been a move to a greater focus on 'unique' rates measuring the behaviour of individuals rather than simply interaction rates with the campaign or message.

It is clear that more businesses are looking at behaviour at this individual level. For example, Stein IAS' 'London 2012 Olympic Games' campaign for Atos measured 'super active' contacts that were identified by four or more click throughs from an automated nurturing programme using a marketing automation platform. Once defined as 'super active', those leads were passed to sales. There's also a clear move toward more complicated methodologies of scoring to determine the warmth and stage buyers are at.

Cyance's campaign for Kensington, a leader in hardware locks and security solutions, shows more sophisticated methodologies for lead scoring where dynamic content based on serving up more popular content to increase engagement. Scoring was defined by touchpoint and interaction behaviour. High scorers were separated out and passed to the Kensington sales team. Lower scoring leads were further nurtured with more content and occasional telemarketing. Additional dynamic elements were driven by geographical region.

Cyance's scoring was measured using a marketing automation platform with scoring capability. Higher value behaviour was deemed as those demonstrating greater interest in the product and the brand. For example, a case study download was 20 points, a slide deck view was five points and whitepaper download was 15 points, while time on the website (more

than three minutes) was five points, but returning visits generated 15 points. These early stage interactions are essential to measuring the number of marketing-qualified leads at a given stage and the overall effectiveness of demand generation activity.



Lead scoring definitions for Kensington

3. Metrics-applied lead nurturing to sales-accepted leads

In the nurturing process, clear use of a CRM or marketing automation platform was evident to establish lead status and next action from well thought-out programmes. The use of such technologies only enhances the measurement capability of the activity, particularly those campaigns with long durations and complex products.

While early stage nurturing very much focuses on the need for a marketing automation platform, at the later stages of nurturing, those platforms need to have integrations with the brand's CRM so that telesales and sales enablement teams can get involved with a full picture of the lead's history.

Harte Hanks' use of 'dynamic nurturing' using a propensity-led approach on which to measure qualification criteria and ultimate campaign success was only possible off the back of using a marketing automation platform. The 'Invictus: connecting marketing and sales' campaign for Microsoft UK (Enterprise) was completely focused on connecting marketing and sales, as leads were cultivated over the sales cycle until they met the defined sales-ready criteria.

"The use of marketing automation or CRM only enhances the measurement capability of the activity, particularly those campaigns with long durations"

While the focus of the campaign lay with email and telemarketing, the success of the campaign came from intelligence and insight drawn from the account information in order to create intelligent conversations through use of call management integration with the CRM. The telemarketing team was expected to fluidly respond to the challenge of proving the right level of technical information for different decision makers. At each point in the process, BANT qualification methodology was used to assess customers to ensure marketing leads were ultimately accepted by the sales team. Harte Hankes' campaign delivered a 343 per cent increase in fully qualified, sales-accepted leads and 73 per cent reduction in disengagement of prospects. Pipeline value, percentage up-weight on previous campaigns and overall total value were all key measurements.

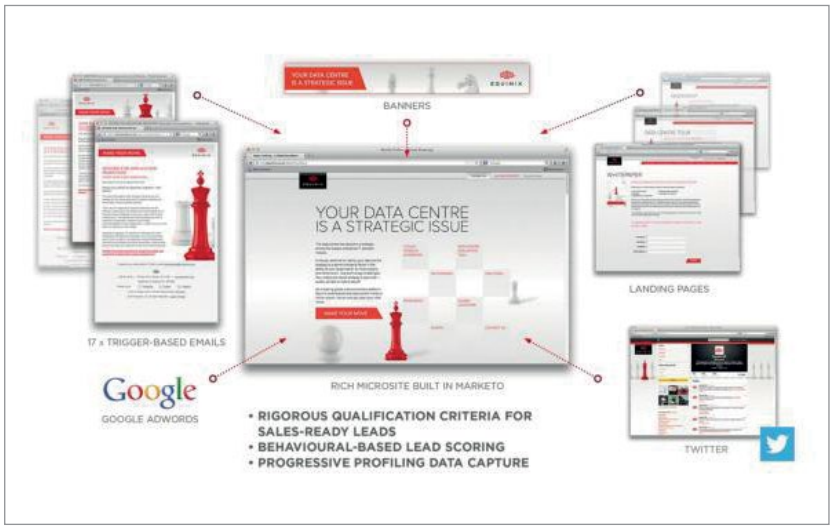
Marketing automation played a key part in The Crocodile's 'Make your move' campaign for Equinix. The use of a marketing automation platform ensured strict criteria for defining marketing-qualified leads and sales-accepted leads. The former based on behavioural lead scoring rather than the more simple and traditional BANT model. With behavioural lead scoring the focus is about clicks in a digital context, which was further enhanced by the use of progressive profiling with forms to improve results. With stricter behavioural scoring, the campaign measured through marketing automation software integrated to the CRM, the metrics are taken care of and nothing slips through the net. It's clear that embracing such tools allows for more precise measurement of activity, increased sophistication and control when executing campaigns, but more importantly a closer alignment with sales through the CRM integration that such tools offer.

Using marketing automation platforms with CRM integration enables clear visibility of pipeline value and sales value attributed to campaigns. This allows marketers to work with clear sales-orientated metrics.

"Marketing automation platforms with CRM integration enables clear visibility of pipeline value. This allows marketers to work with clear sales metrics"



Equinix's inbound and outbound activities



Equinix's prospects were nurtured through four phases

"Entries this year emphasised the real business value of the campaigns – hard metrics and seeing the bigger picture"

4. Soft versus hard metrics

With all campaigns there was less of a focus on simpler measures such as open rates and clicks, instead, campaigns looked to demonstrate a clear movement from one stage to the next. There's a clear move toward assessing quality and quantity of marketing-qualified leads, rather than 'total' leads. Marketers didn't stop there. With clear dialogue between marketing and sales, campaigns were also being assessed on the progression of marketing-qualified leads to sales-accepted leads and either the opportunity value or the total contract value.

Entries this year emphasised the real business value of the campaigns – hard metrics and seeing the bigger picture. For instance, more than one campaign talked about results as ROMI rather than simply ROI; taking into account costs such as overheads for the sales process, other touchpoints and infrastructure required to support the campaign.

Several of the campaigns drew focus towards closer alignment with the sales department, working with them to define and refine the lead qualification criteria as well as increased use of marketing automation platforms to provide insight for marketers and the sales (via integrations).

The other key differentiator this year has been the deeper metrics applied to social media campaigns both in terms of the campaign performance during the activity and the quality of the leads coming from the activity. What's been really interesting is the richness of the metrics from social activity and how tailored metrics are being generated to specifically track and measure performance. In coming years, I would expect these customised metrics to increase and for social media campaigns to have increased integration into the sales process and be measured against marketing-qualified leads, sales-accepted leads and other hard metrics.

With access to such rich campaign information through reporting, and the requirement to assess and report on prospects' progression, there is an increasing need for more metrics-driven marketing directors. Now the marketer can put forward such strong evidence of campaign success tied to hard metrics, it's no surprise that there is the ever increasing need for the marketer to sit at the boardroom table.

"With access to such rich campaign information through reporting, there is a need for more metric driven marketing directors"

Further reading

Best B2B lead generation campaign
Winner: 'Lead generation factory' for Atos by The Marketing Practice

Runner up: 'Social media lead generation: From LinkedIn to Salesforce' for IBM Tealeaf by Immediate Future

Shortlisted: 'London 2012 Olympic Games' for Atos by Stein IAS

Best B2B lead nurturing campaign
Winner: 'Invictus: connecting marketing and sales' for Microsoft UK (Enterprise) by Harte Hanks

Runner up: 'EMEA demand nurturing' by Avaya

Entrant: 'Make your move' for Equinix by The Crocodile Integrated Marketing

Best use of social media
Runner up: 'The power of collaboration' for Avaya by DirectionGroup

Shortlisted: 'Social selling' for IBM by Mason Zimbler

More information available at b2bmarketing.net/awards

SECTION 10

The 21st century marketer

The question
What skills do marketers need to be truly effective in 2014?

The context
The world of B2B marketing is in a constant state of flux. A true but hardly earth-shattering statement, particularly for marketing professionals with a few years on the clock.

B2B marketing has historically had a less sexy image than that of its consumer-facing cohort. It's all exhibitions, events, whitepapers and telemarketing, right?

Well, not any more. Advances in technology and innovative new business models mean B2B marketers today work in a more complex and dynamic environment than our predecessors.

How you perform today is as much to do with keeping up-to-date with the zeitgeist, as it is rolling out a tried and tested marketing plan. But that's not as easy as you might think.

The world of digital marketing is a complex and dynamic place. Just when you get the hang of SEO, Google changes the rulebook with an algorithm update. That community you are slowly building on Facebook may 'like' your page, but are they really engaging with your content? And will Facebook actually be around in two years time?

Of course this dynamism means B2B marketing has become a challenging and exciting field to work in. The rulebook has been ripped up and we have the world at our fingertips. But that's not to say we should forget some of the core responsibilities of every marketing professional:

- The need to prove a return on marketing investment.
- The skills to convince a board team.
- The ability to unite sales and marketing.
- A strong sense of who your customers are and what they really need or want.



ANDY BARGERY
CEO
KLAXON MARKETING

"The world of digital marketing is a complex and dynamic place. Just when you get the hang of SEO, Google changes the rulebook with an alogrithm update"

The answer

To be an effective marketer in 2014 means you have to be open to change. You have to keep up with the tools and technologies that generations X, Y and Z have grown up with – this in itself could be a full-time job.

"To be an effective marketer in 2014 means you have to be open to change. You have to keep up with the tools and technologies generations X, Y and Z have grown up with"

In this chapter I'll be looking at some of the core skills B2B marketers need to be able to deliver against their objectives in 2014. I'll back this up with examples from entrants of the B2B Awards 2013 who have all driven their business forward, demonstrating the value of skilled B2B marketing professionals. Marketers these days need to evolve or die. It's as simple as that.

The evidence

1. Measuring return on marketing investment

The fundamental difference between a successful marketing campaign and a not-so-successful campaign is not the tactic selection, but the strategy.

It sounds obvious, but the campaign with a clear strategy and objectives tied to a set of realistic measures generally performs better. That goal might be sales pipeline, revenue, marketing-qualified leads, or softer metrics such as brand awareness, or a measurable change in perceptions. The importance is defining the right outcomes at the start of the campaign. It's clear the more successful marketers are starting off with an end goal in mind and identifying what needs to be done to close that strategic gap.



Emma Postill, head of communications and partner marketing, O2

Emma Postill, head of communications and partner marketing at O2 demonstrated a real understanding of this in her channel campaign targeting UK SMBs. Return on investment was measured in hard metrics: revenues booked and costs saved. Considering the importance of this customer base for O2 – responsible for a hefty percentage of their SMB revenues – it's immediately obvious we're talking big numbers. The performance had to stack up and Emma transformed a lackluster channel into a high-performance operation. Sixty per cent revenue growth on 40 per cent cost reduction is outstanding in my book.

How did Emma do this? By clearly identifying the problem, defining a strategy, then creating a marketing plan with an integrated online offline approach. Of course she was also able execute well and measure her performance too.



Paul Higgins, marketing director, TalkTalk Business

Paul Higgins, marketing director at TalkTalk Business evidenced the same type of thinking. By measuring the impact of commercial and marketing initiatives in terms of annualised revenues no doubt he has had a much easier time convincing the board to back his ideas in subsequent years.

What does this mean for marketers?
Primarily that you have to get to grips with measuring return on investment with hard metrics. Understanding how your board will assess the performance of your initiatives and being able to tell the story in their language is essential. Ultimately the ability to measure how your campaigns translate into converted revenue will elevate you from the spending department to a partner in the business.

How do you do this?
Create an infrastructure that enables you to easily track conversions. The advances in digital and the applications of tools, such as web analytics and marketing automation, makes this much more achievable too.

Perhaps, equally as important, it means creating strong links with sales so that collectively you are driving revenue. It is beholden on marketers to find, qualify and nurture prospects before handing over to sales. Make sure you both have the same idea of a qualified lead. This will enable your sales colleagues to value your contribution and work with the leads you provide. It's not good enough to focus purely on lead volume.

All that's not to say the softer metrics aren't just as important. Ogilvy's campaign for UPS around their sponsorship of London 2012 was measured by a quantitative study of its target audience. This allowed for an assessment to be made of whether the campaign had met its objectives of improving brand awareness and increasing consideration among the target audience. Clearly defined objectives, backed up with appropriate measurement.

"The ability to measure how your campaigns translate into converted revenue will elevate you from the spending department to a partner in the business"

Of course, how you report on performance is important too. Have you set up the right executive reports that the board can immediately see the impact of your campaign? With the ease by which you can now translate data into graphical storyboards, it's time marketers got to grips with storytelling inside the business too.

"The effect of new technologies on marketing has been transformational. Changing not just what we do, but how we do it"

Key skills for marketers:

1. Understanding and setting appropriate metrics.
2. Reporting ROI at a business level.
3. Developing effective marketing strategy.

2. Digital marketing

The effect of new technologies on marketing has been transformational. Changing not just what we do, but how we do it.

Last year was without a doubt the year digital grew up, social media started to show real value, content marketing exploded, and the world of SEO began to evolve. Serious marketers jumped onto marketing automation, prompting a spending spree from the big technology vendors and we all followed the mantra that 2013 is the year of the mobile.

But what did this mean to marketers on the front line? Firstly, it means we are all now more capable of defining, running, optimising and measuring campaigns online. And this doesn't always mean expensive agency or developer fees either. The marketer who has armed themself with just a little HTML/PHP and the basics of how to read a Google Analytics dashboard can be a force to be reckoned with.

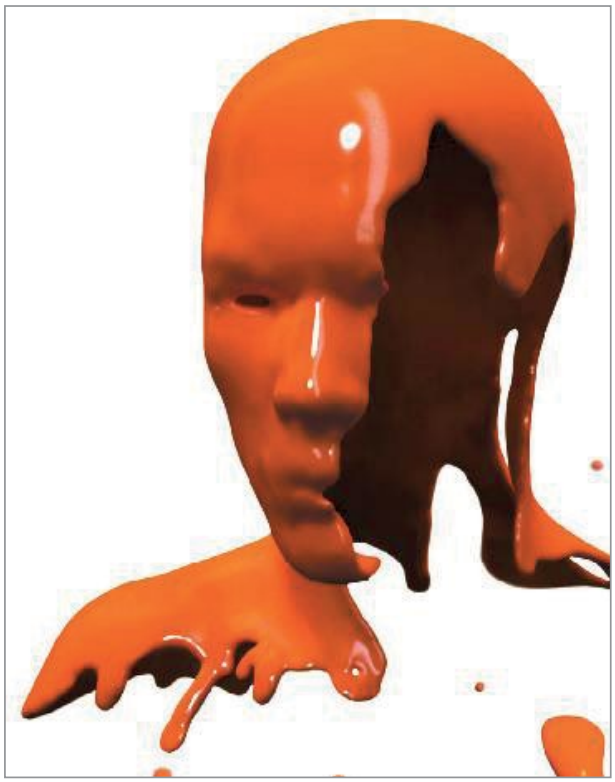
Secondly, it means you can now more easily measure the impact of your marketing investments by integrating online with offline. If you run an outdoor campaign, or send a DM, a strong call-to-action to engage online allows for more easy attribution modelling. Real pounds and pence if that's the objective. Alternatively you might begin to measure engagement metrics such as:

- Time on site
- Number of assets reviewed
- Bounce rates

Ideally you should link this performance to prospect contact data too, translating visitors into prospects at the earliest possible stages of the sales cycle.

I saw real evidence of this with Earnest's excellent 'Search. Find. Stop.' campaign for NetNames. A whole suite of integrated communications, online, offline and mobile, drove enquiries into a campaign microsite. The site was augmented with Lead Forensics – a java script plugin that provides intelligence on who is visiting a website – to ensure the relevant visitor data was recorded. Not rocket science, but the result was a multi-million dollar sales pipeline.

"New digital marketing technologies mean you can now automate many of the processes that might have otherwise sat in manual systems"



The striking creative for NetNames' 'Search. Find. Stop' campaign

We mustn't forget the value of good creative in the process too, but the technology was there to support and enhance the impact of Earnest's campaign.

Lastly, new digital marketing technologies mean you can now automate many of the processes that might have otherwise sat in manual systems. Lead scoring and lead nurturing are empowered by complex marketing automation platforms, better linking sales and marketing in an ever more co-operative relationship.

O2's new Enterprise division employed Oracle's Eloqua platform alongside Salesforce CRM to great success. Working with its agency partners The Marketing Practice, the result was 160 per cent of the pipeline target achieved. Gold stars again to O2 and its agency.

Key skills for marketers:

1. Basic HTML coding
2. Conversion optimisation and attribution modelling
3. Marketing automation

3. Big data

With all this talk of technology it would be remiss not to discuss big data. It's been a buzzword used without hesitation for a few years now, but it seems to have largely under-delivered on its potential for most marketers. Let me explain.

It's the combination of data from multiple sources, in a variety of formats and at high velocity that most marketers are struggling to deal with. In everyday B2B marketing do we really need the ability to crunch data from tens if not hundreds of sources to create real time insights?

B2B marketers typically have a clearer picture of the decision makers in their target audience and what motivates them to make purchase decisions. Also decisions are more likely to be the result of a longer research and evaluation process, meaning real time is less important than in consumer markets; consider buying cycles measured in months or years rather than minutes.

Perhaps big data in B2B is more suited to business intelligence and decision-making at a macro scale. Or maybe marketers can use the explosion in data to help them evaluate, execute and evolve their marketing programmes with a broader set of metrics? In any case the B2B marketing community would do well to explore how big data can be used better to empower marketing campaigns.

The marketer with a head for data and statistics will inevitably become a prized asset in 2014 and beyond. I suggest all marketers dig out their university or college statistics workbook as we move into a more data-centric world. Refresh your memory of standard deviations, mean, median or mode averages, sampling distributions and so on.

If nothing else, big data can be used to identify and develop stronger profiles of your sales targets. It's surprising what you can find out about a person with simple social media searches. What can marketers do to automate and enhance the process of data collection at every stage of the buying cycle?

With big data comes data protection. The regulation is set to become ever more restrictive and it's essential marketers understand their responsibilities. Are you storing customer data legally, cleaning it regularly, segmenting effectively and using it to create personalised brand experiences, as per Earnest's campaign for NetNames?

"It's the combination of data from multiple sources, in a variety of formats and at high velocity that most marketers are struggling to deal with"

Big data also means big responsibility too and marketers need to stay on top of the legislation. Are you up to speed with the European Data Protection Regulation coming into force across the European Union in 2014 or 2015?

Key skills for marketers:

1. Use of data to understand the decision-making unit.
2. Statistical analysis.
3. Knowledge of European Data Protection Regulations.

4. Creative and integrated marketing

In an industry not historically known for creative excellence, recent innovative approaches have certainly paid dividends. Not simply in terms of messaging and artwork, but business models and strategy too. I've mentioned O2 already, but its creative approach to channel strategy and a new look at enterprise marketing both showed impressive results and merit emphasis. Both demonstrated creativity in strategy and the approach to tackling a real business challenge.

However, more typically when we think of creativity we consider the creative execution: messaging, branding/design and channel selection. There is increasing scope for creativity in each of these areas as advances in digital have opened up new and interesting avenues to play with. This also increases the challenge for marketers and their agency partners to integrate complex campaigns into a seamless execution.

An example worth highlighting here is KeyedIn's PSO launch campaign, orchestrated by Marketing Options International. Over a six-month period, the campaign ran integrated online and offline communications including direct mail, email, telemarketing, exhibitions, content marketing, social media, advertising and live webinars. Many of these tactics were personalised (emails, landing pages, DM pieces) and all funnelled responses into a central, content-rich microsite to capture leads and nurture interested visitors through the buying cycle. The campaign delivered a 400 per cent return on marketing investment. Not too shabby at all.

"There is increasing scope for creativity as advances in digital have opended up new and interesting avenues to play with"



KeyedIn Solutions bi-monthly ezine, webinar and survey

"Consistency in message, format, tone and channel will empower marketers to plan, execute and study the results of their efforts"

Independent pensions consultancy Hymans Robertson LLP also excelled in this regard. Kicking off its 'Pensions auto-enrolment' campaign with research into their target audiences meant it had a better chance of engaging around the right issues. Eager to move away from 'bland corporate financial marketing' the team engaged with its agencies to develop the creative idea and subsequent assets: DM, dedicated microsite, speaking opportunities and an ad campaign. These tactics were supported by a PR campaign and telesales to follow-up on earlier communications.

The result? 133 per cent of their initial target was achieved – which was the metric set at the start of the campaign.

5. Content marketing

Of course the creative assets used in any campaign are also hugely important and content marketing came into its own in 2013. The response of B2B marketers looking for fresh sales leads was to ramp up the volume of content being produced: blogs, infographics, tweets, how-to papers, case studies, best practice guides, webinars, video, curated web channels, the list goes on.

With the increased volume it became apparent that if a channel existed, a marketer would use it; the field of dreams scenario. Social media platforms count for many tens of outlets for broadcasting and sharing content, but sometimes with the result being little or no audience for the content.

In 2014 marketers need to be a little savvier. We need to get better at understanding where our audiences are and what they will engage with, before producing mountains of content. The CMI's Joe Pulizzi dares marketers to "focus your content marketing on one niche using one channel." Be creative in the content, but equally creative in the channels, which does not mean use every channel available.

One thing that is abundantly clear for content marketers is the need to tie content together and tell a coherent brand story. Consistency in message, format, tone and channel will empower marketers to plan, execute and study the results of their efforts. We must all get better at creating compelling content for our audiences.

Key skills for marketers:

1. Be creative with business models and campaign assets.
2. Better integration of different marketing tactics.
3. Knowledge of the core tenets of storytelling.

6. Getting up close and personal

You will all have heard the adage 'people buy from people', probably because there's something in it. Relationships pay a crucial role in B2B marketing. This is proven by the consistent and growing spend by marketers on events and exhibitions.

But the landscape for events is evolving too. With new technologies come greater opportunities for before, during and after show experiences and, indeed, entirely new formats. Event marketers reading this will have seen first hand how technology has created additional opportunities for engaging their audiences: webinars, virtual expos, video calling, live streaming and now Google Hangouts. All have created interesting new event tactics for marketers to employ.

"In 2014 marketers need to be a little savvier. We need to get better at understanding where our audiences are and what they will engage with before producing content"

Whatever the event format, the ability to attract and engage an audience remains as important as ever. The proliferation of information available online means there is a greater need for event marketers to provide real benefits in order to get decision makers out of their offices. So much can be achieved online now that events are more of an opportunity to start a dialogue with a customer than as part of the information search stage. Events work as a tactic much further along in the buying cycle now and there is a clear need to provide engagement opportunities for your prospects.



FORGE London Event developed by Katie Neal, marketing manager at Crofton Design

Don't forget your content though. It remains essential that you educate, entertain and engage. Otherwise no matter how innovative your approach, it's likely your event will fall short of expectations.

The success of your events might also come down to how well you integrate digital into your activity to best serve your audience. Building an event mobile application, or at least a responsive microsite, is surely the minimum requirement these days. But equally the need for creating digital assets, engaging on social media and empowering your attendees to communicate in person is paramount.

All marketers need to get up to speed with how to integrate digital into their events, but also how to build events into a comprehensive marketing plan.

"The need for creating digital assets, engaging on social media and empowering your attendees to communicate in person is paramount"



Gareth Case, global marketing director, Xchanging

"A good relationship between marketer and agency remains one of the key skills marketers need to work on this year"

Xchanging's global marketing director Gareth Case demonstrated excellence in his approach to events with the launch of insurance software Xuber. He devised an unconventional marketing strategy involving experiential and guerrilla event tactics – picture 50 butlers serving coffee to workers during rush hour in the City. The result, a substantial pipeline for the business.

Key skills for marketers:

1. Making events more engaging.
2. Applying digital marketing tactics to enhance events.
3. Devising where events sit in the buying cycle.

7. Partnerships

The most common feature of a high performing campaign and awards entry seemed to be a good relationship between marketer and agency. This is a common thread in discussions around marketing effectiveness and it remains one of the key skills I believe marketers need to work on this year.

Agencies need clients, but it should never be a one-way street. Client side marketers should be aware the best way to get the most from an agency is not to beat them up over fees and deadlines, but to work in a more collaborative relationship.

Empower them to learn about your business and your needs. Share information that validates the work they do and allow them to create case studies from your projects. Consider retainer-based relationships over projects to allow agencies a greater degree of confidence to hire and grow their skill base. This will be repaid in buckets of loyalty and creative thinking.

At the same time, agencies that operate as partners need to ensure they do more than pay lip service to the word 'partner'. Invest time to understand your clients' businesses and their needs, not just exploiting avenues for fee revenues. Employ and motivate staff that will work an accounts for years, not months, incubating new team members while they get up to speed on your clients' businesses. Reward clients with excellence in consultancy and execution; they deserve no less.

Of all the B2B Awards submissions I reviewed writing this chapter, it was seemingly obvious which were based on strong client and agency relationships. I have mentioned a handful already but other notable entries I reviewed include McCann Enterprise with Nestle Docello, Moreish Marketing with LV, and Gyro with Powwownow.

"Partnerships are about more than clients and agencies. In the current climate the speed of change is rapid, and marketing teams must evolve"

But partnerships are about more than clients and agencies. In the current climate the speed of change is rapid. Whole new industries are born overnight and industry incumbents, just like their marketing teams, must evolve.

Innovation is one way to achieve a step change, but let's not forget the humble joint marketing agreement or joint venture. What opportunities are there to exploit agreements with complementary goods or service providers?



Katie Neal, marketing manager at Crofton Design

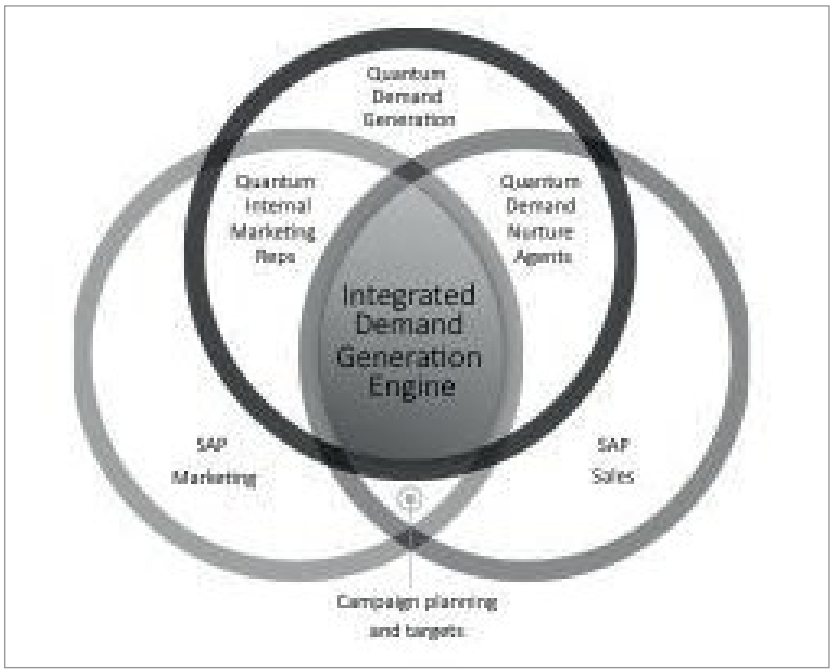
Katie Neal, marketing manager at Crofton Design developed the FORGE Property Partnerships in exactly this way. By working with Crofton's partners Katie was able to create a platform to engage with construction sector professionals, position the business as thought leader and raise brand awareness. All achieved on a micro budget.



Michael Portillo, former politician and broadcaster, speaking at FORGE London

But, what about internal partnerships for marketers working in bigger organisations? O2 created a brand new enterprise division with 150 sales managers and 20 marketers that were tasked with working together, with support from its agency The Marketing Practice.

Another great example is SAP with its partner Quantum Marketing. SAP created a combined team approach where Quantum's staff now resides within SAP's business, acting as a bridge between internal sales and marketing teams. This insourced team acts as an integrated unit delivering global demand generation and lead nurturing services. The result of this close alignment has increased lead flows and greater team productivity.



SAP and Quantum's integrated team model

At the start of this chapter I also touched on channel strategy. In a world of technology-driven disintermediation, there can still be tremendous value from a well structured and managed channel. O2's SMB story showed real evidence that marketers can think laterally and outside the four, seven or eight Ps. The role of reseller is no less important for B2B marketers and can be a source of significant marketing results.

Key skills for marketers:

1. Agency/client management skills.
2. Awareness of opportunities for creative and business model innovation.
3. Working knowledge of core channel marketing strategies.

"In a world of technology-driven disintermediation, there can still be tremendous value from a well structured and managed channel"

Conclusions

There's a lot for marketers to contend with in 2014. The annual deluge of forecasts available online at the start of the year indicates that B2B marketers are faced with an ever more dynamic industry. The skills required to be an effective marketer in the next 12 months and beyond are evolving too.

"You had better get used to the idea of being creative in your strategy and execution to cut through the noise and make an impact"

According to the annual *BtoB Marketing Outlook Survey* from AdAge7:

- **The drive to digital is on:** 79.9 per cent of B2B marketers plan to increase their spending on digital.
- **It is finally the year of the mobile:** 47 per cent of B2B marketers say its extremely important to advertise on mobile.
- **More events and more online:** 9.4 per cent growth in the number of marketers increasing their budgets for webinars and webcasts, with spend on events as a whole up seven per cent.

What conclusions can you draw from these statistics? You need to grow your skills in digital marketing, web, mobile, social, conversion and attribution modelling and, of course, big data. But alongside digital don't forget:

1. To make sure you measure return on marketing investment and tell a good story.
2. To be creative with your tactic mix and integrate seamlessly.
3. There is still huge value in face-to-face activities, but use digital platforms to enhance and amplify.

One thing that's abundantly clear for 2014 is all marketers need to get used to the idea that their audiences are being swamped with information. There has been a deluge of information made available in every possible channel. Pushed out in outbound marcomms and served up through inbound campaigns; more content, more volume, more crap (to paraphrase Doug Kessler and Stand Woods of Velocity Partners).

You had better get used to the idea of being creative in your strategy and execution to cut through the noise and make an impact. In 2014, marketers must work harder than ever before to understand their audiences, map products and services onto their needs and become the link between business and customer. Only by occupying this position can marketers begin to add real business value and move the profession up a notch.

Further reading

B2B marketer of the year
Winner: Paul Higgins, head of marketing, TalkTalk Business

Shortlisted: Katie Neal, marketing manager, Crofton Design

Shortlisted: Gareth Case, global marketing director, Xuber

Shortlisted: Emma Postill, head of communications and partner marketing, O2

Best integrated or multichannel campaign
Winner: 'Taking the guesswork out of the EU gender directive' for LV by Moreish Marketing

Runner up: 'Search. Find. Stop' for Netnames by Earnest

Shortlisted: 'UPS Olympics campaign' for UPS by Ogilvy

Shortlisted: KeyedIn PSO launch campaign agency: marketing' for KeyedIn Solutions by Marketing Options International

Shortlisted: 'Shaping the market for auto-enrolment' by Hymans Robertson

Shortlisted: 'Creating their sweet signature' for Docello by McCann Enterprise

Shortlisted: 'More sense than money' for Powwownow by Gyro

Best integration of sales and marketing

Winner: 'O2 Enterprise team' for O2 Telefonica by The Marketing Practice

Shortlisted: 'SAP Forum UK & Ireland demand generation' by Quantum Marketing Group

More information available at b2bmarketing.net/awards

STAY ON TOP OF THE MARKETING EVOLUTION

Corporate membership

B2B marketers have never had to be so multi-skilled, multi-tasked, and accountable to business objectives. Marketers need up-to-the-minute research, knowledge and insight to ensure they are not left behind.



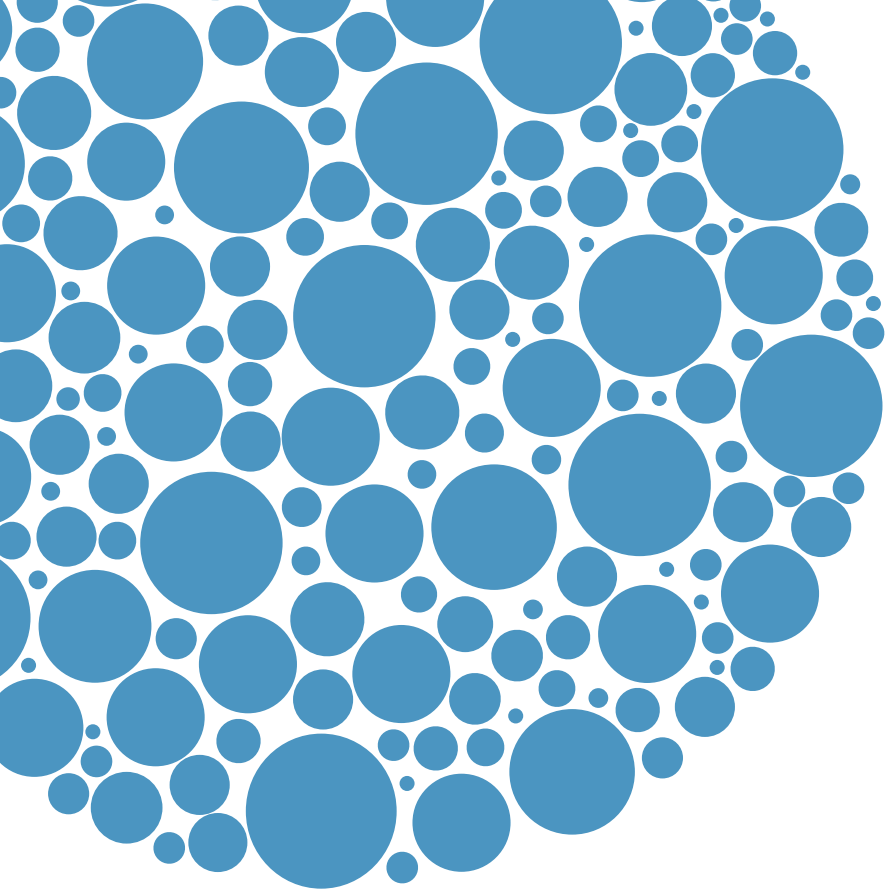
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