Connecting with the B2B Buyer

As buyers become more and more "blind" to marketing communications, how can you make the information they do see influential to their decision making process? With Base One's Buyersphere Report finding 87% of B2B buyers look for research before choosing a supplier, are marketers doing enough to actually reach buyers, and not just communicate at them?

LOSING CONTROL

Citing word of mouth as the best source of information, followed by web searches, online community sites, and social media, it's clear that buyers are thoroughly researching your business to validate your offering – but as the freedom of online opinion grows, are you losing control?

REACHING THE B2B BUYER

It's critical if you want to be shortlisted as a supplier that your content appears at every point in the buyers decision making process, and you must consider each of these touch points in your marketing strategy. In the current digital climate it's not enough to post blogs on your website, because your prospects might never get there; relevant and helpful information needs to reach your prospects at the right time to help resolve their problems and recommend the solution your product offers.

Buyers can be 90% into the buying cycle before they make contact

THE BUYER'S JOURNEY

We know that buyers change the way they act during different stages of the buying process; in early stages they are looking for general information and advice on how to solve their business problem, whilst later they will be comparing the various suppliers' offerings and solutions on the shortlist.

83% of B2B buyers plan to start using real-time data

1. Identifying and defining the business requirement

During stage 1 prospects will be looking for solutions to their business problems and search for trusted opinions and sources to validate the decisions they make. The Buyersphere Report shows respondents find whitepapers and industry press most helpful at this time in the buying cycle; prospects will be more interested in issue based content, most likely due to the low commitment needed to acquire these resources. Consider distributing and publishing whitepapers via third party's, focusing on prospects' issues.

98% of visitors leave your website without enquiring

2. Identifying potential suppliers

Prospects are most actively viewing content during this stage in the buying process and will be using a wider number of channels to identify and compare potential suppliers, including social media, personal word of mouth, supplier websites, direct mail, and videos. With web searches voted most popular at this stage, ensure your website is clear, tackles the prospects problem immediately, and makes it easy for them to understand how your offering can help. Consider PPC campaigns and SEO to direct buyers to your website instead of your competitors'.

3. Final supplier selection

By this stage the prospect is likely to have a shortlist of providers, so it's crucial you are armed with content and stand out against your competitors. Also, don't assume that prospects have stopped looking at your online content at this point, research shows at this stage in the buying process respondents found Twitter most useful as they can see what other people are saying about your business, both good and bad. Take advantage of this by posting testimonials and links to case studies and asking your brand advocates to mention your brand and offering.

INVISIBLE LEADS

Reports by Forrester show buyers can be 90% into the buying cycle before they contact suppliers to make the final decision. Although your marketing team are creating and publishing content and driving traffic to your website, what if a prospect never actually engages with you? 98% of visitors leave your website without enquiring, you could be missing out on new business opportunities.

When prospects start researching your brand, they are researching your competitors too, who will be reaching them with "me too" messaging. With the average B2B professional receiving up to 150 emails per day, **how can you stand out from the rest?**

All this information confuses prospects and leaves them unsure about where to spend their resource and money, and often they choose the safest option of not making a decision at all.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

88% of sales and marketing executives say that they have missed opportunities due to not being able to leverage external, internal and social information, plus a 2012 CSO Insights survey found that nearly 82% of them feel challenged by the amount of data available and the amount of time required for research before making contact with prospects. Whilst sales and marketing professionals are facing these issues, a pot of readily available, new business opportunities exist in the form of anonymous website visitors.

NURTURING THE WAY TO SUCCESS

Forrester Research shows companies that excel at lead nurturing generate 50% more sales-ready leads with a 33% reduction in costs. Leverage the insight you have by planning how each of your marketing channels can be used at the different stages of the buying process. For example, use your messaging and content to influence decision makers to behave in certain ways at each of these stages.

IP tracking is really beneficial at this point too because it introduces an additional channel to your mix, enabling you to target prospects visiting your website that never make contact, whatever stage of the buying cycle they are at. Nurture these leads from anonymous website visitors to hot sales ready leads and you'll be front of mind long before your competitors are.

HOW IP TRACKING WORKS

Lead Forensics IP tracking software tells you not only which businesses have visited your website, but also their contact details and browsing history on your website even if they haven't made contact, creating the opportunity to nurture previously unknown leads.

And with comprehensive information about those businesses including industry/SIC code, employee count, and how they found your website, your sales team can make contact with the hottest leads before your competitors.

Companies that excel at lead nurturing generate 50% more sales-ready leads

IMPACT THE BUYING CYCLE

At basic level Lead Forensics provides your sales team with hot leads to follow up. Real insight can be gained by looking at the visitor's journey on your website, enabling you to closely follow leads and effectively nurture them according to which stage they are in the buying cycle.

The Lead Forensics solution can be used to bypass the traditional buying cycle and contact previously anonymous visitors rather than waiting for them to contact you. Use Lead Forensics to enhance your messaging, know what stage the prospect is at and make contact before your competitors on the shortlist do.

During the early stages of the cycle where a prospect may have downloaded a whitepaper or been redirected to your website from an article, your sales team can use the Lead Forensics solution to reach out to them before your competitors with additional content they might find interesting and the invitation to find out more about your offering.

At the later stages in the buying cycle, use trigger alerts for visitors coming from certain links or channels, such as PPC, where you know they are actively searching for your solution. Your sales team can use this opportunity to make direct contact and tell them more about your product or service.

Not only does Lead Forensics help businesses to generate more new business leads, it also helps clients identify upsell and cross sell opportunities with existing customers, and with 83 % of attendees at the DMA2012 conference saying they plan to start using real-time data, it's a valuable tool to any B2B business.

Lead Forensics clients have increased sales by 50%, whilst also reducing the volume of cold calls they make

FOR YOUR MARKETING TEAM

There's real value for your marketing team too, despite the huge investment most businesses make to drive traffic to their website, web traffic without enquiries means nothing. The Lead Forensics software allows you to increase the conversion and ROI from all your online marketing activity by identifying who has been on your site even if they don't enquire. The client portal provides access to a variety of reports allowing you to truly measure the effectiveness of all your web marketing activity across various channels. This in addition to insight at each stage of the buying cycle is hugely valuable.

STORIES OF SUCCESS

Here's what some of our clients and the experts have to say:

"After contacting a business by using Lead Forensics we were invited to a pitch, which became a win for us. Lead Forensics receives, literally, my highest recommendation."

Lance Baird, Senior Vice President of Global Business Development, Godfrey

"Lead Forensics has allowed us to stop wasting time trawling through endless piles of data and go for the solid leads; it has impacted our sales activity by about 50%."

Duncan Stuart, London Sales Manager, ABC Imaging

"The challenge of sales is prioritisation, and Lead Forensics gives us our order of battle and puts us into a position to win."

Doug Richard, BBC's Dragon's Den investor and entrepreneur.

CASE STUDIES

CASE EXAMPLE
LEADING CREATIVE AGENCY

- Spends £80k per month on online marketing
- Invests heavily in PPC and SEO
- Gains most revenue from upsell and cross sell opportunities
- Have a healthy lead nurturing process in place
- Objective to increase new business opportunities
- Wanted the ability to target prospects at earliest stages of the buying cycle

THE SOLUTION
LEADING CREATIVE AGENCY

- Lead Forensics tracking solution added to the website
- Agency identifies new business opportunities when they hit the website, by seeing the pages visited are able to identify which services prospects are interested in
- Lead Forensics solution enables agency to contact prospects at research stage of the buying cycle and build relationships with them from day 1
- Agency able to bypass full buying cycle process and in some circumstances secured business prior to prospects contacting the competition
- Upsell and cross sell opportunities increased with existing clients as agency have visibility of them visiting website
- As a result increased new business opportunities by 400% and increased existing client spend by 60%

CASE EXAMPLE
TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS COMPANY

- Operate outbound sales force to generate new business
- Paid search consumes majority of marketing budget
- Increased competition in PPC and SEO channels
- Need access to new business leads before competitors
- Objective to generate more new business enquiries and higher ROI on marketing spend

THE SOLUTION
TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS COMPANY

- Client uses Lead Forensics to provide deeper insight into web visitors behaviour and identify new business opportunities
- Client able to follow up previously unknown website visits immediately and build relationship with prospects before their competitors
- Enables sales to follow up click throughs from PPC activity that didn't enquire, maximising ROI from this channel
- Sales team use trigger reports to identify the hottest leads quickly, using detailed criteria to determine the level of interest and stage in buying cycle
- Have better insight to how web visitors navigate around their website and optimise pages to increase visitor to lead conversion
- Outbound sales team productivity significantly improved
- Website visitor to lead conversion increased by over 300% plus sales increased by 250% over 18 months

To find out how Lead Forensics can help you nurture leads through the buying process and to generate more new business opportunities and increase your online marketing ROI, contact us today.

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LEAD FORENSICS