

MARKETING TO AUTOMATION & CONTROLS ENGINEERS:

YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

The automation and controls space is robust, with purchases of industrial automation equipment **predicted to reach $225 billion by 2017**. It's the engine behind most of the world's manufacturing. If you're marketing to this critical space, success means making a real connection with engineers. This is easier said than done. Making the right connections requires a unique balance of art and science that's critical to your success.

IT'S AS PROBLEMATIC AS IT IS PROMISING

At first glance, the engineering audience is amazingly homogenous. And yet, it is undergoing a generational shift more pronounced than perhaps any other B2B audience. This shift will change many of the characteristics and behaviors that are important to marketers. Fortunately, another contradiction works in your favor: While engineers are famously "stealthy" in their behavior toward marketers, they are among the most studied audiences in B2B marketing. So, if you know where to look, you'll find plenty of channels where you can engage them with valuable content.

WHY WE WROTE THIS GUIDE

In our years of experience as a B2B marketing communications agency, we have interviewed literally hundreds of engineers from original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to end users. We have developed rich personas on engineers and others on buying teams. And we recently commissioned primary research from **Feedback**, a Richmond, Virginia-based firm that specializes in ethnographic research into specific audiences. These new findings draw from psychology, sociology and anthropology to observe behaviors and identify the preferences that motivate the automation and controls engineer.

This guide provides a single place for us to organize our new proprietary research, our key insights from secondary sources and our own experience in marketing to automation and controls engineers. We've put decades of knowledge into this book, and now we're happy to put it into the hands of our B2B colleagues. Hopefully this will make it just a little bit easier for you to make a connection for that ever-elusive audience.

01. UNDERSTANDING THE LANDSCAPE

CURRENT PRESSURES AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE AUTOMATION & CONTROLS MARKETER

Like other marketers, those in the automation and controls space are facing the biggest megatrend in B2B marketing – the fact that today's empowered B2B buyer is **completing 50-80 percent of the journey** to a purchase before ever reaching out to sales. This gives Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) more opportunity – and responsibility – to guide the customer toward a buying decision.

A new **study from Forrester Research** cites "grappling with big data, becoming customer-obsessed and dealing with the flood of marketing technology" as some of the top challenges facing B2B CMOs in 2016. And ***Branding Magazine*** found that, if anything, CMOs face "too much opportunity – too many channels, too much data, too many choices to make for innovation and expansion – which then becomes the challenge."

Marketers need to focus on doing the right things in an era when maintaining focus and staying on course is increasingly difficult.

WHAT THE NEW RESEARCH TELLS US

Let's look at marketers in the automation and controls space in particular. In our new, proprietary research study, we tracked social interactions among CMOs in addition to the engineers they are seeking to reach. Our key findings:

Like their peers in other industries, **engineering CMOs have to handle a variety of persistent challenges**:

- Building pipeline
- Managing customer experience
- Delivering new prospects
- Maintaining a productive team with the proper skill set
- Driving revenue

- The **most important topics of discussion** include inbound/content marketing, storytelling, webinars, e-books and keeping up to date with the ever-changing digital marketing landscape.
- **LinkedIn conversations** include social selling, conversational sales techniques, mobile marketing and new marketing channels (e.g., Snapchat).
- Due to long sales cycles, engineering CMOs are **challenged to tie marketing efforts to revenue**. This requires tracking what's happening with prospects for a longer period of time, and that can bring out **tensions between marketing and sales**.
- But what's really unique are the social **conversations around marketing to engineers**. Two useful and popular resources are the **Marketing to Engineers® blog** and the advertisers' site on **engineering.com**.

HOW YOU CAN KEEP YOUR EDGE

Fundamentally, marketers need to understand **how engineers think and react** to marketing messages. This e-book is designed to help marketers do a better job connecting with engineering decision-makers in the automation and controls space. While there is no "easy button," there is a proven path to success based on our long experience connecting with engineers in this space. And that path always begins with knowing your audience.

02. MEET THE ENGINEERS

BUILDING A PERSONA FOR THE AUTOMATION & CONTROLS ENGINEER

Reaching an audience as highly skilled and technically oriented as automation and controls engineers requires not only a deep knowledge of the technology, but also a thorough understanding of the audience's motivations. Engineers are sophisticated users of online resources. They can be quickly turned off to what they see as promotion or fluff, and they demand authentic, practical information. What's on their minds? Is it cost or quality? Performance or standards compliance? End user acceptance or ease of use? All of the above?

Nailing those drivers is the key to success in marketing to this complex and multifaceted audience.

THE FIVE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

1. THEY LOVE DATA

The more exhaustive, the better. That means product information, reviews and specs. Application notes. White papers and trade publication articles. They want to see charts and graphs, performance data and hard information. Social media, not so much. Blog posts, forums, apps and infographics are their least favorite types of content. But that may be changing a little (see Point No. 3). And as for trade shows, more than half of these professionals say they have not gone to one within the past year.

2. THEY ARE UNDER PRESSURE

Engineers are expected to meet deadlines, cut pricing, design for manufacturability and get their products to market faster. Yet they're still on the hook for product reliability: According to one survey, 44 percent say the pressure to meet deadlines is putting product quality and reliability at risk.

One design engineer we interviewed told us that he deals with more than 2,000 suppliers.

And these engineers worry about keeping up with all the new technologies and products – everything from the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT), to cybersecurity, to augmented reality, to robotics, to additive or 3D manufacturing.

3. THEY ARE RETIRING IN DROVES

More than 60 percent of the audience is over 50, **according to one recent survey**. And less than 20 percent of the design engineer audience is under 40. Over 40 percent say their companies are losing specialized knowledge and expertise faster than they gain it. And less than half say their companies have practices in place to capture and retain that knowledge.

The younger engineers coming up through the ranks are slightly more likely to use a mobile device or view a video, podcast or webinar than their older colleagues. But it's not a huge sea change: It is, after all, still tough to read a data sheet on a three-inch screen.

FROM THE BLOG:

WHEN HALF OUR ENGINEERS RETIRE: THE IMPACT ON B2B MARKETING

During a recent customer interview for a client project, my subject remarked about the aging of the engineering population and the dire impact it might have in the next decade or so.

He used the term "silver tsunami" and attributed it not so much to the declining interest of our youth in science and engineering, but more to decisions by companies to downsize their workforce, especially their staff engineers, during the past decade or so of economic turmoil.

He noted that companies just don't have the younger staff in place, as they once did, to replace veteran engineers as they retire. There will be a huge loss of engineering experience on the plant floor over the next few years.

Read the full blog post »



JIM EVERHART
ACCOUNT PLANNER, GODFREY

4. THEY ARE PART OF A TEAM

No longer does one engineer specify or authorize a purchase. More and more, engineers are buying as part of a team. And that team grows larger every year. In addition to other engineers, it might include representatives from marketing, R&D, manufacturing and sales for an OEM.

There might be a technical committee involved with specifications or a commercial committee in charge of negotiating contracts – in other words, squeezing their suppliers on price and delivery.

5. THEY LOVE BEING ENGINEERS

Despite the pressures and frustrations of their jobs, 84 percent would recommend their profession to a friend or child. Seventy-four percent feel appreciated and respected, and 71 percent think engineering is a respected profession.

On the negative side, 24 percent are actively seeking another job, and 20 percent are concerned with job security.

THE MANY PERSONAS OF THE AUTOMATION & CONTROLS ENGINEER

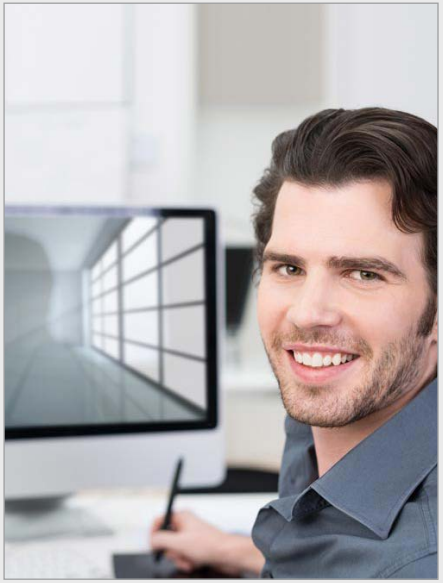
There is no single persona for "The Automation and Controls Engineer." This category of buyer contains its own subsets of unique personas, each approaching your brand with their own motivations and concerns. Let's look at a few of these audience groups in general and explore what makes them different.

ENGINEER #1: THE MACHINE-BUILDING OEM

Original equipment manufacturers certainly care about product cost, but marketing messages should mainly focus on factors that reduce the overall cost, including time-savings, and make their jobs easier as machine builders:

- Easier programming
- Faster installation and commissioning time
- Reducing machine footprint
- Lower energy consumption
- Lower cost of machine ownership for end users

Product quality and availability as well as engineering support are also key factors. Finally, product features and benefits are important, especially in helping OEMs differentiate their equipment for end users.



ENGINEER #2: THE END USER

End users are concerned with cost, of course, but for them cost is largely an issue of maximizing uptime and productivity. To the extent that end users specify components, they may direct their OEMs to specify components from automation companies they can trust for reliability and functionality. The ability to standardize and reduce components across multiple production lines is an important message for end users seeking to shrink their supply chain and cut inventory and maintenance costs. End users are interested in messages about:

- Lower total cost of ownership
- Less maintenance and downtime
- Improved overall equipment effectiveness (OEE)
- More flexibility for faster production changeovers
- Increased energy efficiency

As automation end users embrace smart factory concepts, messages about securely connecting multiple production lines with each other and with the IIoT will resonate in the buying process.

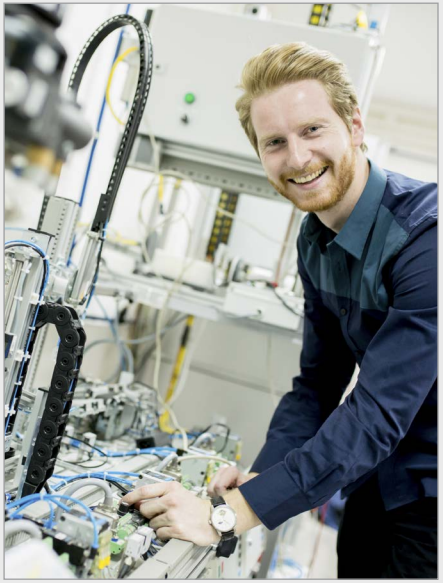


ENGINEER #3: THE SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR

Systems integrators are an important audience, as they work directly with end users but have slightly different motivational appeals as they specify automation components. In addition to cost, product reliability, and features and benefits, systems integrators may have more interest in messaging about:

- Ease of engineering and programming
- Open standards for compatibility
- Speed of commissioning

And while product availability is important, messaging about ease of ordering, fewer part numbers and reliable delivery times will also appeal to systems integrators.



YOU CAN START BUILDING YOUR OWN AUDIENCE PERSONAS

If you know where to look, this kind of knowledge is always within reach. You can leverage a number of accessible resources and experiences to gain insight into the factors that affect purchasing behavior. These include:

- **Secondary research**, like studies completed by major professional organizations and publications
- **Institutional knowledge** gained from decades of experience in marketing to these professionals
- **Client perceptions**, including success stories or anecdotes from sales and customer service personnel
- Review of **published articles** appearing in trade and professional journals
- **Monitoring online activity**, like social media and even the customer's own website
- **Primary research**, which could include surveys as well as in-depth interviews conducted with customers and prospects

The automation and controls engineer can make an elusive buyer. But when you listen in the right places, you'll learn a lot about what these professionals most appreciate – and what they most dread.



VIDEO:

HOW TO IMPROVE THE CURRENT STATE OF PERSONA MARKETING

At Godfrey's FWD:B2B Conference, Katie Martell, Founder and CMO at Cintell, talked about how modern digital tools can make the creation of marketing personas less painful than ever.

03. WHAT ENGINEERS LIKE TO TALK ABOUT

CURRENT INDUSTRY TRENDS, DRIVERS AND CHALLENGES

Marketing to automation and controls engineers is always a sophisticated conversation. This industry is driven by technological change and business demands for cost reduction, increased productivity and better return on investment. It's fair to say your target audience is "bombarded" with content that promises the perfect solution to every problem they face. But that's not a conversation, let alone a sophisticated one.

The engineering audience needs – and will pay much greater attention to – in-depth content about the issues that really matter to them. Understanding those values is the first step toward fostering a robust and ongoing conversation.

FROM THE BLOG:

UNDERSTANDING THE MIND OF THE ENGINEER: SIX MAJOR MISCONCEPTIONS REVEALED

Getting into the head of an engineer is a top-of-mind task for B2B marketers who need to get their product designed into OEM equipment, integrated into a system or specified as a solution. Because the engineer's mindset is different from other influencers in the buying process, B2B practitioners often fail to grasp the engineering mentality.

These misconceptions often lead to communication problems – and wasted marketing budgets. Blending a recent study from UBM Tech with decades of Godfrey experience with engineers in mechanical, civil, chemical and other disciplines, it's apparent that misunderstandings occur in six major areas.

Read the full blog post »



KEN JONES
PARTNER, GODFREY

WHERE TO START THE CONVERSATION

Before you start creating content for the automation and controls engineer, make sure it falls into one of these categories.



Implementation Strategies

When and how to expand the smart factory technologies their systems utilize



Technical Advice

Tips about technology selection – bus architectures, intelligent components, manufacturing workflows, etc.



Professional Development

Insights into resources and organizations that can help keep them abreast of developments in their field



Everyday Tips

Working with suppliers, planning for new technologies, managing millennials – anything to help them handle the day's work

THE FIVE MOST POPULAR TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

Our recent study strongly indicates that automation and controls audiences are especially drawn to conversations around five current topics:

1. PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF SMART FACTORY TECHNOLOGY

Understanding what kinds of technologies they need to begin integrating into their systems. What kind of functionality do they need to deploy? How do they utilize new concepts such as embedded sensors and more autonomous control systems to further the integration of people and machines?

2. UPDATING AGING INFRASTRUCTURE

What's needed to make today's automation and manufacturing systems smart factory ready? There's increasing interest in deploying robotics and other increasingly automated systems, but what's the best way to do this without completely ripping out and discarding existing, highly valuable production systems?

3. CYBERSECURITY IN THE AGE OF THE INDUSTRIAL INTERNET OF THINGS

When embedding sensors and intelligent technology in their machines, what risks are there that these digital devices can be hacked? Building confidence in the newest generations of machine with billions of devices and communication channels interacting with each other is crucial.

4. THE IMPACT OF BIG DATA

Data-rich manufacturing environments capture and process vastly greater amounts of data; how do they optimize how this data is captured and provided to end users to be of greatest value at the machine level, on the factory floor and across the enterprise?

5. EXPANDING USE OF SIMULATION AND VIRTUAL MODELING

How can advances in simulation technology be used to shorten machine development time frames and gain insight into system behavior early in the design cycle to prevent costly redesigns? These are powerful capabilities, but what changes in the OEM's engineering culture and processes are needed to make the best use of these advances?

WHAT WE KNOW FOR SURE

Our list of topics is not comprehensive, but it does cover the vital issues that remain "top of mind" for automation and controls audiences. Regardless of the topic, however, engineers share a focus on the applicable and the practical: a recognition that the smart factory/IIoT revolution is quickly moving from theory to practice. They seek concrete, usable advice and insight, backed up by proof in the form of case histories, focused webinars and demonstrations of working systems that apply the latest capabilities to actual production challenges.

FROM THE BLOG:

SMART FACTORY TECHNOLOGY WILL CHANGE THE CHANGEOVER

Whether it's a machine tool switching from producing one part to another, or a high-speed bottling machine switching from 12-ounce bottles to half-liter bottles, "the changeover" is a necessary step in virtually every manufacturing process. It's also a cost – because when changing from one product run to another, nothing is produced; and in highly automated manufacturing operations, that's a cost that businesses constantly seek to minimize.

Smart factory technology will make the changeover more streamlined and flexible. Smart B2B marketers in the automation and controls industry will seek out ways to highlight how their "smart-factory-ready" technology can help make this change happen.

Read the full blog post »



BRIAN MOORE
SENIOR COPYWRITER, GODFREY

04. HOW ENGINEERS MAKE A PURCHASE

SUPPORTING AND ENERGIZING THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

It's probably time for a quick recap: We have identified the audience and what they care about before making a purchase. But how exactly do they go about making that purchase? How do engineers buy?

THEY MOVE IN PACKS

We've discussed that B2B purchasing has increasingly become a team sport, with lots of different players joining in at various stages of the process. For example, an OEM purchase of a new component or technology may involve representatives from purchasing, sales, product management, operations and even marketing. If it involves a significant capital investment, approval by senior management or ownership may be needed.

THEY'RE DOING MORE RESEARCH THAN EVER BEFORE

Making the process more challenging, the B2B buying journey is more self-directed. Long gone are the days when a sales rep controlled the process and fed customers the information he or she thought they needed, when they needed it. Buyers want to conduct their own initial research, often before sales and marketing even know they are interested.

In fact, research from the **CEB Customer Purchase Research Survey** indicates that the average B2B buyer is 57 percent of the way through their decision-making process before engaging a supplier sales rep.

CASE STUDY:

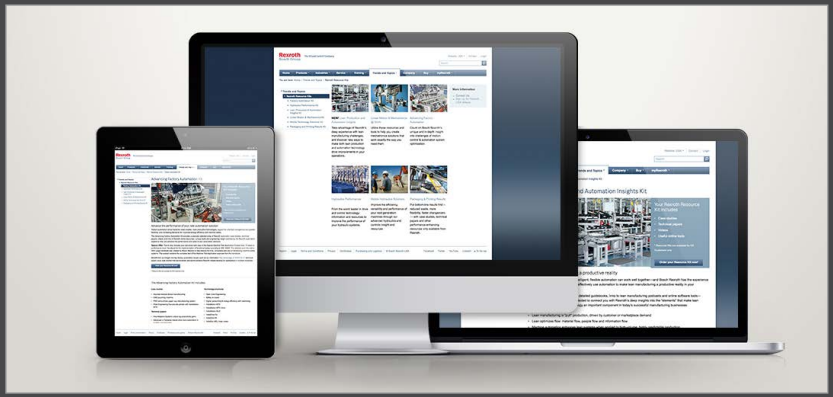
TURNING EXISTING CONTENT INTO THOUSANDS OF LEADS

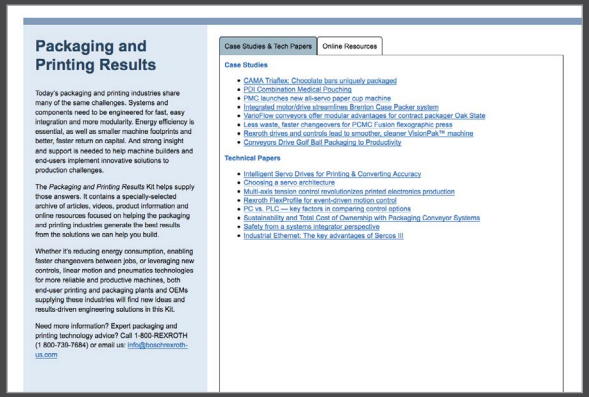
Bosch Rexroth wanted to generate leads by connecting with their buyers' research process. But they needed to do it without overextending their marketing investment. It was a good thing, in this case, that they had already accrued a substantial library of knowledge assets. So we built a strategy for Bosch Rexroth to organize and repackage all of this content as a powerful lead generation tool.

Godfrey helped create customer resource kits that each focused on an industry topic (factory automation, hydraulics performance, etc.). Any requested kit would arrive at the customer's or prospect's address with a USB stick that brought them "knowledge assets" through a web-based interface.

Read the full case study »





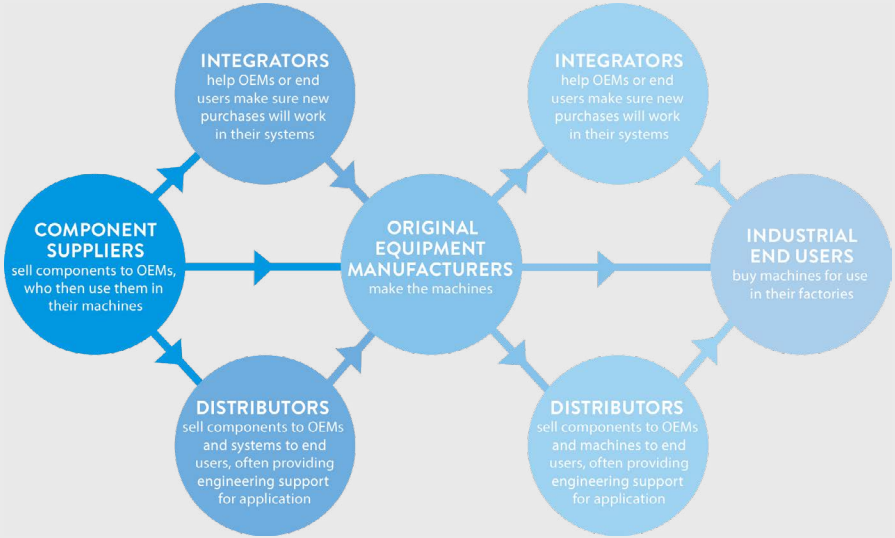


THE JOURNEY IS LONG AND UNPREDICTABLE

In the "considered purchase" environment of B2B, the buying process can take longer – up to two years in some cases. All of these players have their own information needs and learning styles. So the process has become more complicated than ever. But maybe the big picture will make things a bit more manageable.

THE PLAYERS

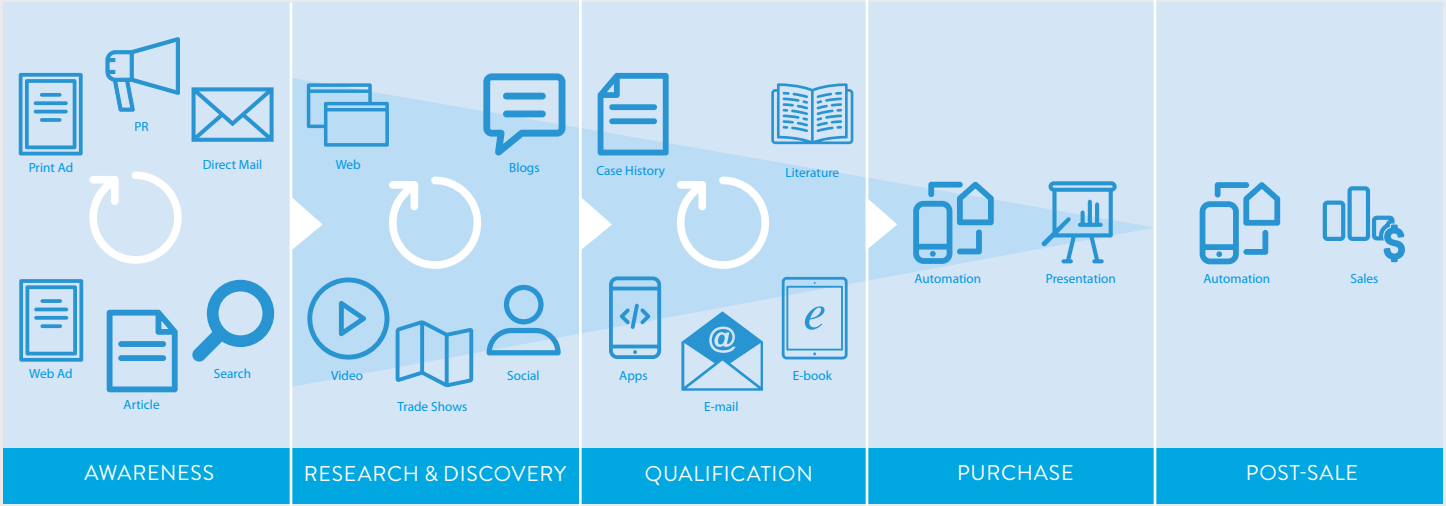
This chart shows the key players in the buying process at the institutional level. On the individual level, each of these "players" may contain multiple players of their own – like the sales, product management and manufacturing professionals that make up the OEM team.



THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY AT A GLANCE

THE PATH

The typical customer journey is rarely a straight line. Instead you must help customers navigate a winding path as our buyers bounce back and forth throughout the process.



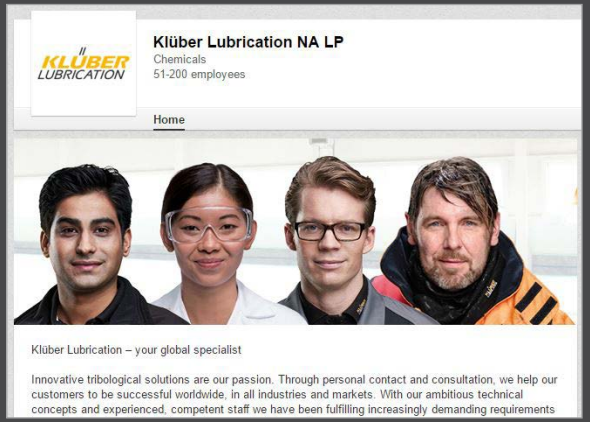
CASE STUDY:

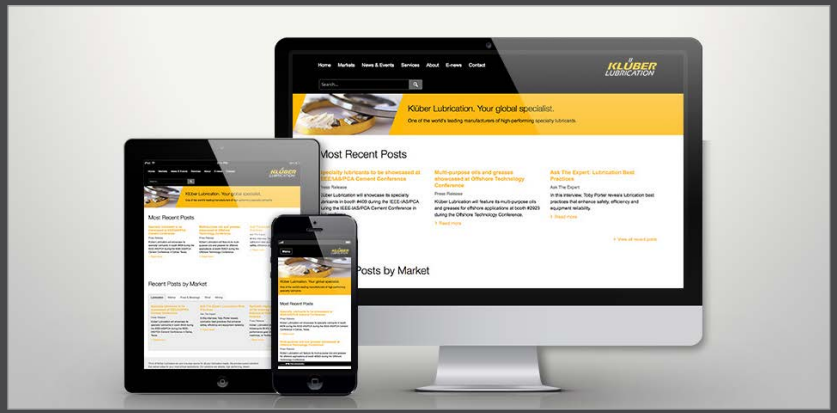
KEEPING UP WITH THE NEW BUYER'S CONTENT DEMAND

Today's buyer completes more than half of the purchasing process through self-guided research. This makes informative, helpful content more important than ever. For Kluber Lubrication, this coincided with a strategic shift from brand awareness to thought-leadership. So Godfrey built a comprehensive content strategy to engage each market and audience with relevant content.

First we interviewed their market managers, reviewed their top five competitors, developed a messaging strategy and defined each of their key market personas. All of that insight made it possible to build content marketing plans that mapped back to each market and provided content that was relevant at the right stage of the buying journey.

Read the full case study »







HOW THE JOURNEY PLAYS OUT

For an OEM, the process may start as a marketing challenge. Let's say, for instance, a design engineer is envisioning a new generation of plastics machines. And he or she is hearing all the talk about smart factories and Industry 4.0 (I4.0) and the IIoT. The sales team says the competition is coming out with a connected "Smart Plastics Machine" that allows remote diagnostics, and he or she is charged with meeting that challenge.

So, in **the awareness phase**, the design engineers will do searches on I4.0, IIoT and the like. They will probably start with articles from broad design engineering publications like *Machine Design*, where they may see some ads. In **the research and discovery phase**, they may visit some industry forums where they can see how other engineers are tackling these problems. They may visit the websites of a few likely suppliers, perhaps downloading a video or white paper. Or look them up at a trade show.

In **the qualification phase**, they may look at a case history, or download printed literature or e-books, deepening their knowledge and beginning to sketch out the outlines of a solution. As they get closer to a solution, they may access suppliers' CAD files to experiment with how different solutions fit an existing machine footprint. And when they finally get to **the purchase phase**, only then will they be entertaining sales reps' presentations and checking out their finalists on social media.

THE MARKETER HAS A ROLE

So that's the way things happen. Except that they happen differently for every buyer. Marketers must be thinking constantly about the buyer's journey, considering all the possible places that prospects and customers may go for answers and developing the materials they need to advance through the process.

05. WHAT YOU CAN DO TO REACH AN ENGINEER

LEVERAGING THE MOST EFFECTIVE MARKETING TACTICS

In today's varied landscape of marketing tactics, which ones are best positioned to communicate your message? And which channels will be the most effective at reaching your audience where they are? These are not easy questions. But you can put existing research and experience to work to help ensure your plan is based on the needs and interests of your audience.

A reasonable approach to developing an effective tactical plan is to consider three main factors: your marketing goals, how your audience engages with content and where they go for information – especially as you consider the demographic of older vs. younger engineers.

KNOW YOUR OWN GOALS

For example, do your company goals suggest a strategy to establish thought leadership? Or are you trying to build awareness around a major product launch? With your goal in mind, look at your messaging strategy and determine what you are trying to communicate – or what questions you are trying to answer for your audience – and align the tactics to those messages.

Thought leadership, for example, can be cultivated during the awareness or discovery phase of the buying process, and most valuable tactics here would be white papers, articles, case studies or e-books. For a **product launch**, where the audience is looking to understand features and benefits and qualify the purchase, your focus could be on product information, reviews, webinars, product demos and how-to videos.

CASE STUDY:

CREATING BUZZ WITH TECHNICAL VIDEO CONTENT

BEUMER sought to leverage the successful results attributed to its Cross-Belt Sortation System, which was installed at the Chico's FAS DC-2 distribution center. So we developed a case study and scripted and directed a seven-minute video to effectively tell the story.

Both pieces demonstrate how the BEUMER solution seamlessly integrates retail replenishment and direct-to-consumer order fulfillment in one facility. The seven-minute video, which captures on-site interviews and picking, sorting and packing operations at the facility, supports BEUMER's media relations efforts as it showcases the BEUMER best-in-breed sortation solution and speaks directly to the materials handling and logistics audience.

Read the full case study »







THE CONTENT THAT ENGINEERS LIKE THE MOST



THEIR FAVORITE CONTENT TYPES

- Product specs or reviews
- Case studies
- White papers
- Trade publication articles
- Application notes
- Webinars
- How-to videos and demos
- E-books

KNOW THEIR HABITS

This is when you can't take anything for granted. For example, let's focus on the senior design engineer and the staff engineer (i.e. experienced vs. young). It's easy to assume the older engineers will prefer traditional channels while the younger engineers would tend to skew digital. But the difference isn't as great you might think. **A recent study** found only minor variations (less than 5% in most cases) in social sharing among these groups.

That same study found that engineers under 40 were slightly more likely to use videos, podcasts and webinars, and slightly less like to download a PDF, read trade publication articles or view survey or industry-trend reports. Younger engineers were also 10 percent more likely than their older counterparts to view email, news articles and e-newsletters on a mobile device (36 percent vs. 26 percent). Younger engineers are connected all the time, and will conduct their research away from their desk.

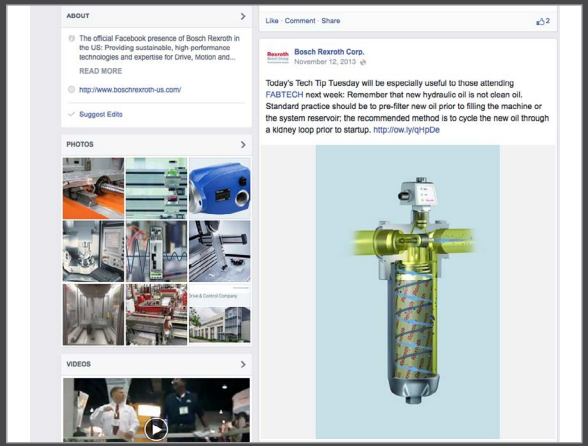
CASE STUDY:

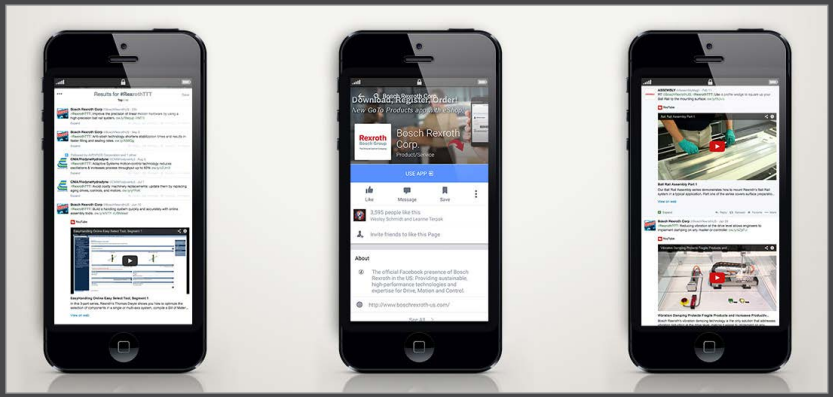
MAKING SOCIAL MEDIA RELEVANT AND HELPFUL

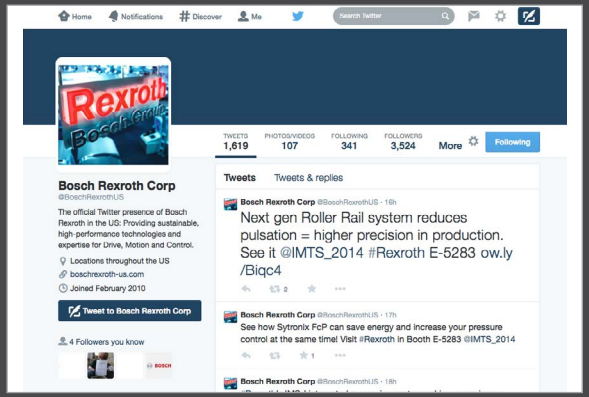
Bosch Rexroth wanted to leverage its online audience and further engage them through social media efforts. The company wanted to provide more valuable content that would engage customers and keep them interested. We suggested sharing regular advice to benefit the audience in their day-to-day jobs.

This idea turned into Tech Tip Tuesday, a simple and cost-effective way to share useful information with customers. The weekly tips, posted to Facebook and Twitter, are based on preexisting technical papers and therefore don't require significant time or monetary investments. While the posts can exist on their own, they encourage individuals to read the full technical papers.

Read the full case study »







FIND THEIR CHANNELS

Once you have determined your message and created the appropriate content pieces, you need to determine what channels to use to get your message in the right hands. The options are seemingly endless. First, use the techniques we've discussed to learn where your audience goes for information. Second, approach planning with flexibility and agility. Be willing to try something and then monitor results. If it's not working, move on to the next option. If it is working, think of how to expand your presence there.

You can reach your existing audience by leveraging your existing platforms – your website, social media, e-newsletters, etc. But to find a new audience, you'll have to deploy your content wherever their journey takes them. Typically, engineers prefer supplier websites, search engines, trade publications, printed and online catalogs, e-newsletters and sales reps.

START YOUR PLAN

There's a lot to consider. Here are a few of the ways that you can get started:

- **Run a few keyword searches.** If you turn off Google's personalized results, this will give a clear picture of how your competitors are ranking. Your analytics and webmaster tool reports will show exactly how you are performing on important keywords. If your search performance is low, you should consider an organic search engine optimization program. And if you're launching a critical campaign, a paid search program is the quickest way to ensure that your site gets listed.
- **Find the right channels and partners** for your audience. Horizontal publications like *Design News* and *Machine Design* are still valuable, but today's options reach further than ever. You can leverage with ad networks to serve targeted banner ads or trade associations to build custom content programs. A paid and editorial relationship with targeted channels can achieve impressive results for awareness and credibility.
- **Identify social media platforms** that your engineer audience frequents. Though under-40 engineers are more likely to use Facebook than their older colleagues, the totals are still low. LinkedIn may be more appropriate, with many targeted groups for engineers across many disciplines. And though Instagram does not lead in user volume, **a recent study** found it more engaging for engineers than any other platform.
- **Listen to and engage in your audience's conversations.** Challenge your sales force to ask their customers about their preferred social networks, forums or blogs. Have your internal teams find opportunities to engage on behalf of your company. This can be as easy as posting your branded content on social media or as involved as joining online discussions on sites like **eng-tips.com** or **edaboard.com**.

MAP YOUR TACTICS TO THE JOURNEY

Creating a marketing mix that combines compelling messaging, engaging tactics and appropriate channels is a challenge that many automation and control marketers face. But it gets easier when you think about your tactics in terms of the customer journey. So based on what we know about the OEM design engineer and the end user staff engineer, let's look at two examples of how your tactics could line up.

FROM THE BLOG:

LESSEN B2B BUYER RISK BY PROVIDING THE RIGHT CONTENT

Think about it – B2B buyers are responsible to purchase large ticket items and sometimes make multi-million dollar purchases. They are people like the director of IT, who is recommending his company implement a new ERP system, or the facilities manager who is recommending a new HVAC system for a commercial building complex. For most B2B buyers, the risks and implications are very prevalent. If they make a mistake, both their career and company could be in jeopardy. Perhaps that is a bit extreme, but in certain cases, it's a harsh reality. B2B buyers want to make the right choice for their company. As B2B marketers, it's important to understand the B2B buyer, their motivations and their journey.

Read the full blog post »

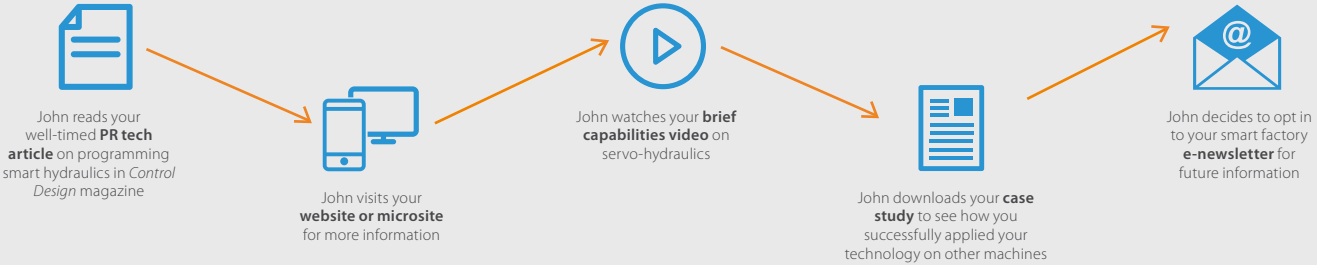


ERIN MICHALAK
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND
DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNT SERVICE,
GODFREY

MAPPING YOUR TACTICS

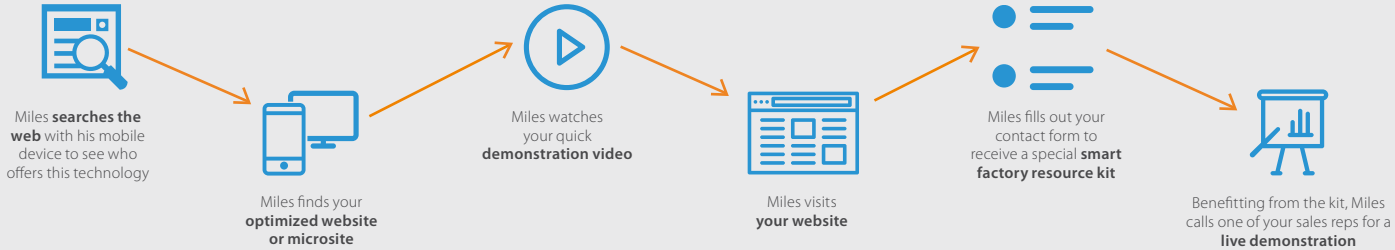
THE MACHINE-BUILDING OEM

Senior design engineer "John" works for an extruder OEM and is in the awareness buying stage. He wants to know **how hydraulics can fit into the smart factory** concept.



THE END USER

Miles is a staff engineer at a Tier 1 automotive manufacturer. He is in the discovery process seeking **RFID technology for a smart assembly line** that will reduce errors and speed product changeovers.



CONCLUSION

Connecting with today's automation and controls audiences can be daunting and complex. Broader and less-defined sales funnels, rapidly evolving technology trends, changing demographics among engineers and myriad of new digital marketing tactics – all these factors make the job of B2B marketers more challenging than ever.

But here's the key to reaching this challenging audience: **Invest in strong content that responds to the engineer's most pressing needs**. To do this, it's important to maintain an up-to-date understanding of the automation and controls audience. Stay on top of their interests and concerns. Establish and sustain real conversations about how you can help them solve their latest challenges, particularly those associated with the rapid, ongoing introduction of smart factory technologies and production systems.

Good marketing today works like a conversation. And a meaningful conversation can only happen when you really understand the other person. So if you focus on what matters to these engineers and map your tactics to their journey, you're sure to make the right connection.

GODFREY

Godfrey is more than a global B2B marketing agency. We're an engine – one that drives industry knowledge, audience insight and strategic creativity through a broad landscape of marketing tactics. Godfrey has the industry knowledge and hands-on experience to help you create and sustain productive conversations with the automation and controls audience.

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