

INTEGRATING LEAD NURTURING & LEAD GENERATION

How B2B Businesses Can Maximise the Effectiveness of their Lead Generation & Increase Lead Quality

INTRODUCTION TO LEAD NURTURING AND LEAD GENERATION

Although many B2B businesses recognise that they should run a lead nurturing program, the reality is that many businesses still haven't adopted lead nurturing in the way they should.

This is particularly so in the SME market, where lead generation is naturally a high priority. Why? Perhaps there is a mistaken belief that investing in lead nurturing will negatively affect sales; because budget that would have been invested in lead generation is invested in lead nurturing instead.

But this misses the point - lead nurturing will make lead generation more effective.

Just as importantly, leads that have been nurtured over a sustained period of time are far more likely to convert to customers than leads that haven't. So

"70% of sales are closed by businesses where the Buyer was already aware of the supplier **BEFORE** the sales process begun.



MARKETING AUTOMATION, CONTENT AND TELEMARKETING – COVERING ALL THE BASES

Marketing automation and content marketing can be highly effective in nurturing leads, and over time, generating inbound enquiries.

While telemarketing is an effective channel for B2B business development and lead generation.

Yet, to boost the potential ROI across your sales, marketing and lead generation activity, it's important to acknowledge that marketing automation alone is often not the answer, just as content marketing or telemarketing alone is not the answer.

Integrating the three techniques together however, can ensure you achieve the ROI you desire.

THIS GUIDE GIVES AN INSIDER'S VIEW INTO:

- Content & Marketing Automation's Role in Lead Nurturing
- Marketing Automation Explained
- The Benefits Marketing Automation Can Deliver
- Key Ingredients to Make Lead Nurturing a Success
- How Marketing Automation, Content and Telemarketing Complement Each Other



CONTENT AND MARKETING AUTOMATION'S ROLE IN LEAD NURTURING

Over recent years there have been changes in the way that B2B buyers find and evaluate new suppliers.

A major part of this change is that Buyers want to conduct more research into potential suppliers before making an enquiry and therefore engaging with the supplier's Sales team.

Giving away insider knowledge – in effect some of your intellectual capital – demonstrates knowledge and helps build trust.

Many B2B businesses have recognised this change and started to develop content such as how-to guides, white papers, and blogs that enable Buyers to satisfy their desire for information.

Particularly in B2B markets, buyers are cautious and sales cycles can extend over many months or even years.

However, developing relevant content is only one part of the solution. The goal is to create awareness of your business in the first place, encourage your audience to engage with your content and then to convert interested prospects into leads.

This is precisely what marketing automation is designed to do; to deliver personalised, relevant marketing communications to prospects to nurture them until they become ready to engage with sales.





MARKETING AUTOMATION EXPLAINED

Marketing automation technology is far more sophisticated than email marketing where links or opens are tracked.

The software tracks prospects' behaviour and interactions with your marketing communications, website and content.
The automated element is where personalised messages are sent that are triggered automatically based upon the interactions of each individual, not just a group or list.

Personalised communication in itself is nothing new, yet the clever parts of marketing automation software are. These include:

- The depth of tracking for each individual; not just via email marketing but across their entire interaction with your content, website (including direct search visits) visits, social and PPC.

- The ability to set an almost infinite number of rules for different types of interaction or engagement. Relevant follow-up communications are sent to each individual, based upon their own unique activity, not just lists, subsets or a pre-set schedule.

What marketing automation has done is enable marketers to gain much greater insight into how prospects engage and react to their marketing communications.

This in turn triggers a relevant, highly personalised follow up in a timely manner, be that by email, direct mail, telemarketing, or assigning the prospect to a salesperson.

THE BENEFITS MARKETING AUTOMATION CAN DELIVER

When used intelligently, and coupled with good data and well written content, marketing automation technology will be at the heart of your lead nurturing, and bring a number of benefits:

1 IMPROVED LEAD QUALITY

Creating and maintaining awareness helps establish your credibility. Over time, as the prospect engages with your content (articles, white papers, guides, testimonials, case studies) they will qualify you as a good fit as a potential supplier.

The advantages of improved lead quality are:

- ✔ Sales will convert more leads into customers
- ✔ Usually, the sales cycle will be shorter

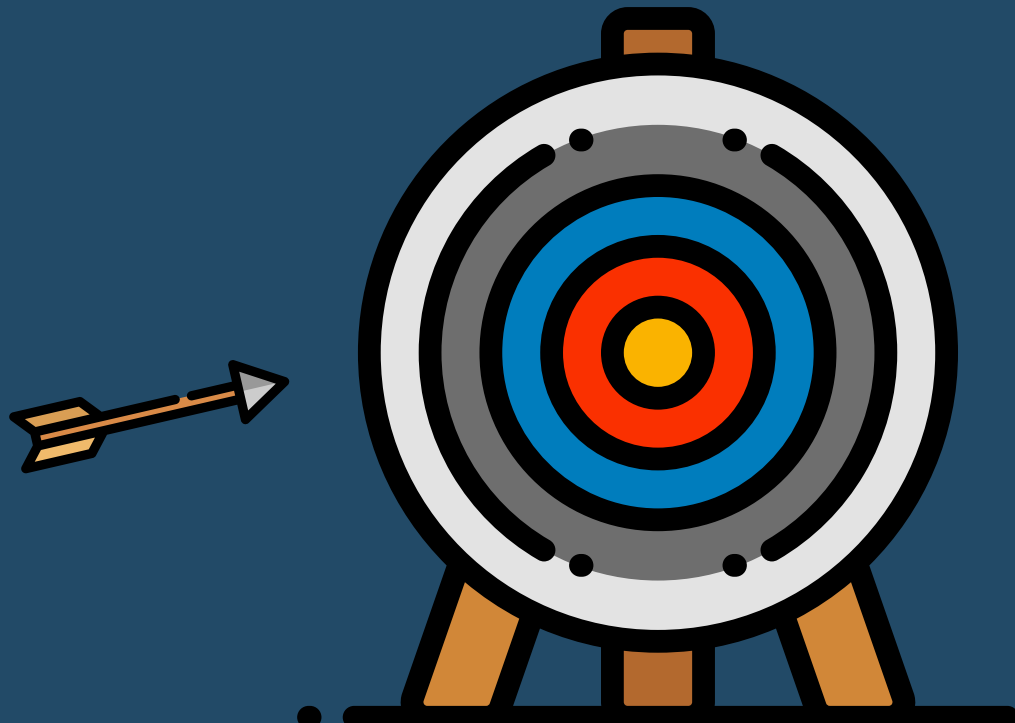
2 GENERATING INBOUND ENQUIRIES

Prospects will contact you when they are at the right stage of the purchase cycle. Isn't this what every marketer or business owner wants? Qualified prospects contacting you!

If you carefully build the prospect data in your marketing automation program, the inbound leads you generate will also be from the very businesses you want as customers.

3 IMPROVED TARGETING FOR OUTBOUND

Outbound marketing – direct mail or telemarketing for example – will be more effective when targeting prospects are warm. For example, targeting prospects that are engaged with your content (which can be identified through marketing automation) but have not made an inbound enquiry, will increase the results from outbound marketing.



KEY INGREDIENTS TO MAKE MARKETING AUTOMATION A SUCCESS

The first thing to recognise is that marketing automation is technology and not a strategy in itself. The software is very powerful and loaded with useful features, but getting the most out of the technology isn't easy and takes far more than just mastering the software itself.

To run a successful marketing automation program that generates inbound leads and improves lead quality, you will need:

1) LEAD AND DATA

For the majority of B2B businesses, one of the most powerful and valuable assets you can own is a database of key buyers and their contact details at the companies you would like as customers.

As every marketer knows, it's very difficult to buy contact-level data, with email addresses, for the businesses you'd like to target. However, it's pretty linear as the more, good quality data you feed into lead nurturing, the better your return on investment.

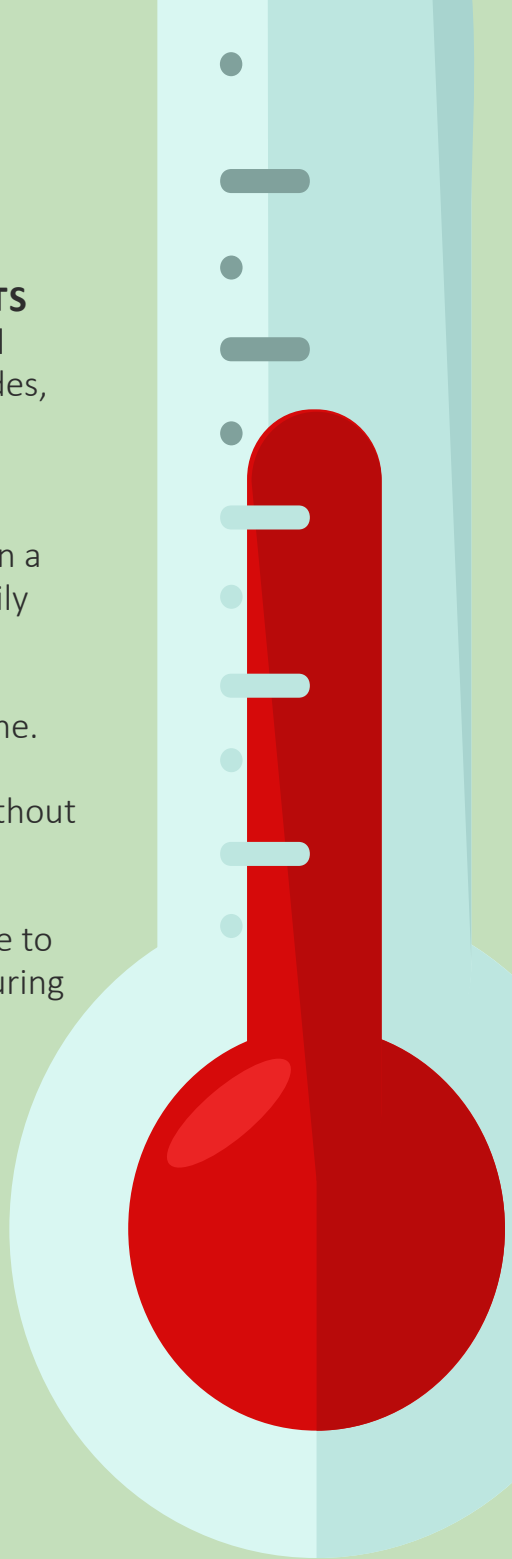
2) CONTENT AND MARKETING ASSETS

For most B2B businesses, content will probably include articles, how-to guides, white papers, articles, infographics, explainer videos and case studies.

These need to be well designed and in a format that is conducive to being easily digested.

You do not need everything on day one. Equally, there is no point investing in marketing automation technology without some of the content being ready.

Additionally, you will need to continue to add to this content as your lead nurturing program runs and develops.



KEY INGREDIENTS TO MAKE MARKETING AUTOMATION A SUCCESS (cont)

3) A GOOD WEBSITE

Your website is your shop front, so needs to present visitors with the right impression. It should include a knowledge base or insights section, where prospects can easily access your content.

4) A WAY TO CONVERT ENGAGED PROSPECTS INTO LEADS

Good content, delivered to relevant prospects via marketing automation will generate awareness, engagement and interest in your business. But not everybody that is interested will make an enquiry to you, as it's a competitive world.

Most marketer and Business Owners will ultimately measure the success of lead nurturing by the quantity and quality of leads over a period of time. Telemarketing can be used tactically to focus in on prospects that are engaged but haven't made an enquiry; which will boost leads and ROI.

5) AN ARRAY OF MARKETING SKILLS

As well as getting to grips with marketing automation technology, you will need to have skills that span a range of disciplines including strategy, content, performance analysis and design.

6) EXPERIENCE

Marketing automation is relatively new and although utilisation is growing, there is a limited pool of expertise to tap into.

Getting it right first time is not easy. There is no substitute for experience. So be prepared to test, measure, learn and refine. Alternatively, consider getting expert help if you want to shorten the time before your marketing automation program delivers, by complementing the skills you have with those you do not.



How Marketing Automation and Telemarketing Complement Each Other

One of the questions often raised when running a lead nurturing program is **`I can see that lots of prospects appear to be engaged, so how do I convert this interest into leads?'**

Telemarketing can be used to drive the performance of lead nurturing and do what telemarketing has done for years – generate high quality leads. By targeting prospects that are engaging with your content (which is tracked through marketing automation), decision maker contact rates and lead generation results can be incredibly high.

Another benefit of integrating telemarketing with marketing automation is that one of the ingredients for successful marketing automation is that data and early stage leads need to be continually added into the lead nurturing program.

One of the attributes of telemarketing is its ability to build accurate data; identifying and capturing the email address of key contacts, and account profiling for a wide range of factors, such as competitor information, where they are in the buying cycle, and what their requirements are.

Professionally managed telemarketing can be an invaluable source of data and market intelligence that can be fed into your marketing automation and lead nurturing program.

The benefit of integrating marketing automation with telemarketing is that once the lead nurturing program has been running for a while, you can generate the same number of leads that are of a better quality, without needing to complete nearly as much telemarketing.

The conclusion is that telemarketing is far more effective when teamed with other techniques such as marketing automation and content; just as marketing automation is more effective when teamed with telemarketing.



SUMMARY

1. Most B2B businesses want to increase the number of inbound leads they generate; lead nurturing and content marketing achieve this.

2. Leads that have been nurtured over an extended period-of-time have a far greater close-ratio than those that haven't.

3. Many larger B2B businesses have already implemented content marketing and marketing automation, with a growing number of SMEs following suit.

4. Successful marketing automation requires investment, a wide range of skills, content and good quality data on an ongoing basis.

5. Telemarketing is a good fit with marketing automation, as it generates high quality data and can be used effectively to convert warm prospects into well-qualified leads.



ABOUT BEANSTALK

Beanstalk is a B2B Marketing Agency that specialises in Lead Generation.

We help our customers win new business through integrated lead generation, lead nurturing and B2B marketing campaigns.

Investors in People accredited, our expertise includes telemarketing, data, content writing, design, strategy, email and marketing automation.

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