



What's a
great idea
worth?

Learn how
to find out.
Exactly.

ART MEET
SCIENCE



Marketing is at a big, positive inflection point; a confluence between the importance of creativity and the role technology has in monitoring its effectiveness.

On one hand, it's never been more important to develop strong ideas and creative. A 2019 study carried out by LinkedIn and Edelman found that a majority of B2B purchase decision makers use thought leadership content to help assess the suitability of potential suppliers – the challenge is to deliver content that can cut through the growing noise.

On the other, it's never been easier for businesses of any size or type to confidently monitor and measure this activity against commercial performance. MarTech tools to plan, deliver and measure activity that were once the domain of the pricier end of marketing automation software are now much more accessible.

The upshot is that with the right creative skills and technical nous you can clearly link great content with lead generation and understand the impact it has on revenue.

Human-centred

Your marketing content – blogs, media articles, videos etc – is having a direct impact on how likely people are to buy from you. Further, if you're not currently producing that type of content then you are conspicuous by your absence and, crucially, letting your competitors talk for you. So it makes sense to start by ensuring content is shaped around creating the right emotional and human interactions.



CONTENT

Firstly, your strategy – in terms of the messages that will have most impact and where/how on the customer journey these should be communicated – is paramount. Investment at this stage in human-centred discovery work that surfaces both messaging that resonates with customers, and explores where across their work they are most receptive to learning about your brand, is critical in making sure your subsequent actions are grounded in good rationale.

This work would typically lead you to producing a messaging matrix – telling you what to communicate to who – and a customer journey mapped out with key touch points where marketing activity should be focussed. From here, a tactical plan for what content is being promoted and when will need to be produced.

Before your content is out in the wild, you'll need to build a method of tracking its success from initial clicks and views through to the volume of sales enquiries it has helped to produce. This is really where customer journey planning comes into its own – thinking about the desired next steps a lead should take when they consume the content, for example encouraging click through from a new product video to a relevant landing page and contacting the sales team.

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TRACKING

Some journeys are necessarily more complicated than this, and using a tool such as Google Datastudio to build a concise dashboard capable of serving the data in a useful format is often a smart step.

Building the ecosystem

This focus on tracking should progress into thinking about what platforms these next steps will be built on, and therefore what continuity of tracking is needed to get somebody from, say a LinkedIn video ad, through to becoming a lead on your CRM system.

Tracking each step in the process is important to understand where the strong and weak links in your chain are – for example, monitoring several LinkedIn ads running in parallel to understand which performs the strongest would include the CTR, the behaviour of those visitors (time on page, activity heatspots etc) on the landing page you send them to, and the volume of those visitors who then enter their details in the contact form to make an enquiry.



CUSTOMERS

What is a lead, anyway?

In order to best establish what good performance looks like, you'll need to set a definition for a marketing qualified lead (MQL) – in fundamental terms, that's someone who the business is happy to class as a potential customer, but hasn't yet been accepted as a lead by the sales team.

The criteria applied against a MQL varies depending on specific business requirements. The most basic criteria would be to simply count all valid sales enquiries generated through marketing activity, and this can be a great way to ensure that marketing works hand in glove with the wider commercial organisation. But this simple definition doesn't take into account the often complex and lengthy processes customers go through before making an enquiry.

An alternative is to look at suitable intention-based behaviour that indicates a serious interest in purchasing from you. For example, repeat visits to a specific web page, viewing multiple case studies or submitting contact details to access a brochure could all be used to help measure how many serious prospects you have early in the purchase process.

A 2016 Divante report, for example, found that 74% of B2B buyers made at least half of their work purchases online, and nearly 75% said that purchasing from an e-commerce website is more convenient than buying from a sales rep (Karwatka, 2016).



METRICS

Close the loop

Once you have metrics that are right for your business, benchmarks can be set in order to clearly monitor what's working. Ratios can be set which form a guideline for the volume of activity you need to achieve – for example, over time you'll get to know that you typically need x number of key actions such as brochure downloads to produce a MQL, what % of these turn into an SQL and subsequently what % of SQLs become customers.

This gives you the data to review, revise and reiterate activity to optimise what works best for your customers. Critically, this closer alignment with customer behaviour is valuable feedback for the creative process in developing new activity that has maximum impact. It allows you to close the loop on a content to sales ecosystem that will yield great results across the customer journey, and generate the information needed for detailed appraisal and improvements.

Here at Lesniak Swann, we help businesses from a range of industries to develop productive, commercially-focussed marketing strategy and activity.

If you'd like to talk further on how we could help your organisation, you can [reach us here](#).