



3 Key Steps to B2B Marketing Optimization

Getting More from
your Marketing Efforts

whitepaper

MaaS Impact Success Series

Three Key Steps to Optimization

Get More NOW:

- » Pre-Click
- » Post-Click
- » Post Conversion
- » Optimization

Relevancy is King:

- » Find where your customers are
- » Tailor your Message
- » Tailor your Content
- » Don't forget the Auto-Responder

Three Key Steps to B2B Marketing Optimization

In marketing, small changes can mean big differences to the success of marketing programs and to the revenue generated by an organization. Typically programs are put into place and considered successful if they meet planned goals. But these results don't take into consideration what more could have been gained if the campaign was optimized to reach its full potential.

In order to get the most out of marketing efforts, they must be continuously optimized. But where should these optimizations begin? B2B companies should be looking at optimizing their campaigns in three distinct categories: pre-click, post-click, and post-optimization. By breaking down campaigns into these three critical areas and focusing on optimizations in each, it becomes easier to see the potential of marketing. Pre-click marketing is everything that happens prior to someone clicking on a company website. It's the area of marketing that focuses on driving a prospect to an organization's website and can be just as important as the website itself, since without pre-click optimizations the website may never be seen.

Post-click marketing is everything that happens once someone clicks on an organization's website, but before they are a known lead. This includes the site itself, but also all landing pages that work to drive conversions for a company. Since prospects are often driven to sites from search queries or links in social media, it's important for this click onto a website to quickly work to show value and then capture the contact's information, creating a conversion.

Post-conversion marketing includes all activities and communications from marketing after a prospect shares their information and before they become a customer. This includes email marketing, lead nurturing and lead scoring, all of which are critical for B2B companies to get the most of their effort of pre-and post-click marketing.

This paper is a combination of thoughts from three experts in B2B optimization: Lee Odden, President of TopRank® Marketing, Anna Talerico, Executive Vice President from Ion Interactive, and Maria Pergolino, who oversees Inbound Marketing at Marketo the technology partner for MaaS Impact. These well-recognized marketing experts discuss best practices to get marketing efforts to produce the highest results possible.



Pre-Click Optimization from TopRank® Online Marketing

Optimizing SEO and SEM to ensure the best prospects are finding your content.

Before leads can be nurtured and converted to sales, B2B prospects must first discover the content that will engage and motivate them to enter the sales funnel.

Consider that more than 85% of businesses use search during the purchasing process, according to digital marketing intelligence firm, comScore. Search marketing tactics ensure web pages and online content have the highest potential to appear in the top rankings of major search engines where prospects are looking. An increasing number of marketers have realized the power of search marketing to increase awareness and sales to improve the bottom line. According to a 2009 Search Engine Marketing Professional Organization (SEMPO) study, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) was ranked the second most effective Internet marketing tactic for generating Return on Investment (ROI).

Search marketing may soon take the top spot. According to eMarketer, by 2013 total U.S. search marketing will reach nearly \$23.4 billion, surpassing contextual advertising. This trend makes sense as marketers are becoming cognizant that search traffic is the most qualified traffic due to intent. With organic search traffic capable of increasing month over month, search marketing delivers increasing marketing ROI. While many B2B marketers have already engaged in SEO and Pay-Per-Click (PPC) advertising to some degree, search marketing is not a one-time task. It is critical that a marketing strategy emphasizing search be formulated to keep search visibility high and constantly refined in order to improve website traffic.

Developing a B2B Search Marketing Strategy

When deploying a B2B search marketing strategy, it is vital to understand that SEO is not a one-size-fits-all solution. The most effective strategies are holistic and ongoing—combining a unique mix of techniques based on specific business objectives.

Some tactics may be extremely successful for certain B2B organizations and less than ideal for others. For example, a B2B company might decide to roll out a blog on its website in an effort to increase inbound links and create additional optimized content. But if the company doesn't have the resources available to update the blog on a regular basis or participate in the conversations that occur, the tactic won't be as effective.

B2B marketers should formulate their own mix of search marketing tactics based on:

- » Organization and marketing objectives
- » Customer preferences (keywords)
- » Available resources: people, content, digital assets
- » Planned digital marketing and content creation

Additionally, it is necessary to re-evaluate search marketing performance on an ongoing basis to determine if chosen techniques are performing.

Keyword Research

Successful search marketing centers on understanding the right mix of keywords used by buying customers. The first step in a successful search marketing program is to conduct keyword research. Determining the words and phrases a target audience uses when searching for your products or services will provide the guidance for optimizing content, as well as link building efforts.



It's important to identify the types of keywords that are appropriate for specific customer personas or audiences—i.e., new customers, repeat customers, media, investors. Initial keyword research sources can include: a review of existing site content, review of competitor content, brainstorming, customer survey, review of current site analytics, and keyword research/analysis tools.

When conducting keyword research, consider three elements:

Keyword Popularity – Keywords highest in demand that are also most relevant present a significant opportunity for qualified search traffic. Marketers may have an indication of the terms customers use to search. But oftentimes, keyword research reveals a slight derivative of that keyword phrase is more popular. Marketers may even discover entirely new phrases not yet considered.

Keyword Competitiveness – Optimizing according to a single dimension, such as popularity, is not always the best strategy due to competition and resources necessary. Quicker results, and oftentimes a greater ROI, can usually be realized by targeting a matrix of popular phrases along with more specific, long-tail terms or attributes.

Keyword Relevancy – In addition to fitting within popularity and competitiveness parameters, a keyword must be relevant to content available on the web site. If a target phrase cannot be used or optimized organically on the web site, that phrase may be more useful as part of a Pay-Per-Click campaign.

In order to emphasize effectiveness, it's important to re-assess target keywords on an ongoing basis—with slight revisions according to identified trends and a complete audit every 6–12 months. Managing keyword emphasis for organic content optimization is handled on a long-term basis, while Pay-Per-Click keyword management can be handled dynamically using bid management tools.

Content Optimization

Leveraging keyword research and optimizing online content and digital assets, such as images and video, is key to gaining high rankings in the search engines.

The results of content optimization can be significant. TopRank® Online Marketing was able to achieve top 10 search rankings on Google for more than 60 competitive keywords through the use of in-depth keyword research and on-page optimization for an online fabrics retailer. Today, organic referrals from the top search engines account for more than 80% of traffic to the website, resulting in a 214% increase in unique visitors. When optimizing, it's important to remember that it is part art, part science—there are no definitive rules on the ideal amount of optimization. B2B marketers should optimize for customers first and foremost. As part of an effective B2B search marketing strategy, consider incorporating keyword phrases in:

- » Title Tags
- » Meta descriptions (not used for ranking, but displayed in search results)
- » On-page titles
- » Section heading
- » Body text
- » Image alt text
- » Navigation text
- » Hyperlinked text
- » Footer text

Keep in mind that there is a risk in over-optimizing web pages and online copy—i.e., using a keyword too many times. Optimizing for customers first helps gauge how much SEO is —too much||. At minimum, a site

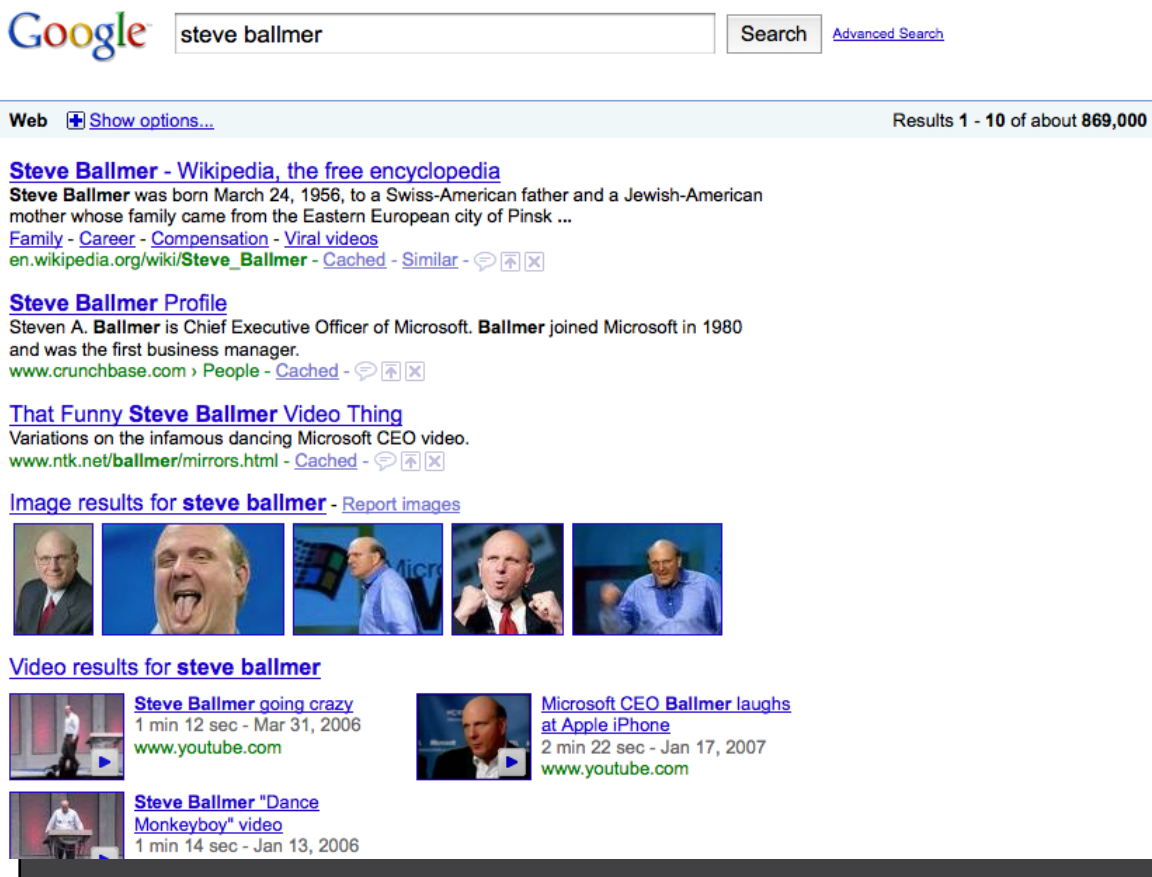


may not rank well. In extreme cases, search engines may penalize a site that attempts to manipulate the engines with keyword stuffing (keywords repeated in a list or hidden in text). Because search engine policies are constantly evolving, it's important to keep up and remain agile.

Keyword focus will assist search engines in understanding the content and relevance of a document and therefore, SEO should emphasize 1–3 keyword phrases per page. More than that will dilute each keyword phrase and diminish the likelihood of a high ranking.

Digital Asset Optimization

Text is not the only element of a website that can be incorporated into a B2B search marketing strategy. Digital assets—including images, audio and content delivery formats like RSS and mobile—can also be optimized to significantly improve an organization's footprint and search visibility on the web. Today, search engines query distinct databases including image, video, blog, news and products, and then incorporate them into standard search results. This is perhaps the most significant change in search engine results pages in the past 10 years. The screenshot below from a Google search query on —Steve Ballmer illustrates how images, video and news results are incorporated into standard search results. The bottom line is, if an asset can be searched, it can be optimized. Identifying all the promotable, digital assets available to a website that may resonate with potential customers gives companies that are not content-rich the additional resources needed to be competitive in today's search environment.



The screenshot shows a Google search for "steve ballmer". The search bar at the top contains the text "steve ballmer" and a "Search" button. Below the search bar, the results are categorized into "Web", "Image results", and "Video results".

Web results:

- Steve Ballmer - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia**
Steve Ballmer was born March 24, 1956, to a Swiss-American father and a Jewish-American mother whose family came from the Eastern European city of Pinsk ...
[Family](#) - [Career](#) - [Compensation](#) - [Viral videos](#)
[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Ballmer](#) - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#) - [Comments](#) - [Share](#) - [Print](#)
- Steve Ballmer Profile**
Steven A. Ballmer is Chief Executive Officer of Microsoft. Ballmer joined Microsoft in 1980 and was the first business manager.
[www.crunchbase.com > People](#) - [Cached](#) - [Comments](#) - [Share](#) - [Print](#)
- That Funny Steve Ballmer Video Thing**
Variations on the infamous dancing Microsoft CEO video.
[www.ntk.net/ballmer/mirrors.html](#) - [Cached](#) - [Comments](#) - [Share](#) - [Print](#)

Image results for steve ballmer - Report images

Five small thumbnail images of Steve Ballmer are shown, including one where he is sticking his tongue out.

Video results for steve ballmer

- Steve Ballmer going crazy**
1 min 12 sec - Mar 31, 2006
[www.youtube.com](#)
- Microsoft CEO Ballmer laughs at Apple iPhone**
2 min 22 sec - Jan 17, 2007
[www.youtube.com](#)
- Steve Ballmer "Dance Monkeyboy" video**
1 min 14 sec - Jan 13, 2006



Link Building

If content and keywords are the Yin, link building is the Yang to effective search engine optimization. Attracting relevant inbound links is a critical component for B2B SEO efforts. Search engines like Google use links between websites as —signals|| when sorting which documents to rank highly in search results.

Strategic link building involves obtaining a high number of relevant inbound links from other trusted websites. Links are signals to the search engines that a web page is popular and has value, which are important considerations when determining the sort order of search results or rankings. As long as a website expects to attract visitors via search engines, there will be a need to acquire links on an ongoing basis.

There are literally hundreds of ways to acquire links, but the most important consideration is to create content worth linking to.

- » Aggregate different, yet useful, resources into one document, for instance, as —Top 10|| lists
- » Publish compelling, remarkable, controversial or ground-breaking articles
- » Syndicate content via RSS and promote it via social media networks and news sites such as Twitter, Reddit, StumbleUpon, Delicious, Digg & LinkedIn.
- » Exchange links with marketing and business partners.
- » Conduct innovative research and publish a series of articles, press releases and whitepapers announcing results.
- » Write guest articles and blog posts for influential publications.
- » Analyze the websites that link to competitor websites and also rank well in search results and solicit them for links as well.

Consider the results of a TopRank® link building campaign for an online game site. Through an inbound link building campaign that included social network participation, submissions to blog and RSS directories and engagement with other online game sites, unique visitors have increased by 4,400%. Forty percent of those visitors come to the site via the search engines and 30% come from social network participation and promotional marketing channels. To date, the site boasts more than 18,800 inbound links.

TopRank® publishes a marketing blog using similar tactics. It has achieved over 750,000 inbound links in the past 4 years, ranking at #2 on Google for —online marketing|| and —digital marketing.||

Social Media Optimization

Companies often implement SEO and social media tactics in a grouped fashion. Deploying SEO best practices with social media content creation and promotion can actually extend social reach via search, as well as complement an existing SEO program.

Core objectives for social media efforts tend to focus on building community. In contrast, company SEO efforts focus mostly on generating leads and sales. The realization is that implementing SEO best practices with social media content creation/promotion can actually extend social reach via search as well as complement an existing SEO program.

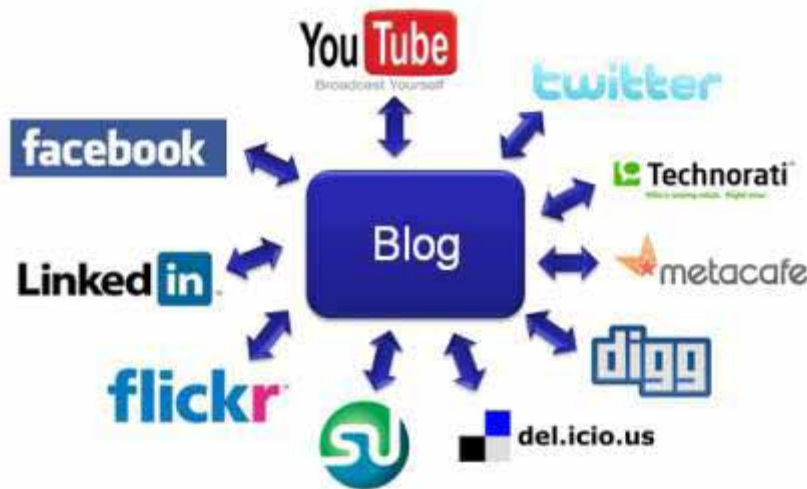
A good example of social popularity turning into good search visibility is Blendtec®. The video where they —blend an iPhone has more than 6 million views, 6,000 inbound links and ranks in the top 10 on Google for the search phrase —blender.



When creating social content as part of a holistic, ongoing B2B search marketing strategy optimize:

- » Titles
- » File names
- » Descriptions
- » Anchor text
- » Annotations, show notes, transcripts

Sharing and attracting links can be one of the most significant SEO benefits from social media. The graphic below illustrates how blog content can be promoted via various social channels to acquire inbound links, and therefore improve search engine visibility:



The key is to create content worthy of getting a link in the first place. Then measure content structures, formats, media types and sites that work best and refine on an ongoing basis.

Pay-Per-Click Optimization

A Pay-Per-Click campaign can be an effective tactic to complement organic search optimization efforts. It's not a matter of choosing PPC over SEO, but rather of determining how the two can work together.

PPC campaigns can allow B2B marketers to react to the content that is displayed in the organic search results. For example, if negative information is presented about a B2B company in organic search results, the company could run a PPC ad in order to tell its side of the story.

As another example, a PPC campaign can allow a B2B marketer to target highly competitive keywords in the short-term where organic rankings have not yet been achieved.

PPC	SEO
On-demand goals	Long-term goals
Reactive goals	Proactive goals



B2B Post-Click Optimization from Ion Interactive

Optimizing websites and landing pages to ensure the best prospects are converting to leads. Say an organization places a text ad in search, a display ad on a website, sponsor an email, etcetera, what they're doing is buying distribution for links to content. Those links need to go somewhere — preferably somewhere good. The better the page a company links to, the more effective their ad spend is and the higher the ROI. Post-click optimization is simply making the pages that are linked to as effective as possible. And this can mean huge increases in conversions of each marketing campaign.

The effectiveness of ads or emails is judged in terms of Click-Through-Rate (CTR). Post-click effectiveness is judged based on conversion rate. Conversion is simply a euphemism for getting people to do what you want them to do. That might mean submitting a form, downloading a document, watching a video, engaging in a social forum or making a purchase. Whatever conversion means to you, it's merely the percentage of people who engage in the specific task laid out for them.

Post-click optimization refers to the creation and testing of campaign-specific, conversion-optimized, landing experiences such as landing pages, micro-sites and conversion paths. The conversion effectiveness of these pages directly impacts your campaign ROI. Better pages mean better results.

The objective of B2B post-click optimization is typically to increase the number of leads generated by a campaign.

Strategic Post-Click Optimization Practices

The most effective post-click optimization programs recognize that effective B2B landing pages operate at both strategic and tactical levels. Strategic best practices help ensure that organizations generate positive ROI from their online marketing. Some of the key characteristics of a strategic post-click optimization program include:

Landing page differentiation — High-performance post-click optimization programs recognize that organic and campaign landing pages are distinctly different from each other and should be categorized separately. Organic landing pages are those that visitors reach from directly typing in your website URL, clicking on a natural search result (SEO) or reaching you from some other inbound link that isn't directly managed by marketing. In contrast to this, campaign landing pages are those that visitors reach after clicking on an ad or message that marketing has placed. Typically, traffic to campaign landing pages is derived from PPC, email, display or affiliate or social marketing initiatives. Organic and campaign landing pages must be managed separately in order to take advantage of their unique properties and to maximize opportunities for conversions.

Agility — Online marketing is fluid and dynamic. To stay current, your organization must be agile and able to respond and flex based on how your marketing is performing. Adaptable, best-of-breed marketing tools, multi-disciplinary processes and real-time feedback enable agility. Agile marketing organizations are typically those that enable marketers to directly develop and execute their programs with minimal IT impact.

Disposability — Campaign landing pages should be disposable. Why? Because these pages should be subjected to continuous testing in order to find and maintain the experiences that convert the highest percentage of visitors. Landing pages should be produced in minutes, hours or days — not weeks or months. If you invest too much time and money in a landing experience and it doesn't perform well in testing, you may be reluctant to retire it and move on to the next test. The links to your campaign landing pages must be stable, but what's behind those links should be changing in real time to optimize results.

Real-time measurement — As a B2B marketer, you know how fast the online landscape shifts and evolves. In



order to be responsive and adaptive, marketers need the ability to have a real-time view into what's happening and what it means. Real-time, specialized reports are a critical success factor in post-click optimization. Tactical post-click best practices

The best performing B2B campaign landing pages are the ones that convert a high percentage of your visitors. High performing landing pages share several characteristics and employ basic best practices.

Message match — A landing experience should be a tightly matched extension of an ad. Each primary message of a campaign should have a corresponding landing page that echoes that message as closely as possible. Without message match, respondents experience a disconnection between the inherent promise contained in the ad and the landing experience. The result can result in distrust of your brand and decreased conversions.

Beyond the page — While we frequently refer to post-click landing pages, a more accurate phrase is 'landing experiences.' Typical B2B landing pages tend to paint marketers into a very small box of standard page elements—headline, subhead, bullets, offer, form. This is the reason why so many B2B landing pages produce low conversion rates—there is only so much you can do to persuade a visitor with a single page. When planning your post-click optimization think beyond the page and consider developing conversion-oriented landing experiences such as conversion paths, wizards and even small micro-sites.

Simplicity — When respondents click your ads and messages you want to keep them completely focused on your call to action until they have completed your lead generation form. An effective landing experience is usually free of elements that can distract from conversion, such as website navigation, multiple conflicting calls to actions, etc. Unnecessary copy, visuals and navigation should be removed from your landing experiences.

Pre-conversion segmentation — Pre-conversion segmentation can be incredibly effective at raising conversion rates on B2B landing experiences. Pre-conversion segmentation is a method of including 2–3 simple choices on an initial landing page in order to help guide respondents into a more relevant and targeted experience. This type of segmentation gives visitors the chance to quickly drill down to the information that is most pertinent to them by allowing them to identify who they are and what they are interested in. A well-designed segmentation page will induce 60–90% of respondents to click through into the next page of the experience. Segmentation is beneficial to the visitor because they can easily guide themselves into the area that interests them. It is equally beneficial to the marketer in order to start gathering segmentation information on visitors before they even convert. Pre-conversion segmentation enables you to learn about your respondents so you can further tailor their landing experience. This relevancy and enhanced user experience increases conversion.

Engagement — How you engage your respondents once they land on your pages directly determines whether or not they will engage with you. As both a user and as a marketer, you know a plain cookie cutter landing page when you see one. So does your target audience. Your audience expects more out of you than that — they expect you to engage them. The idea of putting up a page with a headline, a subhead, a call to action and a form is long gone. Sub-par landing pages deliver sub-par results. An engaging landing experience uses an arsenal of tools like flash, video, social elements and pre-conversion segmentation to capture and keep the user's attention and drive them through conversion.

A/B Testing — A/B testing is particularly well-suited to campaign landing pages because it is relatively easy to implement and administer for marketers and can help quickly lift conversion rates. With A/B testing, high traffic volume is typically not necessary in order to reach statistical significance on test results. In A/B tests (also called split tests) traffic is equally and randomly routed to two or more landing experiences in real-time in order to learn which is most effective at capturing conversions. An effective approach to A/B testing is continuous testing through cycles of innovation and iteration. During an innovation cycle, apples-



and—oranges tests are run where the experiences are markedly different from each other. When a champion (winning) experience emerges from the innovation cycle, a period of iteration can help further lift conversion rates. During iteration, smaller changes are applied and tested on the champion.

When high conversion rates are the objective of your online marketing program, optimized landing experiences are the crucial tool to deliver the results. An effective landing experience can help achieve conversion rates that are well above industry averages. Organizations that elevate landing experiences to a strategic level segment, qualify and convert three times the number of respondents as those who don't. That's B2B post-click optimization — better landing pages, better online marketing ROI.

Post-Conversion Optimization from Marketo

Optimizing email marketing, lead nurturing, and lead scoring to turn leads into revenue.

It was only a few years ago that the job of marketing ended when a lead was captured. The lead would be passed to sales who were responsible for its qualification, and hopefully its conversion into a sale. Today, marketing and sales work side-by-side after the lead is generated, developing the lead with both sales interaction and lead nurturing through purchase. Companies that have taken this approach have seen a great improvement in their sales and marketing process as sales can focus on leads who have budget and are ready to buy, making better use of their resources. At the same time marketing can continue to interact with leads who may be great prospects but need more time before making a decision, or who are still securing budget or learning more about the products.

Because of this increased responsibility for marketers, many use their CRM and marketing automation system to create emails that would start educating a lead as soon as it was received (using auto-responders) and then continue the education with lead nurturing programs that either send a succession of emails about a product (drip campaign) or that begins sending emails triggered off of the actions the prospect takes (closed-loop campaigns). Lead scoring is then done based from both the demographic information captured by an organization, but also on the activities taken by a lead like emails read, white-papers downloaded and webinars viewed. Unfortunately, creating these emails and nurturing programs and performing lead scoring for your organization is not enough. These programs need to be properly optimized on a regular basis to ensure you get the best results and continue to stand out from the competition.

Email Marketing Optimization

When sending emails to your leads keep in mind the ultimate goals of your programs. This may be different for each organization so optimization strategies will ultimately be company specific. Some companies may be emailing customers to increase retention or to up-sell products, while others may use email to introduce their product to prospects they met at trade shows or through content syndication. Once this end goal is established, or multiple goals if you have the ability to segment portions of your list, make sure that each message you send supports that goal in some way.

This does not mean that emails should be about that product. Instead, emails should be interesting to the buyer persona that typically would purchase that product.

Some tips for email marketing optimization include:

Develop buyer and customer personas and align them with the content in your email messages. Create multiple messages or use dynamic content to ensure the email is sent with information that is important to that persona. Use the same name and email address when sending to ensure the recipient recognizes the email sender. Also keep your emails in the same style as other branded content so the email feels familiar. Use A/B testing to find the right subject lines, images and content for your buyer personas. Each email should have a call to action, typically in the form of a link, which will allow you to see if the message resonated with



the recipient. Try to limit the number of calls to action so the recipient does not become overwhelmed or miss an important call-to-action. Go beyond following CAN-Spam rules, ensuring that every recipient has opted-in to your email. Test how emails will render in multiple email clients like Microsoft Outlook, Lotus Notes, Gmail and Hotmail. Also test to see how emails will render on mobile phones.

Even if your organization has a lead nurturing program in place, it is likely you will still use email marketing to announce new products, share an important piece of company news, or invite prospects to a webinar, tradeshow, or other event. When this is done make sure to keep nurturing programs in mind, not distracting the prospect too much from their current place in the nurturing track and not sending them too many messages in a specific period.

Auto-responder Optimization – After your organization receives a lead, it is important to follow-up promptly and with the right message regardless of the lead source. Companies who use an email auto-responder to thank a lead for downloading a whitepaper or for visiting your company at a trade show have made a great first step. But often these emails are created and then forgotten about, causing them to be dated or irrelevant. Whether you are optimizing this type of email or putting it in for the first time, follow these best practices:

- » Annotations, show notes, transcripts Review auto-responder emails on a quarterly basis to make sure they are still relevant to the recipient who will receive the email.
- » Create different auto-responders for each type of download, making sure that they aren't forced to be a 'one-size fits all'.
- » Include one call-to-action in each auto-responder, informing the recipient of other information that may be useful to them.
- » Ensure auto-responders are relevant to the action the lead took. For example, if a lead just downloaded a white paper offer, include an offer to watch a webinar on the same topic while thanking them for their download.

Monitor auto-responder opens, click-throughs, and opt-outs as you would with your other email program. Use these results to identify when there may be problems with your current auto-responders.

Lead Nurturing Optimization

Lead nurturing programs are different than batch-and-blast emails, as they allow you to control the order and timing in which your prospects receive a message. This makes your email marketing more like a conversation, sending out timed messages that deliver the next important piece of information that is relevant to learning about your product or service. Unlike emails which simply need their content optimized, lead nurturing optimization is more complex and can be separated into three areas:

Lead Nurturing Frequency Optimization – Each prospect is likely to research your product and industry in a different way. Because of this, the frequency at which they receive your messages must be tailored to their needs. To accommodate the prospect, Marketo recommends creating a normal and an accelerated nurturing program. These will allow those who are making a decision faster receive the information they need when they need it, while not frustrating recipients who are just trying to gather information about your product or service. Allow leads to choose which path they will participate in or use online behavior to determine if a prospect should be moved to the accelerated nurturing path. Often this can be decided if a lead has heavy web activity or if they begin to visit pages on your website that are typically visited by those ready to purchase, like pricing or demo pages.

Lead Nurturing Path Optimization – Path optimization is the optimization to the order the prospect receives the messages you are sending. Marketers can improve their lead nurturing program by finding the



way that their prospects want to see these messages. To do this, do a simple A/B test altering the order of the messages in the nurturing campaign and implement those changes based on the order of those results. Continue to do this, altering messages on a regular basis, until you have found the best path for your customers.

Lead Nurturing Content and Creative Optimization – The content included in each email in your nurturing program needs to be updated and improved on a regular basis. This includes using A/B testing to find out which subject lines, email content, images and even sender names should be used. This also includes trying different types of content like videos or mp3s as part of the message.

Often, B2B marketers will ask about using multivariate testing to test multiple parts of their email at one time (like subject line, image, and text all at once), but this is almost impossible for most B2B marketers to do because they do not send the volume of emails to get any solid actionable results. Instead, B2B marketers should test one variation at a time, continually making improvements to their messaging and imagery.

Lead Scoring Optimization

Lead Scoring Optimization is the process of improving your lead scoring to deliver leads to sales at a time when they are interested in your product and have the budget to buy. For many B2B companies this is tricky, as they will have different purchase influencers reviewing the industry and product over many months when selecting a solution. Increasing the complexity are external factors like seasonal changes, industry trends and economic impacts. To compensate for these external factors and the complex buying process, it is important to always be improving lead scoring in your organization. Some companies spend a lot of time setting up their lead scoring programs, but then let these scores go stagnant by not updating them, causing them to be a wasted field in an organization's CRM system.

To ensure this doesn't happen at your company, use your CRM or marketing automation reporting to help you identify places where scores should be optimized including:

- » Review scores of won and lost opportunities. Were these scores where they should have been for these top prospects?
- » Look at leads that had high scores that did not turn into opportunities. Could scoring be improved so that these did not end up appearing a top priority for sales even though they never turned into revenue?
- » Look at scores by demographic segments like region, title, and company to see if demographic scoring is adjusting the score improperly.
- » Look at online behaviors to see if the actions your best leads are taking are reflected properly in the score.

After gathering all the data that may improve scores, meet with sales management to see if they have additional ideas to optimize lead scoring. Do this on a monthly or quarterly basis to continually optimize, keeping notes on what has worked and what hasn't.

Budget and Resources for B2B Marketing Optimization

For pre-click, post-click, and post-conversion marketing to be successful it must be done as an ongoing part of an organization's marketing effort. This means looking past one-time costs to create a landing page or to engage in a single link building campaign and implementing efforts across all B2B online marketing programs as part of the annual marketing budget. To do this you must dedicate both budget and resources to ensure proper optimization. The benefit is getting more from what you are already doing, increasing the conversions of current efforts and ultimately, the number of those who become customers from marketing campaigns. Marketers who dedicate the time and resources needed are likely to see some of the best results from their marketing campaigns, providing a return many times the investment.



According to Forrester research, 21% of all marketing budgets are predicted to be devoted to interactive (display, mobile, email, social, search) channels by 2014 (about \$55 Billion). Companies who adopt early are likely to also get the benefit of increased brand recognition and reputation as an early adopter. But deciding how and when to adjust resources can be difficult. Start by implementing solutions that can be run by your current staff or with the help of outside service providers. Tools like CRM and marketing automation allow many companies to implement B2B marketing programs without added headcount, and companies specializing in search marketing or landing page creation can increase marketing success without additional team members.

Continuing Success with B2B Marketing Optimization

For B2B marketers who haven't harnessed the power of B2B marketing optimization, now is the ideal time to cost-effectively improve the quality of marketing campaigns. This can include the amount of traffic to websites, conversions from landing pages, or number of leads that turn to sales.

Those who have already tapped into the power of online marketing should continue to reenergize their efforts by revising and perfecting strategies on an ongoing basis. With the modern business communications platform being digitally focused, a foothold in online programs is invaluable in order to connect with prospects and protect the brand. By taking B2B marketing optimization to the next level, organizations can gain a long-term competitive advantage.

Learn More:

www.maasimpact.com

