CREATING EFFICIENCY & ENGAGEMENT THROUGH YOUR LEAD GENERATION CAMPAIGNS

Intelli Connection

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It's no secret that efficient and engaging lead generation campaigns will lead to stronger, more profitable sales pipelines. However, a 2012 study showed that only 11% of B2B lead generation marketers believed that their campaign were highly effective, efficient, and engaging, according to the Lenskold Group.

One trend has become clear: efficiency and engagement are rarely accomplished in tandem. Marketing may either drive demand but at too-high a cost (engaging but not efficient), or provide few returns despite scalability at a low cost (efficient but not engaging). Individually, efficiency and engagement are essential for running successful lead generation campaigns. But when combined together, your campaigns could be unstoppable.

Engagement

Each day a consumer is exposed to more than 3,000 messages. Somehow, your job as a lead generation marketer is to cut through the noise and make your message stand out. Today, the ultimate goal is not just to attract potential leads to your products/ services – but to keep them engaged through the content. The question then becomes: in an age when our attention spans average eight seconds, how can we keep our prospects interested?

1. Research the Content for Your Audience

Just as you shouldn't create a mix tape of heavy rock music for a classical music aficionado, you shouldn't create a content strategy that is not catered to your target audience. To create the most engaging lead generation campaigns, consider the following questions.

   a. What subject matter is interesting to my audience?

   b. Are there opportunities for us to fill a void?

   c. What formats does my target audience prefer? While a younger audience might prefer social media posts, others might prefer articles, videos, podcasts, or images.

   d. What language does my audience use in discussions related to our product or service? This will help determine what keywords you use in your content.

   e. Other considerations to test: subject matter, formality (informal writing? Formal?), length, timing of distribution, and subject lines.

2. Vary the Content

Engaging content comes in many forms: emails, blogs, advertisements, social media, etc. But, according to the State of B2B Content Marketing Survey, content that included social proof was ranked the highest in terms of effectiveness and engagement. This "social proof" content included customer testimonials and case studies.

3. Personalize the Content

Personalization is crucial to audience engagement. There is no one-size-fits-all engagement strategy; content should vary based upon a company's industry, a customer's prior engagement, and the consumer's stage in the sales pipeline. Indeed, 69% of marketing professionals reported customizing content based on their vertical/ industry, and 59.5% reported tailoring content based upon solutions.

4. Create a Value Proposition

A value proposition is defined as the key reason why you are the best choice company for your ideal customer. This statement should clearly communicate what your company offers – and why it's better than your competitors. A successful value proposition will have appeal (be compelling and descriptive), exclusivity (not describe any other competitor), and credibility.

5. Offer Innovative Engagement Options

White papers, social media posts, and email campaigns are all essential content for your consume engagement. However, these categories are by no means exhaustive. Engaging your audience depends on their needs. Adobe.com, for instance, developed a 24-hour live chat solution to create an open-dialogue between company and consumer.

Efficiency

Efficiency has always been a lead generation buzzword. After all, what business does not want a sales funnel that quickly pushes leads from prospects to consumers at a fair price point? But efficiency is more than just a buzzword; businesses can take actionable steps to increase their campaign efficiency.

1. Identify Your Buyer Persona

This is a detailed profile that represents a fictional or actual group of your target audience, including common interests, motivators, demographic characteristics, and behavioral actions. These ideal profiles will your help marketing and sales teams refine their strategies and target only those that are most effective.

2. Analyze How you Capture Consumers

In the business world, your future sales come from those you have already made. Track how you gain each new lead and converted customer. Do you have a referral process in place? Are leads captured from your website? From your social media? By discovering your business' strengths and weaknesses, you can better identify areas to improve upon.

3. Google Yourself

Search the Internet for your company name. Then search for your product category. Do you come up? What page number are you on? Because the Internet is increasingly becoming a source of leads across every vertical, if you're not immediately searchable, you're losing potential customers. Funnel more time and money into Search Engine Optimization (SEO): arguably the 21st century's most important lead gen strategy.

4. Call Yourself to Action

In a 2013 study of call-to-action practices, 72 percent of small businesses did not have a call-to-action on any of their interior website pages. Call-to-actions, or buttons that entice the consumer to take action(either by downloading information, contacting the company, or inputting personal information) should be featured prominently on each of your website pages.

5. A/B Test

Let Google be your guide: this search engine Mecca is ruthless about A/B testing, understanding what font sizes, colors, and ad placement locations are most effective at gaining clickthroughs. The premise of A/B testing is that two variants, A and B – the control and the treatment, are tested in a controlled experiment. A/B testing allows businesses to take the guesswork out of website optimization and alter sites based on proven results.

6. Maintain Records

Just because a lead leaked from your sales funnel doesn't mean they're not valuable to your business. Although some leads may be dead, others may be qualified future customers that were not able to convert because of factors beyond their control (contracts, budget issues, etc.) Maintaining contact with all leads – customers or otherwise – can prove profitable for your business.

Once the key components of engagement and efficiency are understood, the two business practices should be implemented simultaneously for the most effective lead generation campaigns. Below, we've outlined three examples of campaigns that meet the criteria for both efficiency and engagement.

1. Email Campaigns

Email drip marketing remains one of the most effective lead generation campaign tactics, with some B2B marketers reporting 12-18% increases in click-through rates thanks to email drips. Email campaigns are successful because they allow businesses to customize their content based upon where their leads are in the sales funnel (engaging) at frequent intervals of time without high costs (effective). To optimize your email drip campaigns, follow these steps:

    a. Analyze and segment your database based upon the leads' location in the sales funnel.

    b. Create a strategic campaign timeline and delivery schedule using consistent intervals of time.

    c. Develop targeted messages for leads throughout the sales pipeline (including after they have already been converted). These messages should each include a unique call-to-action.

    d. Schedule automated delivery using systems such as Constant Contact or Aweber. Be sure that your emails are delivered during periods with high open rates (generally higher on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.)

    e. Using click-through metrics, analyze results and adjust messaging content or timing to improve open rates.

2. Social Media Campaigns

Although social media's effectiveness for lead generation is still elusive, companies cannot risk ignoring social media as a marketing tool. SM drip campaigns can be deployed across one or more channels, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter, and give your company a more personal, engaging image. Similarly to email drip campaigns, social media content should be regularly scheduled through tools such as Hootsuite or Buffer.

Unlike email, however, social media campaigns can span multiple channels and can be featured in multiple mediums. Rather than a unilateral approach, develop a multi-channel strategy across the main SM sites (LinkedIn, FB, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest). Media should span images, video, and texts with links redirecting the leads to the company website. Businesses should research trending topics prior to deploying their campaigns, include a call-to-action in each message, schedule automated delivery, and analyze results to determine which channel and media is most effective.

3. Pay-per-click (PPC) campaigns

PPC campaigns are text or visual ads spread across targeted Internet sites. These ads use targeted keywords and unique offers to compel the Internet user to move their cursor to the advertisement. Upon clicking these ads, visitors are sent to landing pages that encourage the visitor to enter their contact details. These are then exported to your business' leads database for future campaigns. To create an effective PPC campaign, follow these steps

    a. Segment audience into unique categories of web users (new consumers versus those who have clicked before).

    b. Research top keywords used in your industry advertisements and incorporate them into your campaign.

    c. Create unique landing page content that honors the advertisement's offer – and includes a contact form.

    d. Deliver an auto-responder email with more information about your company/ the advertised offer.

Through efficient and engaging campaigns, businesses can make their lead generation more effective and profitable. For more information about best campaign practices, visit Intelliconnection's case studies.