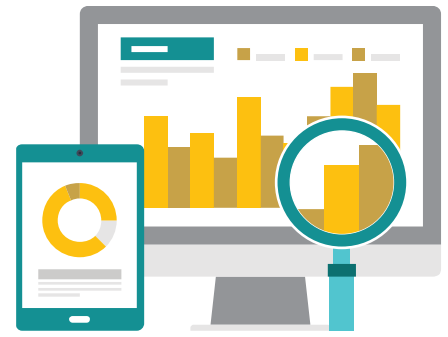


MARKETING PERFORMANCE RESULTS



If you're a small business or startup, you know that having the right skills and bandwidth to execute effective marketing strategies to drive leads to your business can be difficult and expensive. You may have tested various tactics with various levels of success. However, to create an effective marketing strategy, it's best to have an entirely cohesive plan. We've covered the essential parts of an effective marketing strategy within this quiz so you can score in each category, how well you are doing. And I've given you tips and tricks to help you to improve in each area.

The Results



If You Scored Between 0 To 40



Well, how can I put this lightly? I can keep it positive by saying, “You can only go up from here.” I’ve worked with successful businesses who haven’t had to use a lot of marketing maybe because they’ve gotten lucky with a few big clients or they’ve done a great job with referrals. However, the tide is shifting. With more and more businesses going online to drive and gain visibility and customers, the competition to be online or become extinct is impending.

There are also those companies who are just starting out and have a small team, so it becomes difficult to execute. It can be hard to know where to start and what would be the most effective tactics within budget.

Regardless of what your current situation is, there will be a lot of great new marketing tactics to start to drive high value leads to your business.

If you scored between 41 to 80

You are well on your way to marketing success. You’ve implemented some strategies, have probably had some success but are held back by either not have the right skill set in-house or your team doesn’t have the bandwidth for all the tasks. Either way, there are some great tools and tips that can help. With a little fine-tuning, you could be well on your way to getting the sales and customers you need to take your business to the next level.



If you scored between 81 to



Congratulations! You’ve done a magnificent job building and executing marketing strategies which are no easy task. How have the results been? Do you see room for improvement? Have you been able to test other tactics to see if you can get even better results? The following tactics could help take you to 100.

Here are some steps you can take to improve your marketing programs and increase leads and sales:

Website Refresh



The web is continually changing, and it's easy to spot an outdated website. In addition to this, not only does keeping your website fresh and updated improve its performance but changing your website on a regular basis also helps with SEO.

Issues from an outdated website include:



Mobile issues



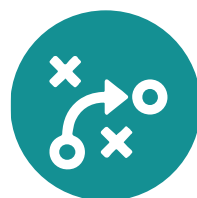
Poor content management system



Coding problem



Outdated content



Outdated SEO strategies



Old WordPress themes



Slow loading times



Low conversion rates

Websites should be updated at least every six months, however, keeping your blog and other content such as resources or press can help to improve your SEO performance.

Web design is ever changing too so if it's been a year since you've updated your website, it might be time for an overhaul. It's straightforward to create your website using a template from within WordPress. They are pre-built and easily customizable to your needs. We prefer to use WordPress plug-ins. Here are a few that are easy to use with the modern design elements: Jupiter, Beaver, and Thrive. There are many more out there as well.




Content Creation



It should be an essential part of your marketing plan to create content on a monthly basis. It can be anything from a blog, white paper, eBook, case study or even webinars, videos or podcasts. It serves to drive traffic to your business, as well as build trust with your customer base.

As a matter of fact, 61% of your customers say they are more likely to buy from a company that delivers custom content.

You can create a monthly content, marketing schedule to keep you on track. Here is an example:

		
Daily Activities	Weekly Activities	Month Activities
<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Research post4. Produce post5. Visitor Feedback6. Photo Content7. Social media engage8. Content updates	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Team Brainstorms2. Analytics report3. Team Brainstorms4. Analytics report5. Team Brainstorms	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Plan for new tactics2. Evaluation plan

I wouldn't suggest coming up with an editorial calendar far in advance. It's better to research what are the current hot topics. Use tools like BuzzSumo to see what subjects are getting the most engagement. You can also get ideas from your most common customer questions and objections as use those as subject matter. It's important to research any piece of content you are writing to integrate quotes or stats from other sources. Hint: this is a great tip that we'll talk about for social media marketing.

Social Media Engagement



Once you've written your content, what next? It's time to promote it to drive traffic back to your website as well as building trust with your potential customers.

Different social sites use different types of content as well as serve various purposes. For example, LinkedIn tends to be focused on professionals, and the kind of content reflects that with mostly business-related content and topics. Whereas, Twitter has both business topics content as well personal images and posts. So whether you are targeting businesses or consumers, it's critical to evaluate which social sites will work best to reach your target market.

If you are using references from other influencers in your industry, be sure to reference them in your content. You can even reach out to them to find out if they'd like to post your blog on their social networks.

It's important to be consistent when posting to your social media outlets. Use tools like HootSuite and CoScheduler to schedule your social posts ahead of time so you won't miss a beat. There are a lot of stats out there about how many social posts you should do a day per network. Some say as many as 5 – 7 while others say no more than one a day. Regardless of what you chose, be sure it's interesting information as well as unique.

Promoting Content

Besides promoting your content through social media outlets, there are also content repositories that can help drive traffic and customer to your doorstep.

There are general ones like Reddit, or you can research ones that are within your industry who may be open to posting your content. You can also reach out to other influencers who will let you guest blog on their site.

You can reuse your content in different formats as well. If you create a blog, consider breaking it down as a PowerPoint presentation and sharing it on SlideShare. And if you are looking to give your business a jumpstart, you can consider paying to have your content promoted. StumbleUpon and Outbrain two options that allow you to pay to have your content promoted.



Lead Funnel

Some visitors to your website will not become customers ever, but some visitors to your website may just need more time to get to know you and your value. Because of this, you must have a way to capture visitor's contact information and have a drip campaign to nurture visitors into becoming customers.







The first is to create a call to action (CTA) and lead magnets on your website.

These should inspire a visitor to want to learn more about a piece of content such as a video, webinar or eBook, etc. You can also offer a quiz, trial or sample of your product or service. The goal is to get the visitors email address so you can continue to email them with a drip campaign.

47% of buyers viewed 3 – 5 pieces of content before engaging with a sales rep. (Demand Gen Report 2016). The drip campaign should bring the potential buyer through a journey and provide them with the WIIFMs they need at each stage to decide to buy from you. Some people will unsubscribe while others will become customers and possibly even share your information with others who are in need of your product or service.

Create a flow of your funnel based on your buyer personas and the customer journey. Here is an example of things to consider along the way:



Buyer Personas and Content Mapping						
Customer Lifecycle	 Awareness		 Consideration		 Conversion	
	 Education		 Solution		 Vendor Selection	
	Content at this stage focused on introducing a problem, and then connecting that problem to critical issues, it should create a sense of urgency for a target to take		Once target problem, content should be build to help them pinpoint their needs in relation to the problem. Next comes the process of		Content at this stage should focus on helping buyers differentiate vendors that offer ideal solution, and arming them with the information they need to address the	
Customer Interest / tasks	Search for collaboration solutions. (May even have a solution that's inadequate)	Review competitive solutions. Read information about product differences	Vendor engagement / Demos / Software evaluation / pilot	Compare short list / socializing / Gaining buy-in	Build business case / prioritization / ROI ? Budget Approval	Negotiation / Procurement
Theme	Thought Leadership	Solution Knowledge	Value Story	Solution Validation	Financial Justification	Onboarding
Perpetual Journey of customer	Disatisfaction with current collaboration solutions or lack thereof	Exploring internet and social for other solutions	Understanding products and solutions for collaboration	Choosing and affirming	We are confident and ready to move forward, negotiate deal terms, etc.	We are ready to commit

Customer Loyalty

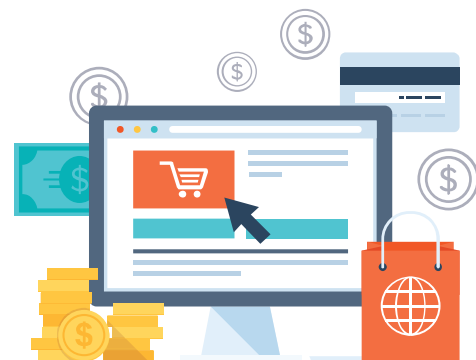


Not only is your revenue growth dependent upon customer retention, but the easiest way to increase sales is to sell more stuff to your existing customers.

Use your content as a newsletter to send directly to your customers. If it's interesting and specific to their needs, they'll read it and will rely on you for up-to-date information. You can create webinars and training videos to show your customers how to get the most out of your products or services.

You'll need a good marketing automation solution to be able to deliver the right content to the right customers or prospects. There are tools such as Marketo or Pardot that are full-service marketing automation tools however they may be cost prohibitive to many small businesses. Luckily there are other options such as Active Campaign, and even Constant Contact and MailChimp are coming out with full marketing automation solutions to handle all your marketing needs.

Sales!



At the end of the day, it's all about sales but knowing when it's the right time to engage with a salesperson is about qualifying your leads through your marketing funnel. If you are executing on all the above tactics, by the time a prospect is ready to bite, your sales team is prepared.

Using the flow chart above, you can start to score your leads based on their interaction with your marketing funnel. This will give your salespeople insights into what's most interesting to your prospects and how to sell.

You'll need to leverage a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system so salespeople can track their activities as well as their pipeline. Salesforce.com is a popular choice. However, there are new products on the market that are giving them a run for their money. Active Campaign has a CRM lite as part of their product. Close.io does an excellent job of tracking emails within their product so salespeople can easily monitor their activities. However, I like Streak. It works right within Gmail.

Are You Getting Enough Leads

To grow your business, you need enough leads to hit your numbers. Not all visitors will become leads and not all leads will become sales. By constantly filling the top of the funnel with new prospects, you can create a consistent flow of sales throughout the year.

You know you don't have enough leads when at the end of the month, quarter or year, you are waiting on one or two customers to make your numbers. This is never healthy as applying pressure or special deals never really works for closing deals. It's better to be able to work with your prospects on their timing and assist them on moving along your marketing and sales funnels. If you focus on helping them answering their questions along the way, you are sure to find loyal customers that will help you grow your business.



Conclusion

Whether you scored low or high, there is always room to improve. If you'd like to learn more about how you can improve, I'm offering a free initial 60-minute consultation. Simply email me at joanne@growthledge.com to find out more.

About Growth Ledge Agency

Growth Ledge is a scalable team of marketing and sales professionals across all disciplines of the most current marketing techniques and tactics that get results. Creative and pragmatic, they're able to design the right strategies for their customers. Growth hackers, designers, technical or process professionals, our team has the talent to take your business to the next level.

About the Author



Joanne Hernon

Joanne is an accomplished marketing and sales leader with over seventeen years of experience defining corporate marketing and sales strategies, managing sales and marketing teams, and closing new business with Fortune 1000 customers across a wide range of vertical markets. Joanne has helped technology startups go from pre-revenue to millions in sales using her growth hacking techniques. She is adept at enterprise sales as well as SMB and mid-market sales.

