

Lesson no. 1: Lead Generation for Business

1. UNDERSTANDING LEAD GENERATION FOR BUSINESS



In marketing, lead generation is the initiation of consumer interest or enquiry into products or services of a business. Leads can be created for purposes such as list building, e-newsletter list acquisition or for sales leads. The methods for generating leads typically fall under the umbrella of advertising, but may also include non-paid sources such as organic search engine results or referrals from existing customers.

Leads may come from various sources or activities, for example, digitally via the Internet, through personal referrals, through telephone calls either by the company or telemarketers, through advertisements, and events. A 2017 study found that 89% of respondents cited email as the most-used channel for generating leads, followed by content marketing, search engine, and finally events. A study from 2017 found that direct traffic, search engines, and web referrals were the three most popular online channels for lead generation, accounting for 93% of leads.

Lead generation is often paired with lead management to move leads through the purchase funnel. This combination of activities is referred to as pipeline marketing.

A lead is usually allotted to an individual to follow up on. Once the individual (e.g. salesperson) reviews and qualifies it to have potential business, the lead gets converted to an opportunity for a business. The opportunity then has to undergo multiple sales stages before the deal is won.

2. WHY LEAD GENERATION IS IMPORTANT



Another way to think of lead generation is to think of it like collecting valuable information. Extremely valuable information. Information like a site visitor's first and last name, email address, and company gleaned when they:

- a) Fill out forms for downloaded content
- b) Share contact information for a coupon
- c) Subscribe to an RSS feed or email list

Inbound marketers collect and use this information to nurture that lead. Because the person has already showed some natural interest in a company's product or service, this makes that person a more qualified lead than traditional, outbound leads.

Instead of a shot in the dark, companies that use lead generation data are already a step ahead. In fact, according to the Hinge Research Institute, 60 percent of their leads online are twice as more profitable than those generating less than 20 percent of their leads online.

Along with higher conversion rates, lead generation can also be an very cost-effective solution because it focuses on aligning both sales and marketing teams—virtually closing any communication gaps (a common pitfall of many organizations).

Lesson no. 2: Understanding Landing Page

1. UNDERSTANDING LANDING PAGES

In marketing terms, a landing page is a distinct page on your website that's built for one single conversion objective. It's a page within your website built with a one actionable "Ask" that facilitates the completion of that objective.

Your landing page should be completely distinct from the rest of your website - with no navigation bar to distract your visitors from your sole conversion goal.

Common Landing Page Use-Cases:

a) *Google or Facebook Ads:*

A landing page helps you get a positive advertising ROI by focusing your visitor's attention on the specific thing or campaign you're promoting.

b) *Email-Gated Content:*

Landing pages are often used for lead generation, and make it easy for your business to turn visitors into leads by incentivizing them with an ebook, industry report, online course, case study, etc.

c) *Free Trial:*

If your business has a trial component, focus your visitor's attention on that goal by using a landing page.

d) Product Page:

Focusing your visitor's attention on a specific product is a great way to improve the chance they'll purchase it. The most successful ecommerce companies have individual landing pages for each of every one of their products.

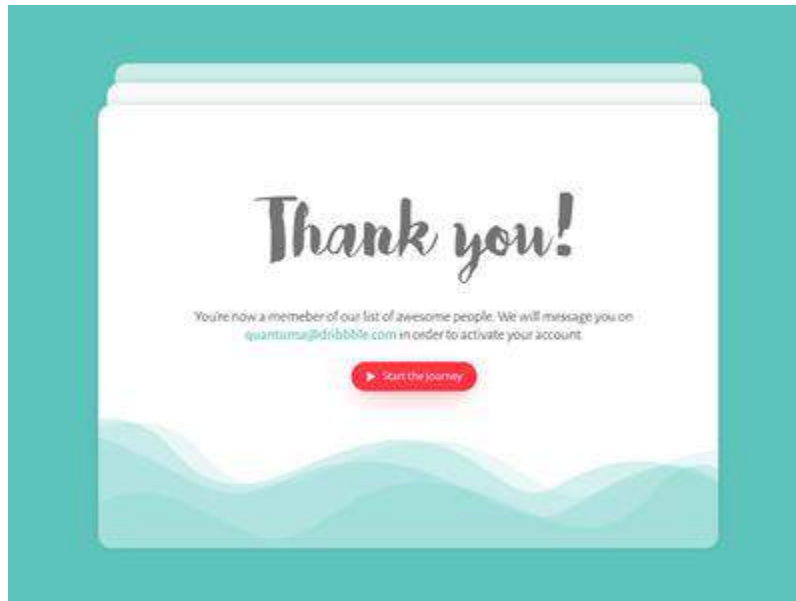
e) Promotion Page:

If you're running a Black Friday campaign, spontaneously doing "Buy One Get One Free," or giving a free year's subscription to your software, the page you host that promotion on should be a landing page - focused only on that single conversion goal.

f) VIP Demo/Contact Us:

For many businesses (real estate, B2B, SaaS, hospitality and others) the "contact us" page is actually one of the most financially important pages on their website. Consider using landing page best practices to optimize the Contact Us page experience.

2. UNDERSTANDING THANK-YOU PAGE



A thank you page is a web page where subscribers are redirected immediately after they submit their information in your opt-in form. While creating your form, you can specify a web page on your site to use as your form's thank you page.

While creating your form, you can specify a web page on your site to use as your form's thank you page. If you do not specify a page, we will use a simple page of our site that thanks the person for subscribing.

A good thank you page should:

- a) Thank the subscriber for signing up.
- b) Provide instructions on what happens next.

If you are using confirmed opt-in, subscribers will also be directed to a confirmation success page immediately after they click on your confirmation link.

3. LANDING PAGE VS WEBSITE



A landing page is a single web page that is designed to serve a single specific objective. While the objective itself may vary (sign up for a free trial of a service, register for a webinar, download a free e-book), the overarching purpose is typically to acquire leads for your sales/conversion funnel.

A website is different in that it is not so limited in scope, purpose, or content. A website should serve as a comprehensive hub for all your digital marketing efforts. Even those increasingly-popular single-page scrolling websites, where all the content is displayed on one page, would not generally be considered true landing pages if they lack a singular end goal.

From a website, you may want to view products, learn about the company, review pricing plans, etc. You have elements like page navigation, image sliders, search bars, and blog posts — each to take you to different areas of the site.

From a landing page, you can perform one action and one action only. You have a very focused design with few elements, designed to lead the visitor to a single end goal.

Lesson no. 3: Best Practice to Create Landing Page

1. BEST PRACTICES TO CREATE A LANDING PAGE

- a) Ensure the primary headline of your landing page matches the ad visitors clicked to get there.
- b) Make your call to action (CTA) big and position it above the fold.
- c) Use directional cues to direct attention to your CTA (arrows or photos/videos of people looking or pointing at your button).
- d) For lead generation forms where the CTA is below the fold (e.g. due to a long form) – make the directional cue point down the page to the button.
- e) A landing page should have a single purpose and thus a single focused message.
- f) Congruence: every element of your page should be aligned conceptually with the topic and goal of the page.
- g) Show your product/service being used in context.
- h) Use video. It's been shown to improve conversion by up to 80%.
- i) Edit to remove unnecessary content. Be succinct.
- j) Use real testimonials for authenticity.
- k) Show social proof via indicators of your social status.
- l) Test new ideas using A/B testing. Let your customers decide which message works best for them.

- m) Provide a free trial. Try-before-you-buy is a standard and expected feature.
- n) Provide a guarantee to reduce/remove risk.
- o) Include partner co-branding to increase trust by association.
- p) Simplify your copy using bullets.
- q) If you are selling a book, or giving away an eBook via lead generation, provide a preview to increase trust show that you are proud of your product.
- r) Segment by traffic source. Send your PPC, email, social media, organic and banner traffic to separate landing pages for better message match and measurability (which channel performs best)
- s) Segment by user type: don't send offers about men's health products to the ladies on your email list.
- t) Show your phone number so people know you are real and can interact with.

2. BEST PRACTICES TO CREAT A THANK YOU PAGE

a) Give Confirmation

The first thing your Thank You page should do is confirm whatever action your visitor just took was completed successfully. For example, if they've just subscribed to your weekly newsletter, your page might say something like, "Thank you for subscribing to our weekly newsletter."

b) Include Navigation

One of the worst things you can do on your Thank You page is keeping your audience stranded there. These are people who have just indicated they're into what you have to offer, which means this is the perfect time to keep them hanging around your site!

At the very least, your Thank You page should include your website's navigation to allow your audience to stick around and explore your site some more.

c) Provide Related Content/Actions

Aside from using your navigation to give your audience an opportunity to stick around, your Thank You page is also a great

place to provide related content or additional actions your lead may find interesting.

d) Add an Offer/Promotion

Did a customer just enter to win a free product? Why not offer a coupon code to encourage them to purchase something sooner? Adding an offer or promotion can be an excellent way to encourage warm visitors to convert, or to increase the value of a converting customer by enticing them to purchase additional items.

Keep in mind that your offer should be something relevant to their action and worthy of their attention.

e) Get Social

Encouraging people to connect with you on social media is a great way to further connect with a warm audience.

Instead of just leaving links to your social profiles, take it a step further and tell visitors why they should follow you. What can they expect to see if on they follow you? News about your business? Tips and tricks related to the action they just took? Spell out the value and make it clear it's worth it.

f) Show Off Testimonials

Even if your visitor has just completed a purchase, your Thank You page can still be a place of reassurance that you're as great as you say you are.

Use your page as an opportunity to show off social proof, whether it be customer testimonials, the number of social media fans you have, or a quick stat or case study.

Your Thank You page should continue to warm your visitors and encourage them either to purchase down the road or to purchase again. Using social proof to help reassure them that you're the real deal can help this process significantly.

Lesson no. 4: Types of Landing Pages

1. TYPES OF LANDING PAGES

I. *Email List Opt-In Landing Page*

Did you know that one of the most effective spots to place an email opt-in form is not on your home page, not in your side bar, and not on your blog? (Although, opt-in forms in these places are helpful, too).

The *most* effective place to put it is on a dedicated landing page.

Creating an email list opt-in landing page gives you the room you need to tell people why they'll benefit from giving you their contact information.

It means you can focus your visitor's full attention on signing up and, by removing all other distractions (like the navigation), you're forcing them to choose: opt-in, or miss out.

II. *Content Guide Landing Page*

Inbound marketing – and pretty much any online marketing *period* now – is all about content.

If you blog, vlog, or create free info products for your audience, you can get even more value from that content by organizing it on its own landing page.

Think about it: your blog is great for featuring your latest posts and, sometimes, there's a search feature so readers can look up topics of interest. But a lot of your great content from way back is probably getting a little dusty from lack of attention.

You can easily remedy this problem and give your visitors a world-class tour of your best stuff by creating topic-specific content landing pages.

III. *Start Here Landing Page*

Your website performs a lot of duties for your business: it tells people about your brand, let's them get in touch with you, offers information, sells your stuff, and more. So when someone lands on your website for the first time, there are multiple directions they can go in.

But the direction they choose isn't always the best one. They might land on information they aren't interested in or be put in front of an offer that have no desire to take (yet).

But what if you could custom create an experience aimed just for first-time visitors? An experience that will give them the ultimate first impression of you, and show them all the info and links they need to get the most out of their first visit.

A "start here" landing page can do all of that.

IV. Coming From [social network] Landing Page

When you find someone interesting on Twitter and click on their website link, where do you end up?

Most of the time, you end up on their homepage. Which is okay. But it's not *great*.

The homepage is rarely the best place to send any traffic; the more customized you can make the experience, the better.

V. Guest Post Landing Page

Guest posts do a lot of wonderful things for you and your website. But probably the most valuable thing is the traffic they can send your way.

But if you're not actively directing that traffic to the right spots, you're missing out on most of the value (like getting more email subscribers).

If you're like most guest bloggers, you use that precious little byline link to send people to your home page.

Your home page is *absolutely not* the best place for these visitors.

You've built up a lot of momentum by delivering a valuable post that they loved (if they didn't, they probably wouldn't be reading

your byline). You want to keep that momentum going and use it to build an even stronger connection with this person – not kill it off by sending them to your homepage where they have to decide for themselves if you have anything else to offer them.

VI. Thank You Landing Page

One of the biggest wasted opportunities on your website is the Thank You page.

This is the page people are redirected to after they opt-in to your email list, sign up for an event (like a webinar), or purchase a product.

A thank you page usually consistent of the obvious: a thank you message and nothing else.

When you land on a page like that, there is literally nothing left to do but leave. This is a massive waste of some of your most valuable, targeted traffic.

Anyone who lands on your Thank You page has indicated that they are interested in what you offer to some degree. At that moment, they are highly engage with your business, and it's the perfect time to push that relationship a little further.

VII. Unsubscribe Landing Page

Admit it: when someone unsubscribes from your list, it hurts a little.

But just like most relationships, an email list break-up can often be salvaged on some level. But not if you're giving your former subscribers the cold shoulder with a generic, indifferent "good-bye" page.

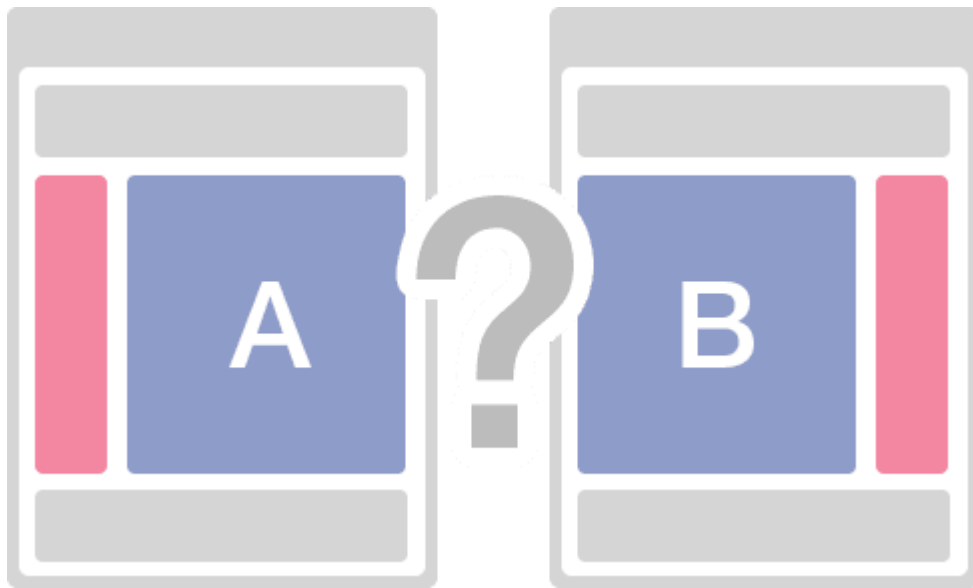
Have you actually *looked* at the page your readers are redirected to after unsubscribing?

Most email hosts (like Aweber and MailChimp) have boiler-plate templates for this page that unsubscribers are sent to automatically. But you can switch it out for your own custom page, and you really should. Here's why:

When someone unsubscribes from your list, they may just totally hate hearing from you. But more likely, there's still a small attraction to your content and your business. So give them other options.

Lesson no. 5: What is A / B Testing

1. WHAT IS A/B TESTING?



A/B testing (sometimes called split testing) is comparing two versions of a web page to see which one performs better. You compare two web pages by showing the two variants (let's call them A and B) to similar visitors at the same time. The one that gives a better conversion rate, wins!

Why Should You A/B Test?

A/B testing allows you to make more out of your existing traffic. While the cost of acquiring paid traffic can be huge, the cost of increasing your conversions is minimal. To compare, a Small Business Plan of Visual Website Optimizer starts at \$49. That's the cost of 5 to 10 Google Adwords clicks. The Return On Investment of A/B testing can be massive, as even small

changes on a landing page or website can result in significant increases in leads generated, sales and revenue.



2. HOW TO DO A/B TESTING

Starting conversion optimization with Visual Website Optimizer is incredibly easy. Essentially, it is just four simple steps.

a) Include the Visual Website Optimizer code snippet in your website

```
</head>

<p><a href="http://www.sample.com/html/tutorial/html_links.cfm">Example Link</a></p>
<div class="more-info"><a href="http://www.sample.com/html/examples/html_links_examples.cfm">More Link Examples...</a></div>

<p><a href="http://www.sample.com/html/tutorial/html_links.cfm">Example Link</a></p>
<div class="more-info">
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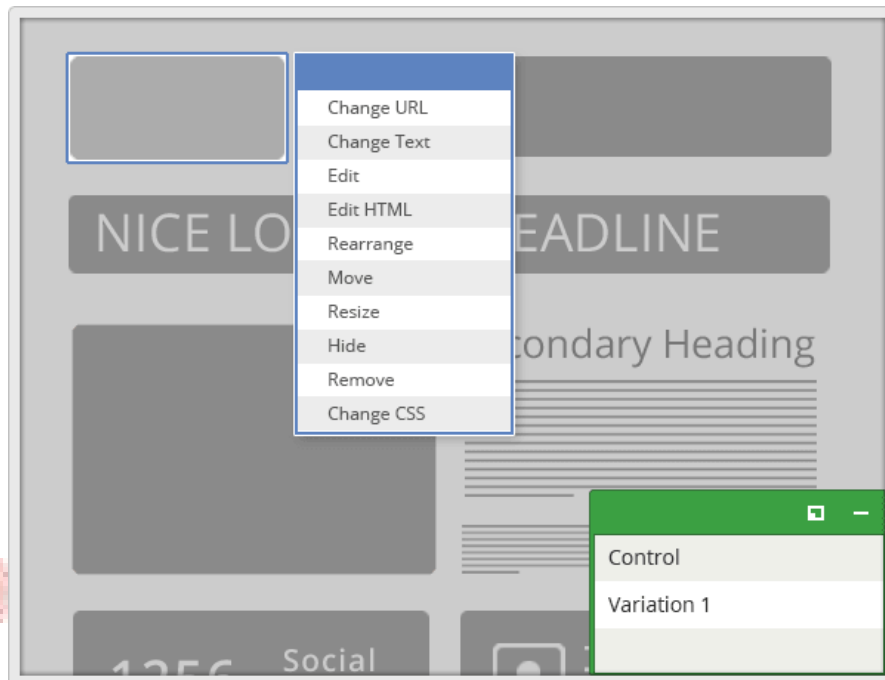
← **<> VWO Tracking code**

```
<!--Start Visual Website Optimizer Code-->
_____
_____
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```

Including the code snippet means we are now ready to run the tests you create on your website. For further ease, we have plugins for Wordpress , Drupal and Joomla that make the process hassle free.

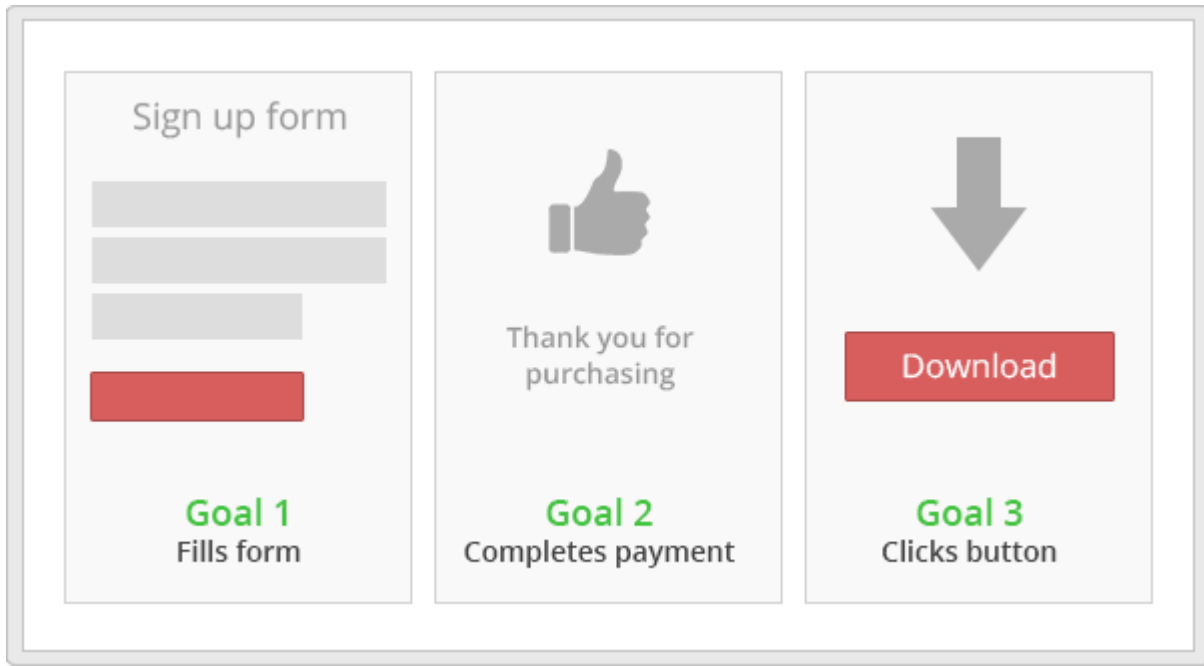
b) Create variations using the WYSIWYG Visual Editor

Load your website in the Visual Editor and create any changes using the simple point-and-click interface. Advanced users can even make CSS and JS code changes.



b) Choose your goals

All A/B tests have goals whose conversion rate you want to increase. These goals can be straight forward (clicks on links, visits page) or could use advanced custom conversion code.



c) Start and track your test

And that's it, your test is ready to go live. Reporting is real-time so you can start seeing reports as soon as visitors arrive on a live test.



3. SELECTING LANDING PAGES AFTER A/B TESTING

I. Run a single test

You want to be able to determine what caused your shift in leads. Don't A/B test a landing page as you're testing the method you used to drive the traffic there.

II. Test a single variable

At least at first you'll want to make small changes so you can isolate the results from changing a particular headline, image, or CTA.

III. Test down the sales funnel

Your landing page changes may generate lots of form completions, but are those leads converting to paying customers? Follow the new leads to determine their quality.

IV. Keep running a control

If you want to remove the image from your landing page to test its results you should still be running and testing against the original.

V. Test at the same time

Testing different pages at different times won't provide you with an accurate comparison in their efficacy. Hubspot will automatically split the traffic to each variation randomly to ensure the most valuable comparison information.

There is no one-size-fits-all when it comes to marketing. Your business may be nearly identical to a competitors, but if you were to duplicate their landing page strategy you may end up with a far lower conversion rate. Don't stop testing landing pages either. If you've tested your landing page and you're seeing 18% more form completions, congratulations, but don't stop there. Things change and there is always room for improvement so keep testing to create the most effective landing page(s) possible.



Lesson no. 6: Converting Leads into Sales

1. CONVERTING LEADS INTO SALES

Constant internet connectivity allows more and more customers do their research online. Approximately 70 to 90 percent of the buyer's journey is completed before reaching out to a sales representative. According to Forrester, the average customer engages with 11.4 pieces of content before making a purchase. Therefore, your website is essential to the purchase process.

I. Use visuals.

Roughly 65 percent of the population has been categorized as visual learners, so it is no wonder that articles with visuals get 94 percent more views. But it is not enough to just have any image on your site, quality plays a vital role and should not be forgotten in the process. Use graphs or charts to quickly display savings and advantages for the product. Adding an autoplay video to a landing page might also be something to take into consideration, depending on the product this can increase conversion by 31 and 86 percent.

Offer specials.

For prospects on the fence, a special, limited-time offer will give them the push they need. In a survey, nearly 7 in 10 took advantage of a sale or coupon from a marketing email in the past month, showing the power a special offer has in converting sales leads.



II. Teach your audience.

Today's buyers are more skeptical and more empowered. They have become accustomed to being able to quickly compare prices and learn the ins and outs of a product before ever talking to a salesperson or requesting information online. In fact, most buyers are $\frac{3}{4}$ through the sales process by the time they reach that point. Therefore, it is important to be the one to teach your prospective customers. Help customers make their decisions through sales enablement which constitutes white papers, videos, info graphics, and other content marketing practices to

better inform the consumer. According to research by Nelson, expert content is 38 percent more effective in purchase considerations than content that is simply branded.



III. Ask for the next action.

Part of sales enablement is to make the information available to help prospective buyers take the next step in the sales process. Especially with high-ticket items, a call to action on every page of your site invites the customer to learn more, download a report, or request more information. This engagement helps in converting leads into sales by showing which leads are ready for the next step and which leads are still in the research phase of the buying process.



IV. *Get contact information.*

You can't rely solely on your website. Even the best crafted website needs the human touch. At some point in order to convert leads, you may need to call them. Even in this digital age, the phone is still a vital tool, especially in reaching targeted sales leads.



V. Call ASAP.

It may seem like stating the obvious, but remember to follow up on all leads. According to PR Newswire, most B2B firms fail to follow up with 70% of their leads. These include contacts from trade shows, seminars, cold calling, database purchase, and telemarketing and represent 65% of their marketing budget. A simple callback within two minutes or less increases the likelihood of a purchase by four times.



VI. Ask for the Sale.

Visual content, special offers and sales enablement are all ways to convert leads into sales, but ultimately, after providing your prospective customer with plenty of information and support, you need to ask for the sale. On your website, provide call to action button such as “buy now” or “add to cart” as an invitation for the

customer to convert. For well-qualified and target leads, take it beyond the digital realm and make a phone call to move the sale along.



When asking for the sale, remember that today's marketing isn't about selling the customer. It's all about helping the customer solve their problems. Make certain you understand your customer enough to offer solutions they will be interested in.

Consider this approach:

Hi _____. This is Bob with _____. I noticed you downloaded our report on _____. I just wanted to call and get you to buy.

Focusing on how you can help the customer has shown to increase leads converting to customers by 70%.

VII. Score your leads.

Not every lead should be added to the sales pipeline. Implement a quality control system by allowing only the high-score leads in and nurturing the rest. Qualified leads will have similar traits to previous prospects, they should have the right title and budget authority with a serious need and interest.

While about 73% of leads are not sales ready, that doesn't mean they should be ignored.



Lesson no. 7: Creating Lead Nurturing Strategy

1. CREATING LEAD NURTURING STRATEGY

Lead nurturing essentially helps your buyer get to know your business. Think of it as the dating period where two people get to know each other before getting married. It also enables you to educate, inform and build trust with your leads and move them from the top of the buyer's funnel (when they are not quite ready to buy) into the lower part of the funnel (when they are ready to buy).

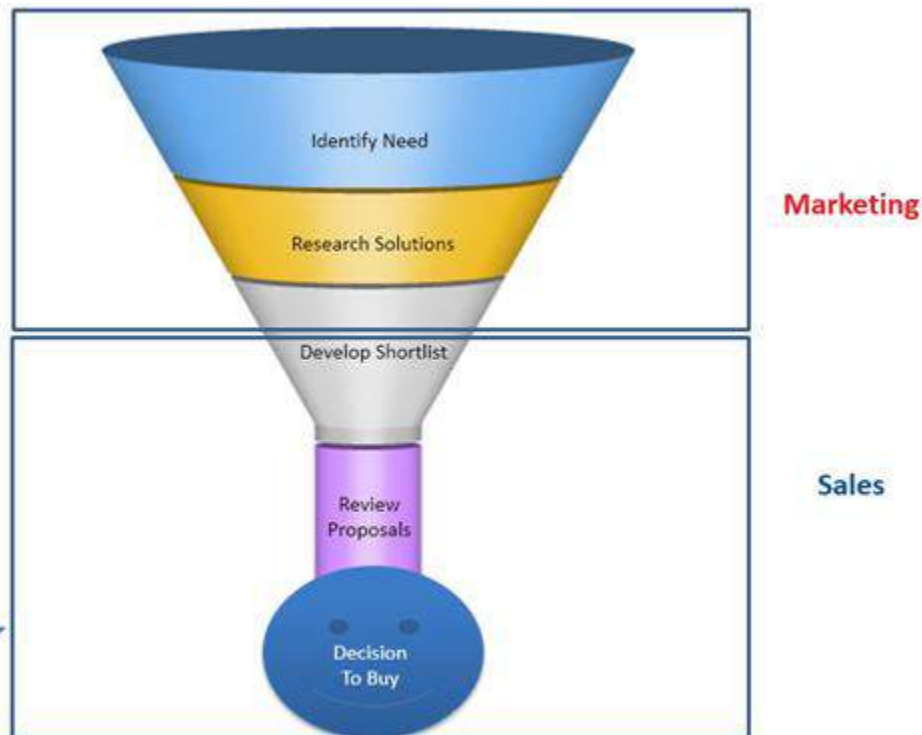
Lead nurturing takes time and effort. In his book, "Start with Lead," Brian Carroll says that, "Lead generation isn't about instant gratification, but rather requires sustained effort to succeed, often over a relatively long period of time. Key words are consistency and time."

six steps to help you get started with your lead nurturing strategy:

I. ALIGN MARKETING AND SALES

You've heard this before – Marketing is from Venus and Sales is from Mars because the two can never agree.

The first step that must be taken is that marketing and sales first have to agree on the definition of a lead. How do you begin defining a lead?



In SuperOffice, we say that there are two types of leads. There are the marketing leads and there are the sales leads. Marketing leads are at the top of the funnel and Sales leads are lower in the funnel. Both are leads. It's just a question of what you do with which lead and who owns what lead.

We defined a lead as someone who has responded to our marketing communications, whether it is from a marketing campaign, paid search campaign or direct mailing. We allocate one person per country who is responsible for logging the leads and qualifying them.

If the lead is ready to enter into a sales process, then that lead is sent to a sales person to handle in the CRM. If the lead isn't ready to enter into a sales process, then that lead is owned by Marketing and entered into a lead nurturing process where the lead is kept warm until she became more sales-ready.

II. DEFINE A LEAD MANAGEMENT PROCESS

When you put so much work into generating leads, it's really important to have a lead management process in place to handle those incoming leads. In addition, a lead management process helps to ensure that your sales teams are only talking to the most qualified leads and filters out less sales ready leads and so that you can put them into your lead nurturing program.

You'll need to discuss and consider how your company will handle the leads, how and where the leads will be registered, how the leads will be qualified, when the leads will be followed up on and what criteria must the leads fulfill in order to enter into a lead nurturing program.

III. GATHER LEAD INTELLIGENCE DATA

Lead nurturing is all about sharing relevant, personalized and targeted information to ensure that you stay on top of the buyer's mind. In order to do this, you need to get a good overview of what types of buyers you have and what kind of information they need in each phase of the buying process.

You can do this by:

- a) Interviewing prospects and/or customers
- b) Interviewing sales team
- c) Mining in-house database to identify characteristics of best and/or worst customers
- d) Interviewing customer service
- e) Using keyword research to identify topics of interest
- f) Monitoring activity on social media sites

Once you've gathered this information, you can create personas which mirror your prospective customers.

IV. CREATE A LEAD NURTURING CONTENT PROGRAM

In order to ensure that you maintain the relationship with your leads, it's a good idea to create a content timeline so that you know when to send what. At this first step, your lead nurturing plan can be very easy. Don't make it too complicated, or it won't get done.

Here's a sample of a lead nurturing program:

Activity	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Email about the new year and new opportunities that await	X												
Alert New Content Minimum 4x a year. Max 12													
- White paper			X			X			X			X	
- Article													
- Tips/tricks													
Event Invite													
Webinar				X									
Actual event BB													
Commercial business message around a product (what's in it for me)										X			
How are you?								X					X
Local initiatives and online webinars													

V. USE EMAIL MARKETING TO COMMUNICATE YOUR MESSAGE

The emails, at any one time, must help your buyers to either save money, solve a problem, educate themselves or be entertained.

The following are five different types of emails which can be used to generate leads:

- i. **Educational email content** – These are general educational emails that feature content demonstrating the value your company can offer. Make sure these emails aren't sales-driven. For example, the messages could offer people links to more white papers, blog articles, and videos that you genuinely believe will be helpful to the recipients' needs and goals.
- ii. **Email newsletter** – The primary purpose of this type of is to give your audience something they need to enhance their skills and/or grow their business, and they respond by giving you their attention. It's a mutually beneficial exchange that serves both parties.
- iii. **Demo/ Product announcement** – Educational type emails are best for lead nurturing, but you should also include some product-specific emails. However, they shouldn't be too frequent, and they don't have to be boring. Make them highly targeted and create a clear connection between them and the first emails in your lead nurturing series.
- iv. **Event invitations** – These emails are email marketing campaigns used to drive traffic to a specific event you're hosting or participating in, including:

- a) Exhibiting at a trade show
- b) Attending a conference
- c) Hosting a webinar
- d) Keynote addresses and speaking engagements

VI. TRACK, MEASURE AND ANALYZE

The phrase, “Track, measure and analyze”, is any smart marketer’s mantra. This tells you if your efforts have been worthwhile or not. Make sure to have metrics in place that tie to your goals.

If you’re looking to drive brand and awareness, measure branded search or direct traffic to your website. If you’re looking to increase leads or email opt-ins, measure how you’re growing your database from you lead nurturing efforts. If you want to measure and increase lead quality, look at the conversions over time and measure how many marketing leads turn into sales leads.

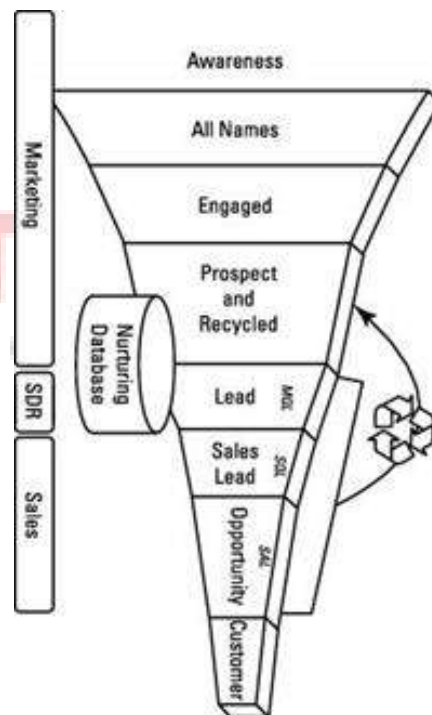
Be sure to measure how many leads come in, how many get handed to the sales team and how many enter into the lead nurturing program.

Evaluate which type of content generates the most leads, as well as to the quality of the content. Ask your sales teams how prospects are receiving the information and ask them what they think about the content too. All this information will then help you to improve the whole lead and content generation process.

Lesson no. 8: Understanding Lead Funnel

1. UNDERSTANDING LEAD FUNNEL

The sales and lead generation process is usually defined and described as a funnel. Like a real funnel, the process involve sifting through a large amount of names and prospects in the beginning, identify which of these names are viable as sales leads, then turning these leads into customers at the end of the funnel.



General intents and purposes the following describes the basic and most common stages involved in the sales funnel:

Stage 1: Awareness and Friend

Depending on how effective your inbound marketing is, the first stage of the lead generation process will generate a huge amount of traffic to your site. The goal here is to create awareness through social media marketing, SEO, paid advertising, and content marketing.

However, marketers need to be careful at this stage particularly when requiring first-contact visitors to sign up, fill up a form or register. Doing so too early in the process can turn off or scare away great prospects. On the other hand, you can also end up clogging your funnel with people who are prematurely engaged – and will eventually fall off further down the funnel.

Stage 2: All Names

The next stage involves officially entering names into your database, although at this point these names are not yet considered real leads. These are names your marketing efforts captured through a variety of ways, getting their contact information as well as their permission to communicate or market to them further.

Stage 3: Engaged

Getting names and contact information is your introductory window to prospective leads, enticing them to move through the lead generation process further by signing up to a newsletter, attend a webinar, downloading an ebook or accomplishing a lead capture form in a landing page, which leads to the next stage in the funnel – engagement.

It is important that your prospects go through this stage in the process before you attempt to move them through the funnel. Through engagement, you're assured that your prospects knows that you are marketing to them and are open to your future communications and engagements with them.

Stage 4: Target or Prospects

If a contact engages with your marketing, you can now continue with the process and perform lead scoring to determine if this particular contact can be a viable lead or not. There are many ways you can perform lead scoring and these can be done both automatically and manually, depending on the type of business and prospects you are targeting.

Through lead scoring, you will know if a particular contact fits the profile of your ideal lead. Profile elements can be anything relevant to your need including job title, industry, size of company, etc. Once you've identifies a lead through scoring, you can then begin nurturing and other steps further down the funnel.

Stage 5: Marketing Qualified Lead

When a contact or target fits the profile of your lead and has been identified as having a high lead score, then you can qualify this particular lead for further marketing. First and foremost, this lead should have demonstrated considerable interest in your products and services to be deemed worthy of further marketing efforts and direct contact from your sales team, otherwise your campaign will just be flushed down the drain.

Stage 6: Recycled

Not all prospects can become a certified lead right away, but it doesn't mean that if they did not become a lead the first time around they won't be viable leads in the future. Such prospects may have demonstrated a certain level of interest in your products or services but at that particular point in time – was not ready to commit to a sale.

Such leads can be placed in your recycled leads database and nurtured by feeding them with continuous educational materials. Continue doing so until such time when they are ready to take the next step and become a qualified sales lead.

Stage 7: Sales Qualified Lead

Once a lead has demonstrated great interest in your products or services and have good engagement with your sales team, an account executive should then take over, engage directly with this sales qualified lead, and make a careful assessment if the prospect is truly a sales lead or would need further lead nurturing from marketing.

Stage 8: Opportunity

After an account executive identifies a prospect as a qualified sales lead, he or she can then identify the prospect further as a sales opportunity and will undergo further opportunity marketing. At this point, it would be important to understand that engaging with leads will incur cost, which include cost of engagement, conversion and opportunity marketing.

Stage 9: Customer

At this point, the lead you have engaged with and nurtured with further marketing has finally turned himself into a paying customer.

Again, it is important to reiterate that every company or organization have unique attributes and targeted audiences, so it would be best to identify which stages are applicable to your niche and make adjustments accordingly.



Lesson no. 9: Steps in Lead Nurturing

1. STEPS IN LEAD NURTURING

I. **DEFINE YOUR AUDIENCE AND SEGMENT**

Companies usually have more than one type of customer. Why do most companies only market to one type of buyer then? In order to set up a lead nurturing email campaign, you first need to know *who* needs nurturing. Once you've defined your ideal customer types, you should then segment them before you start creating campaigns.

II. **OFFER SOMETHING VALUE FIRST, NOT A SALES PITCH**

Just because someone converts on your page doesn't mean you should jump straight into sending them an email about requesting a quote or a demo. You need to *nurture* them through the sales funnel first to make them readier to buy. Instead of pitching your product as the greatest thing ever, you should first offer value. Examples of valuable offers include webinars, ebooks, and whitepapers. You don't have to create new content for your lead nurturing emails -- if you have a backlog of content, utilize those assets. If they've been successful converting leads in the past, there's a high chance the leads you're nurturing will find value in them, too.

III. SET OBJECTIVES AND GOALS FOR EACH EMAIL

So now you know you should be sending content first, not sales quotes. But how do you know what type of content to send? And what should that content's purpose be? Ultimately, you should be picking offers that will appeal to your chosen audience segment with the intention of moving them further down the sales funnel and closer to the customer stage.

Email Subject Line	Call to Action	Type of Content	Goal of Email
How to get more from the manifesto you downloaded	Take personality quiz	Quiz	Share retail insights
Email Subject Line	Call to Action	Type of Content	Goal of Email
Harnessing your company's personality styles	Download Speaker Packet	Guide	Download Speaker Packet
Email Subject Line	Call to Action	Type of Content	Goal of Email
\$(firstname) discover how to move your store merch	Read these resources	Blog articles	Educate leads
Email Subject Line	Call to Action	Type of Content	Goal of Email
Request a copy of my new magazine	Request copy of new magazine	Magazine	Identify C-Level executives
Email Subject Line	Call to Action	Type of Content	Goal of Email
\$(firstname) get a free chapter	Chapter Download/Hire Bob	Book Chapter	Hire Bob

A good example of how to do this is in the chart above

IV. SET UP A TIMELINE FOR EMAILS

Your business has a typical sales cycle, and so should your lead nurturing campaigns. Typically, it's a good idea to send 2 to 3 emails to your prospects in a lead nurturing campaign. Try to space out your emails accordingly. For example, if your typical cycle runs 30 days, you may want to set up a campaign for emails to be sent out the 1st, 10th, and 20th days after a conversion. With lead nurturing, patience is a virtue. It's

important to remember not to rush into the sale. Instead, let it take its natural course.

V. EVALUATE YOUR SUCCESS AND OPTIMIZE

As your campaigns run, make sure to experiment with the offers you send, the subject lines, and the calls-to-actions found within the email. There's always room to improve your campaign. Make sure you take advantage of testing and experimentation to better nurture your leads.

Lead nurturing can be ineffective if done incorrectly, but if you put the time into your campaigns and follow these steps, you'll be more likely to drive more lead-to-customer conversions for your business!