



Strategic Marketing

Transform your marketing into a long-term strategy that will immediately give you a competitive advantage.



STRATEGIC MARKETING

Without a systematic approach to manage your marketing activities, it's far too easy to waste significant amounts of time and money by getting completely off track.

The purpose of this guide is to help you get the payoff you should from your investment in marketing. It includes actionable tips and will help you build a strategic marketing process for your business.

We will cover the concepts behind getting the types of customers you want. We'll show you how marketing can make your customers feel valued and, in turn, recommend your company to their colleagues. We'll also discuss the importance of measuring and analyzing data so you can repeat your successes and fine-tune them to continuously improve your results.

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Marketing strategy is a series of integrated actions leading to a sustainable competitive advantage.

- John Sculley, former CEO of Pepsi-Cola and Apple

WHAT IS STRATEGIC MARKETING?

Strategic marketing is about creating a system of branding, promotion, and advertising that focuses on long-term results. It involves thoughtful planning, effective implementation, and continuous improvement.

WHO IS STRATEGIC MARKETING FOR?

Strategic marketing is for organizations that struggle with one or more of the following marketing challenges:

- Standing out from the competition
- Getting more qualified leads
- Creating valuable content
- Generating brand awareness
- Increasing traffic to your website
- Improving your rankings on Google
- Positioning your company as experts in your industry
- Using marketing automation effectively
- Connecting the dots between marketing and revenue growth

HOW STRATEGIC MARKETING WORKS

PART 1: SUSTAINABLE STRATEGY

Strategic marketing planning that increases your revenue and profit takes a collaborative effort. Involve sales, operations, accounting, and marketing managers so they are on the same page. They should be able to describe the plan, the marketing goals, and know what their roles are.

Keep these five things in mind during your marketing research and planning:

YOUR VISION—Your vision describes the big-picture view of why you are in business and how your company will contribute to the future of the world. Your vision is something you believe in and are always striving for.

YOUR CUSTOMERS—Your sales and marketing process will be more effective if you define your target market. Create buyer personas to gain a deeper understanding of your target audiences. Learn how they view products such as yours, and how they prefer to buy.

YOUR BRAND—Branding is your effort to influence the way people think about your business and what you sell. Your brand identity defines the essential elements of your marketing. It influences your company name, your marketing messaging, and the way you work with customers.

YOUR VISUAL IDENTITY SYSTEM—Your visual identity system includes graphic design elements visible to the outside world. It defines your logo, tagline, typography, colors, and photography styles. It's important to use these in a consistent way so people can identify your products or services at a glance.

MARKETING CAMPAIGNS—Strategic marketing campaigns comprise many tactics working together to achieve a specific time-bound goal. There should be many measurable points within a campaign so you can analyze your results and make improvements.

PART 2: CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND THE BUYING PROCESS

What problems do your customers face? What matters most to them? What is the process your customers have to go through to buy your products or services?

The more you know your customers, the better you'll be at delivering relevant messaging and the more likely they will want to do business with you. Look at the buying process from your customers point of view. Make it a good experience.

Let's take a look at the table on the next page illustrating the three stages of the B2B buying process, what the buyer is trying to achieve, and an example of how marketing can influence buyers to choose you when it is time to make a purchase.

As marketers, we should be changing the mantra from always be closing to always be helping.

- Jonathan Lister, LinkedIn Ad Sales Chief

STAGES	BUYER'S OBJECTIVES	HOW MARKETING HELPS
Researching*	At this point, buyers have a lot of questions and are searching for answers. They are looking for possible solutions to their problem or for vendors that can provide the specific products/services they need.	Blog articles that answer your customer's questions are invaluable at this stage of the buying process. These types of articles rank well on search engines, demonstrate your expertise, and help your buyers understand how to fix their problem.
Evaluating	The buyer has found different options and begins evaluating each in depth to narrow down the list to the most suitable candidates—usually three—to call, request more information, or setup a meeting.	Case studies that provide real-world examples will show your buyers how you can help them. Other types of articles that build trust are comparisons, testimonials, and reviews.
Purchasing	The buyer has made their decision and is ready to buy.	Even though the purchasing stage is handled by sales, marketing still plays a supporting role by creating presentation materials, email communications, etc. It is important for your messaging to be consistent. What your sales person says to your buyer needs to match what they saw on your marketing collateral. If there is a disconnect the buyer will feel uneasy and may change their mind.

**78% of industrial buyers turn to suppliers' websites during research, 70% use search engines like Google, and 53% talk to colleagues (GlobalSpec-2016 Industrial Buy Cycle Study).*

PART 3: CONTENT CREATION

Gaining trust and building a presence in your intended market is necessary for growth. But it's no easy task. To do this, your strategic marketing system relies heavily on your website content. Digital assets like ebooks, articles, and white papers attract people to your site and prove expertise.

The best place to start when creating content for your website is to answer common buyer questions. Your sales and customer service departments are great resources for the questions your customers are asking. Create content that explains the answers in detail.

Types of helpful content you can create:

- Blog Articles
- How-To Videos
- Ebooks
- White Papers
- Step-by-Step Guides
- Comparison Charts
- Photo Galleries
- Case Studies
- Testimonials
- Webinars
- Interactive Tools

Answering common questions with an ebook.

NOCO ENERGY STAR® Homes created an ebook to help people understand new home construction standards and the benefits of energy efficiency features. Included in the ebook are definitions of common terms, in-depth explanations of nationally recognized programs, and an illustration to show how they stack up against each other.

To further their efforts, NOCO ENERGY STAR® Homes also created a condensed version of the ebook as a brochure to hand out at trade shows and distribute to their channel partners. The brochure gives a quick overview of the benefits and prominently features the URL to download the full, free guide.

The helpful content they are creating has made the resources section and blog the most popular sections on their website. People look to them as experts in energy efficient homes.



Seriously. Content works. Creating content is one of the most effective and sustainable ways to build brand awareness and attract potential customers to your site.

The top three content marketing tactics are blogging (65%), social media (64%), and case studies (64%)

– [LinkedIn Technology Marketing Community](#)

78% of B2B buyers use case studies when researching purchases

– [DemandGen](#)

74% of companies indicate content marketing is increasing their marketing teams' lead quality and quantity

– [Curata](#)

Content marketing costs 62% less than traditional marketing and generates about 3 times as many leads

– [DemandMetric](#)

67% of the typical B2B buyer's journey is now done digitally, and 9 out of 10 B2B buyers say online content has a moderate to major effect on their purchasing decisions.

– Lenati

57% of B2B buyers have already made their purchase decision before ever speaking to a sales person

– CEB Global

95% of B2B buyers consider content as trustworthy when evaluating a company and its offerings

– DemandGen

Conversion rates are six times higher (2.9%) for companies and brands using content marketing than those that aren't (0.5%)

– Aberdeen Group

PART 4: LEAD GENERATION

You know that digital marketing offers many marketing and advertising benefits. While many digital strategies and tactics work well, it's not a good idea to replace traditional marketing tactics all together. Each company is different, it will take the right marketing mix to reach your goals.

Digital marketing campaigns can include:

- Blog Articles
- SEO
- Calls-To-Action
- Landing Pages
- Lead Capture Forms
- Pay-Per-Click Advertising
- PR

Traditional marketing campaigns can include:

- Product Samples
- Direct Mail
- Print Advertising
- Trade Shows
- Strategic Partnerships
- PR
- Signage
- Vehicle Graphics

Create strategic marketing campaigns by combining digital and traditional tactics.

You can make your traditional marketing tactics measurable. Let's use jobsite signs and vehicle graphics as an example. Before digital, the only way you would know if somebody saw your sign or vehicle is if they told you.

By incorporating a dedicated phone number and short URL you will know how many calls and website visits your outdoor advertising is generating. Including both options is important because some people prefer to fill out online forms while others just want to call.



PART 5: CLOSING SALES

An important aspect of your strategic marketing process is supporting your sales team with forms and procedures that qualify leads, marketing automation that keeps new contacts interested, and presentation collateral that gets attention.

Tools you can use to help close sales:

- Emails & Marketing Automation
- Presentations
- Education Materials
- Pay-Per-Click Remarketing
- Workshops
- Trial Offers
- Demonstrations
- Questionnaires

Even if a potential customer is not ready to buy, it is important to keep in contact.

Providing them with useful, relevant content reinforces your position as the expert and reminds them that you still care about their needs. Keeping in touch on social media, through a direct mailing, or with email marketing lets them know that you are there to answer all questions and concerns.

When they are ready to buy, they will think of you.

PART 6: CUSTOMER SERVICE

Many people don't think about customer service as marketing, but it is one of the most important marketing activities you will do.

You may remember that 53% of industrial buyers talk to colleagues before making a purchase. You definitely want to come up in these conversations in a positive way. You're also 60-70% more likely to make a sale to a current customer versus a new one. These are two very good reasons why it's important to focus marketing efforts on your current clients.

Marketing tactics you can use to provide excellent customer service:

- Onboarding Emails
- Help Desk
- Customer Training Program
- Surveys
- Referral Program
- Customer Events
- Special Offers

Consider ways marketing can keep your customers interested in doing business with you. Email newsletters, sending thank you cards after a sale, or offering loyalty programs all make your clients feel valued. Customer service doesn't have to be expensive or elaborate—it just needs to be genuine.

Take a handwritten thank you note included in your packaging for example. It costs nothing, takes you maybe two minutes to write and yet makes your customer feel important and truly appreciated.

Building productive and profitable relationships with customers is the key to sustainable, long-term business success. If a customer likes you and continues to like you, they will do business with you. If they don't, they won't.

PART 7: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Setting Your Goals

The purpose of marketing is to help you grow your business. To determine if it is working, there are a few questions you need to answer before you can measure the results.

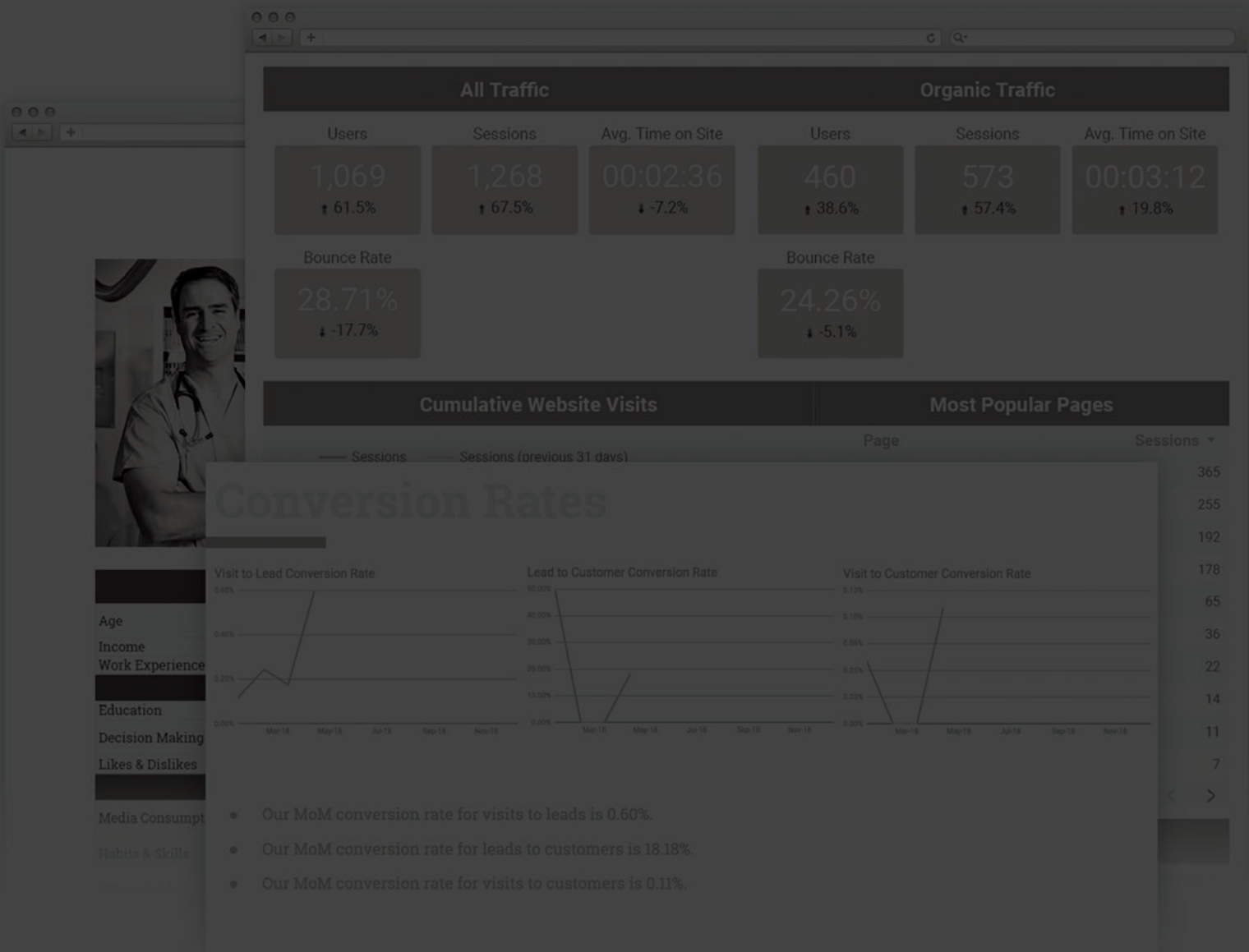
First, start with your revenue goals, then work backwards to determine how to accomplish them.

- How many sales do you need to reach your revenue goals?
- How many customers do you need to make those sales?
- How many qualified leads will it take to get those customers?
- How many contacts does it take to get one qualified lead?
- How many people do you need to reach to get one contact?

Measuring Your Results

Review and analyze your marketing campaigns. Look at your pricing strategies, KPI dashboards, metrics, and other analytical data. What can you do better in your next marketing campaign? Remember, continuous improvement is about making small, incremental adjustments instead of large overhauls.

Comparing your results to the goals you set will help you adjust and improve your marketing over time and bring it to the highest level of effectiveness.



IS STRATEGIC
MARKETING RIGHT
FOR YOU?

GETTING STARTED

Building a strategic marketing process is a long-term strategy. It will likely be 6 months to a year before you start seeing significant results.

Ask Yourself These Questions when developing your marketing process:

- What is your marketing budget?
- How much time can you dedicate to marketing?
- Do you have the internal resources or do you need to outsource?
- Are you willing to wait for long-term results?

If you make the commitment, the time and effort will be well spent. Setting up the right elements now will give you a competitive advantage. Your marketing will improve over time and grow your bottom line for years.

ABOUT US

Most business owners are not sure how to improve their marketing in a cost effective way, so we help them create a strategic marketing process that delivers predictable results and makes their company more money.

We believe everyone deserves to feel certain that their marketing dollars will deliver dependable growth for their business. Which is why, since 2001, we've been developing our sustainable approach to marketing.

Our typical client is a small- to medium-sized company that operates in blue collar industries like construction, energy, manufacturing, and commercial services that have a complex sales cycle.

<https://www.digglescreative.com>

NOTES:

Strategic Marketing and Creative Design

Make growing your business easier with our proven approach to marketing and feel proud of the way your company looks.

