

Includes Missed Opportunity Worksheet to Determine How Much Additional Revenue You Could be Earning!

THE MISSED OPPORTUNITIES OF TECHNOLOGY MARKETERS:

7 WAYS TO CONVERT MORE LEADS AND MASSIVELY MULTIPLY YOUR ROI

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Introduction

As a B2B technology marketer, you know generating leads online can be as difficult as closing the sale.

However, many marketers make the process much more difficult than it needs to be.

This is because they lack a clear understanding of who visits their website and what information buyers need before making a purchasing decision. Without this knowledge, technology marketers create ‘one size fits all’ content that speaks to only a fraction of their potential customers and drives many interested prospects away.

The purpose of this report is to help you identify common mistakes that may be blocking your online marketing success. This report will also show you easy changes you can make to your website to build long-term relationships with customers.

The 3 Stages of the IT Buying Process

Both Google and TechTarget recently published research describing how IT buyers go through a 3-stage process when purchasing products or services. Google’s *Global Technology B2B Survey*¹ refers to these stages as “research, evaluation/comparison and decision.”

Google’s survey also revealed that technology buyers perform up to “12 different research activities” before making a purchasing decision. According to the report, “The Internet is the most important source for IT product research” and company websites are used “more than other online sources at every decision phase.”

This means your website will attract visitors who are in different stages of the buying process. You may get some late-stage leads, but many potential buyers will visit your website to conduct research or evaluate your product.

Why ‘One Stage Fits All’ Messaging Doesn’t Work

Google’s research strongly implies that if you use your website to connect with only one audience – the customers who are ready to buy – you miss the opportunity to build relationships with prospects in earlier stages of the buying cycle.

These early-stage leads can account for almost all the people who search for your products or services. TechTarget’s *2009 Media Consumption Report*ⁱⁱ found “99% of respondents rely on the web and search engines as their primary activity for information gathering.”

If your website’s content isn’t relevant to your prospects’ needs and buying stage, you run the risk of:

- **Longer sales cycles.** When buyers can’t find the information they need to make an informed purchasing decision, it takes them much longer to get approvals. This draws out the already lengthy B2B sales cycle.
- **Lower sales.** You only have a few seconds to make an impression on your website’s visitors. If buyers don’t understand how your products or services can help them, they will go to your competitors.
- **Failing to lead successful marketing campaigns.** As a marketer, your job is to create campaigns that enhance your company’s bottom line. If you don’t target your messages appropriately, your campaigns won’t generate the results you need.

Fortunately, there are easy ways you can speak to the needs of both your early and late-stage leads online.

How to Drive Buyers to Your Website and Keep Them Coming Back

One of the questions in TechTarget's 2009 *Media Consumption Report* was, "If IT marketers wanted to capture profile information from you, in which form would you be more receptive to hearing their messages and offers?"

55% of TechTarget's respondents said they would prefer online offers.

Although the majority of IT buyers are receptive to offers, many technology marketers make one of the following mistakes with their online lead-generation strategy:

1. They don't feature a compelling offer on their website.
2. They create an offer only for customers who are ready to buy now.

This type of marketing is short-sighted and decreases their chances of building long-term, profitable relationships with customers.

As a marketer, your goal should be to provide buyers with all the information and support they need to feel confident in their purchasing decision. This means educating customers about your product or service and giving them end points that don't require an immediate sale.

"Lots of education is needed in the technology buying process," says Steven Woods, CTO of Eloqua and author of *Digital Body Language - Deciphering Customer Intentions in an Online World*ⁱⁱⁱ. "Marketers need to focus on nurturing buyers through an education-based buying process."

The educational content on your website should correspond to your customer's stage in the sales cycle.

"Understanding your buyers' digital body language, or online behaviour, is critical," says Woods. "You should automatically sense where buyers are in the buying process and give them relevant information to keep them coming back to your site."

The benefits of creating highly targeted educational content for your website include:

- Increased response rates.
- Improved search engine rankings. This means more qualified leads will visit your website.
- A better ability to understand your buyers' needs and guide them through the sales process.
- Decreased chances of buyers going to your competitors.
- Successful marketing campaigns.

The Top 7 Lead-Generating Offers for B2B Technology Websites

According to TechTarget, "IT buyers rely on a myriad of online content types during their purchase process and have different preferences for different assets based on where they are" in the buying cycle.

The following offers have been proven to increase online response rates for B2B technology companies:

1. CASE STUDIES

Google found case studies are one of the top 5 incentives that encourage buyers to give a product more serious consideration. IT buyers look to case studies for proof of a product's reliability and past success.

Take some time to interview your satisfied customers and put together case studies for your website.

2. E-NEWSLETTERS

E-newsletters are a powerful tool to stay in touch with people who may want to purchase your product or service a bit further down the road. Google found that 72% of IT buyers prefer vendors contact them by email.

Include a sign-up box for your e-newsletter on every page of your website. Each issue should contain an informative article that helps your readers with one of their key problems.

3. WHITE PAPERS

66% of TechTarget's respondents reported using white papers in the past 3 months to evaluate new technology information. White papers are one of the best marketing tools you can use to educate your audience about your products or services.

You can also offer a white paper as an incentive for someone to subscribe to your e-newsletter.

4. FREE TRIAL OR ONLINE DEMONSTRATION

According to Google, product demonstrations or previews are the most attractive vendor incentive. TechTarget also discovered buyers are more likely to purchase a product after downloading a free trial.

However, many marketers hide trials deep within their websites. If you offer a product demonstration, make sure your visitors can easily find it from your homepage.

5. SALES COMMUNICATIONS MATERIALS

Give your early-stage researchers information they may easily download or forward to someone in their company who has buying power. These materials can include downloadable information kits, sell sheets, presentations or brochures. Use them to clearly explain your product's features and benefits and differentiate yourself from your competition.

6. FREE CONSULTATION WITH A TECHNICAL EXPERT

Free consultations with technical experts or sales representatives are one of the most popular B2B offers. However, many buyers won't connect with a sales representative until they are close to making a purchasing decision. To get to this point, buyers first want to review some of the items mentioned above.

7. AN ONLINE COMMUNITY

“Give your existing buyers an online community so they can engage with you,” says Eloqua’s Steven Woods. “Referrals from peers are often the biggest contributions towards driving revenue.”

Online communities can include:

- A blog where customers can comment on your latest articles and ideas.
- A forum that allows customers to ask questions, receive assistance and share insights.
- An account with a social networking site such as Twitter, where your community can interact with you.

Next Steps

Research has proven your customers want your website to contain a variety of offers. Without compelling marketing and educational content, your leads will not move into the final stages of the sales cycle.

If you need assistance developing lead-generating website content or other B2B marketing collateral, contact me at 647-342-4921 or rachel@freshperspectivewriting.com to discuss your marketing objectives.

About the Author

Rachel Foster is an award-winning B2B copywriter and owner of Fresh Perspective Copywriting. She helps technology companies increase their leads and sales by providing them with compelling marketing copy that motivates their target audience to take action.



If you found the information in this report helpful, you can also **visit www.freshperspectivewriting.com to subscribe to the Fresh Marketing e-newsletter.** This free monthly e-newsletter reveals how you can improve your online and print communications to generate more business.

Join the 7,000 B2B marketing professionals who follow Rachel on Twitter at www.twitter.com/CopywriterTO. She shares the latest B2B marketing trends, copywriting tips and advice on how to effectively use social media to market your business.

ⁱ Robinson, Richard. *Global Technology B2B Survey*. Rep. Google and Media-Screen, LLC, May 2008. Web. Dec. 2009.

ⁱⁱ *TechTarget 2009 Media Consumption Report: Mindset of the IT Pro During the Recession*. Rep. TechTarget, Inc., June 2009. Web. Dec. 2009.

ⁱⁱⁱ Woods, Steven. *Digital Body Language – Deciphering Customer Intentions in an Online World*. Danville, CA: New Year LLC, 2009. Print.

Missed Opportunity Worksheet

How much money are you losing because you're not targeting leads in all 3 stages of the IT buying process? Use this worksheet to calculate your potential ROI.

OPPORTUNITY COST

How many extra leads do you suspect your website could generate **per month**?

Hot leads (buyers in the decision stage) _____

Warm leads (buyers in the evaluation stage) _____

Cold leads (buyers in the research stage) _____

SUSPECT OPPORTUNITY

Now calculate your estimated opportunity cost for these hot leads, warm leads or cold leads.

*Example: 30 leads per month x 12 months = 360 leads per year
Convert 2% in 1 year = 7.2 sales x LTV (lifetime value) of \$35,000 each =
\$252,000 Opportunity*

_____ leads per month x 12 months = _____ leads per year

Convert _____% in 1 year = _____ sales

x LTV (lifetime value) of \$_____ each =

\$_____ Opportunity

SUSPECT COST

How much will it cost you to create a white paper to convert these leads?
I used white papers in this example, because they provide the highest ROI.

White paper copywriting costs \$2,000 - \$10,000

Plus other materials you already have + N/A
on hand (e.g. articles, brochures
and sell sheets)

Suspect cost for capturing lost names: \$2,000 - \$10,000

POTENTIAL ROI FOR CREATING A WHITE PAPER CUSTOMIZED TO LEAD TYPE

Example:

<i>Suspect opportunity costs</i>	\$252,000
<i>White paper copywriting costs</i>	- <u>\$ 2,000 - \$ 10,000</u>
<i>Potential ROI</i>	\$242,000 - \$250,000

Your suspect opportunity costs _____

Your white paper copywriting costs - _____

Your potential additional hidden ROI _____

STOP MISSING OPPORTUNITIES

Now that you can see what you're losing by not going after these leads, give me a call. I can help you create a compelling white paper (or other marketing piece) that turns these leads into customers. Contact me today at rachel@freshperspectivewriting.com or 647-342-4921 for a complimentary consultation to discuss your marketing objectives.