

Lead Generation:

2.3 | Tactical Plan



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| Introduction

Marketers today are constantly reminded that the company needs more sales leads...now. Unfortunately, that immediacy quite often is at the direct expense of quality. A flood of ordinary, everyday leads does not mean that successful sales will follow. The challenge, therefore, is to tailor and adopt lead generation programs that will increase the odds of creating better sales leads, ultimately resulting in long-term, happy and profitable customers.

The complex sale is not about mass marketing. Rather, the complex sale focuses on the specific needs and wants of the target audience. It is valuable to businesses that are engaged in long-term sales processes that require prolonged education and nurturing of the prospect. These companies generally provide solutions to their clients, who tend to be more sophisticated, are targeted to solving specific critical business issues and are managed deliberately and with precision. The complex sale most often manifests itself in the environment of business-to-business marketing.

*In our three **Lead Generation** white papers we outline a series of critical success factors that will best serve your needs in today's world. In our final paper of the series, we explore key tactical methods to generate leads as well as the importance of a continuous lead nurturing process.*

| Tactical Plan

- ▶ 1. Integrated Multimodal Tactics
- ▶ 2. Consistent Lead Nurturing

1. Integrated Multi-Modal Tactics

To be successful in generating leads for a complex sale, marketers can't rely on one specific tactic; rather, they must **leverage a portfolio of tactics**. An informed strategy is required for reaching the targeted decision makers, a strategy with multimodality of tactics and repetition of message as key elements.

A multimodal lead generation plan heightens the response rate potential, due to the fact that it **more effectively impacts contacts and their spheres of influence**. While overcoming the inherent challenges associated with timing, this enhances audience awareness as well.

So, what about multimodality of tactics? The CEO who asked his marketing manager about the most effective tactics for generating leads and got the response "all of them" probably wasn't pleased that it takes more than one.

The objective of initiating dialogue with a prospective company can be fulfilled in many ways. It might be by way of an initial face-to-face meeting. Or, he or she may have been motivated by other means to make contact with you. Regardless of how dialogue has been established, other tactical modes to keep it going – e-mail, direct mail, business events, et al. – should be ready and waiting to be brought into play.

A client shared this analogy:

“ I look on our lead generation efforts, particularly in the present economy, as I would a financial portfolio. If I can't measure the tactics or programs in terms of return on investment to the organization — leads generated, business closed, opportunities in the funnel — then why should I expect the company to invest in my fund?

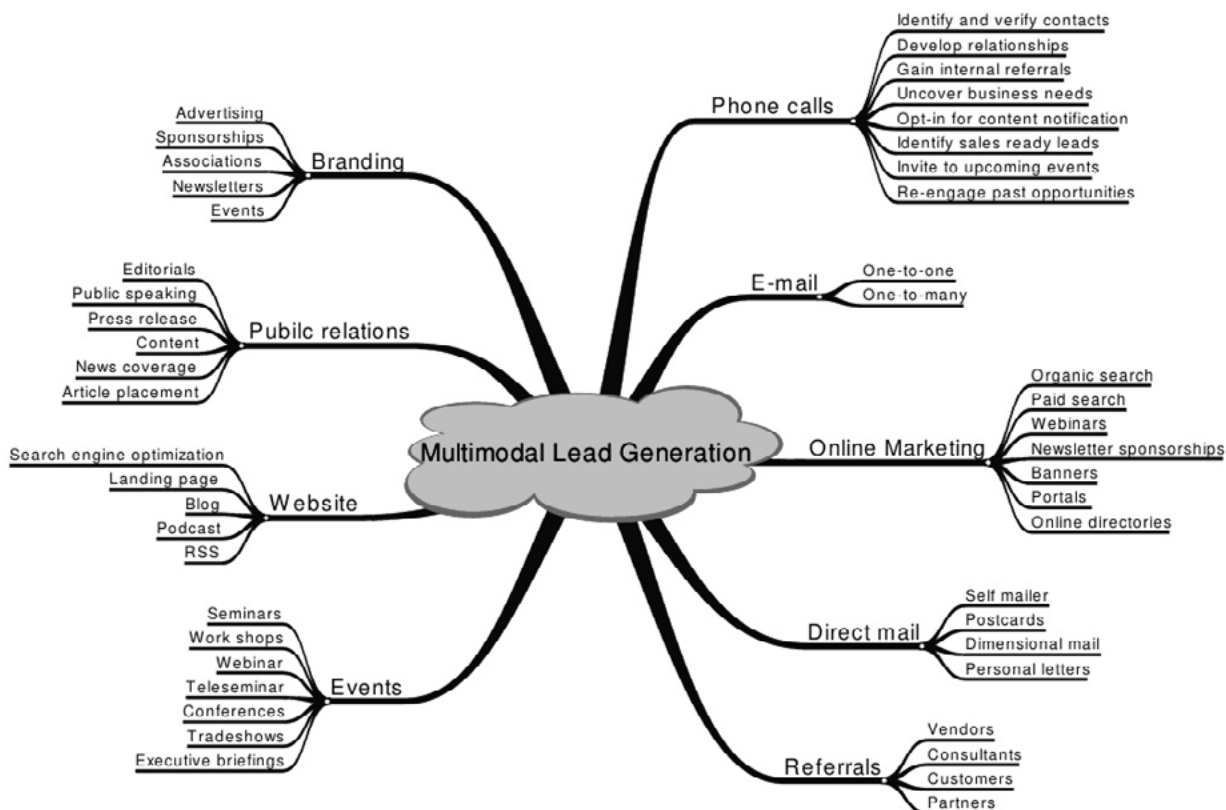
Which is to say, strive to maintain an assortment of researched and/or proven best-fit tactics.

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What tactics are you using to good advantage? What tactics are your competitors using? The flexible and iterative multimodal approach calls for a thorough evaluation and systematic planning of the various lead generation methods. **Success** depends on a **balance of push tactics that encourage the contact to action and pull tactics that create a strong impression** of your company and build brand awareness.

Analyzing, measuring and optimizing tactics is what it's all about. Complacency is not. Tactics that perform well and underperforming tactics should be quickly identified and dealt with as required. And there is close correlation between tactics and budgeted spending; when the two are close together, you will achieve the end-result of optimal return on investment.

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What tactics are your competitors using?



2. Consistent Lead Nurturing

In a broad view, **the secret to successful lead generation** is the underlying **process of lead nurturing**. Lead nurturing converts inquiries into qualified leads and starts the qualified leads on a trajectory to capture sales. It essentially follows up and turns qualified leads into future sales opportunities by consistent and meaningful dialogue, regardless of timing to buy.

Lead nurturing is not a single marketing campaign, but rather a series of steps and communication tactics with the objective of developing and building a relationship with the potential customer. The relationship will result in conversations that may convert to sales.

Lead generation initiates and perpetuates the requisite dialogue in the quest of **opportunities that are relatively imminent**. **Lead nurturing**, on the other hand, **keeps the conversation going over time**, building solid relationships and allowing the creation of interest in products and/or services while bringing the leads to sales-ready status whenever the buying opportunity presents itself. The sales-ready state of such leads is the result of good lead nurturing and ultimately brings in better-qualified leads, higher close ratios, stronger sales pipelines and shorter sales cycles.

A sustainable, long-term lead nurturing process is proactive, intentional and actionable. It incorporates multimodal tactics designed to move prospects from awareness to interest to trial to action. The key is to dynamically integrate your execution, always aligning marketing efforts with sales initiatives. The result offers the greater probability that sales will adopt the working discipline of nurturing leads on a long-term basis.

A lead nurturing program might ask:

- ▶ Who do I want to nurture?
- ▶ What problems does the prospect face?
- ▶ What is the prospect's top priority?
- ▶ What does the prospect worry about?
- ▶ What is my messaging?
- ▶ What is the best way to deliver my messaging?
- ▶ What action should the prospect take?
- ▶ Should my product or service be demonstrated?
- ▶ What are the incentives or inducements?
- ▶ How often should I stay in contact?
- ▶ Which tools require direct sales involvement?

A crucial aspect of lead nurturing is the ability to provide **valuable education and information to prospects**. By enlightening prospects about the ways your business can fulfill their needs, you earn the distinction of expert and trusted advisor. The sales person provides insights and solutions rather than making sales pitches.

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A carefully crafted lead nurturing program anticipates the prospect's questions and responds with timely answers. This inspires awareness that you are creating value by providing useful information. **Relevancy is the key.** By consistently offering relevant content in the context of lead nurturing, the potential customer's inner dialogue will be inclined to respond, "You and I have been talking for quite awhile. You understand me, my company and my industry. You have given me useful and pertinent ideas on this issue. You have helped me sell the idea to my colleagues and they understand and accept it. I realize this is going to be a challenging project, but I think you can do it. Let's get it going."

The true value of lead nurturing comes from the disciplined technique of staying in touch while providing the "right" information throughout the evaluation and buying processes. The result is optimized mind share, efficient budget spending, profitable relationships and increased business.

| To Conclude

The complex sale requires a proven approach that depends on diligence and intelligence. Lead generation specialists are committed to the long-term proposition that digging for leads, educating prospects, navigating the nuances of the complex sale and creating new, high-level return on investment is what has brought lead generation to the position it enjoys in the marketing hierarchy today... vis-à-vis the eight critical success factors.

| About StratMarketing Group (StratMG)

With 95%+ in customer satisfaction ratings and 100s of projects, our proven methodology has successfully generated more than \$100M+ in sales for our industrial manufacturing customers. We help build deep and meaningful relationships with their prospects and customers which in turn is a catalyst to organic sales growth.

We consistently exceed objectives by leveraging complex technologies and analytic methodologies to deliver simplified sales, faster. Our methodology breaks the process into three main categories:

- ▶ Make Customers
- ▶ Manage Customers
- ▶ Monetize Customers

| Specialties

Demand Generation | Marketing Automation | Go-to-Market Strategy | Marketing Operations
Marketing Services | Marketing Strategy | Lead Management | Lead Nurture
Database Marketing | Sales-Marketing Alignment | Lead Qualification

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