

Boost Your Business With Seven Easy Digital Marketing Techniques for Lead Generation

by Yael K. Penn



Growing your in-house database should be at the top of every marketer's list. Why? When done correctly, it will house your most-qualified and responsive prospects.

Though organic list growth may take time and effort, you will definitely see a high return on your investment.

Consider the following techniques to acquire new leads and grow your list with success.

1. Determine your ideal leads and how you reach them

Create a profile for your best customers. Include things such as age, gender, hobbies, job function, how they shop (online or at stores), where they shop, what they read, which websites they visit, etc.

2. Analyze your competition

Take some time to find out what your competitors are doing to generate leads. If they have an e-newsletter, be sure to sign up to receive it. You will find out what type of promotions they are running, any marketing alliances they have formed, and how they are positioning their product or service.

Then take some time to find out where they advertise— websites, magazines, etc.—and whether they are running PPC campaigns and, if so, which keywords they are using. Most of this information can be gleaned from simple web searches.

3. Reach your best customer

Once you've created your customer profiles and finished your competitive analysis, you are ready to develop your lead-generation strategy.

Your strategy can include initiatives such as banner ads on websites that your target audience visits, PPC campaign using relevant keywords, direct mail or email campaigns to magazine subscriber opt-in lists, etc.

You can also approach other products or service providers for co-promotions or mutually beneficial partnerships.

If you have time to dedicate to creating editorial content, two other great lead-generation and PR strategies are starting a blog or an e-newsletter.

4. Realize that your offer is everything

You must create an intriguing offer that will prompt recipients to willingly give you their information in exchange for something they want. Your offer should be something of great interest to your target audience.

For instance, you might send an email introducing your company to a magazine subscriber opt-in list that you believe your target audience reads. By including a free downloadable document such as an industry salary guide, a list of the hottest bars in town, or a best-practices whitepaper, you will be able to capture contact and demographic information for many of the recipients.

Another approach is to ask them to answer a few short questions in exchange for movie tickets or some other premium. Once you've captured their information and they've opted-in to your database, you will be able to continue communicating with that lead on an ongoing basis.

5. Create a landing page

It is extremely important to guide the campaign recipient through the entire process. By creating a landing page on

your website that mirrors your campaign's message and offer from both a design and a copy perspective, you will encourage the recipient to follow through and fill out the form. In addition, you should give prospects the option to call you, in case they do not feel comfortable filling out the form.

6. Use a lead-capture form

Your landing page can link to a lead capture form or you can embed the form in the landing page itself.

Since your prospects will be more prone to fill out a shorter form than a long and drawn out questionnaire, limit the amount of information you are asking them to provide in exchange for their premium. Besides the basic name and email address, think of including one or two well-thought-out demographic questions that will result in information you can leverage for future campaigns.

In addition to the demographic questions, your form should include a checkbox allowing people to opt-in to receive information about your company and future promotions. (According to the CAN-SPAM Act, if people do not explicitly say that they would like to receive emails from you in the future, it is unlawful to send them commercial marketing emails.)

If you do not now have a way to capture leads, an easy alternative is to sign up for Web-based email marketing software. All of them will provide you with both the lead-capture form and a database to house the acquired leads. They all provide you with the ability to download your list as well, so you can upload the new leads into your main database. Some are quite inexpensive, with a monthly price as low as \$19.99.

7. Track your efforts

If you track your lead-generation efforts, you will be able to pinpoint which initiatives are working the best and focus more of your energy on those. You might decide that others aren't worth your time.

In your lead-capture form, include one questions asking people how they heard about you with a drop down menu where customers can select from a list of your current marketing initiatives. Some easy ways to track your initiatives:

Web Analytics: sign up for a free Google Analytics account. This will enable you to track how many people are visiting each page on your site and which campaign they are coming from.

Landing pages: make sure you have a separate landing page for each marketing initiative. Each email, banner, and PPC ad should have its own landing page so you can track page visits to these dedicated pages with your analytics account.

Dedicated 800 numbers: There are services that will provide you with a range of 800 numbers that redirect to your main phone number. Including a dedicated 800 number on each landing page will enable you to associate each call with a specific campaign.

Remember, even if are accurately targeting your best customers, your campaign will be a success only if you get them to act on your offer and opt in to your database. Be sure to spend enough time tailoring your message and offer to the people who will receive your campaign.

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