

Acquia

***6 PRACTICAL STEPS
TO GENERATE
MORE DEMAND
THROUGH YOUR
WEBSITE***





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This eBook explains how your website is a powerful tool for generating new business and important channel in your demand generation process.



Laura Hamilton
VP Demand Generation

FOREWORD

DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION VALUE THE WEBSITE AS A CRITICAL CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH YOU CAN GENERATE NEW BUSINESS?

Your website is often your prospects' first impression of your business. So, making sure you can deliver on their expectations is crucial.

In demand generation, the goal is always to provide enough information and motivation for prospective customers to advance to speaking with your sales team.

High-value content is key; content marketing generates three times the leads than paid search advertising, so it's important to get it right. Once

you've gotten your visitor to your site, you must be able to demonstrate that you understand their challenges by providing them with the resources they need, at the right time on their buying journey.

This guide will look at how you can optimize the website experience for your customers, provide advice on how to overcome any internal or external challenges, and help you transform your site into a valuable tool for generating new business.

—Acquia thought leader Laura Hamilton, VP Demand Generation

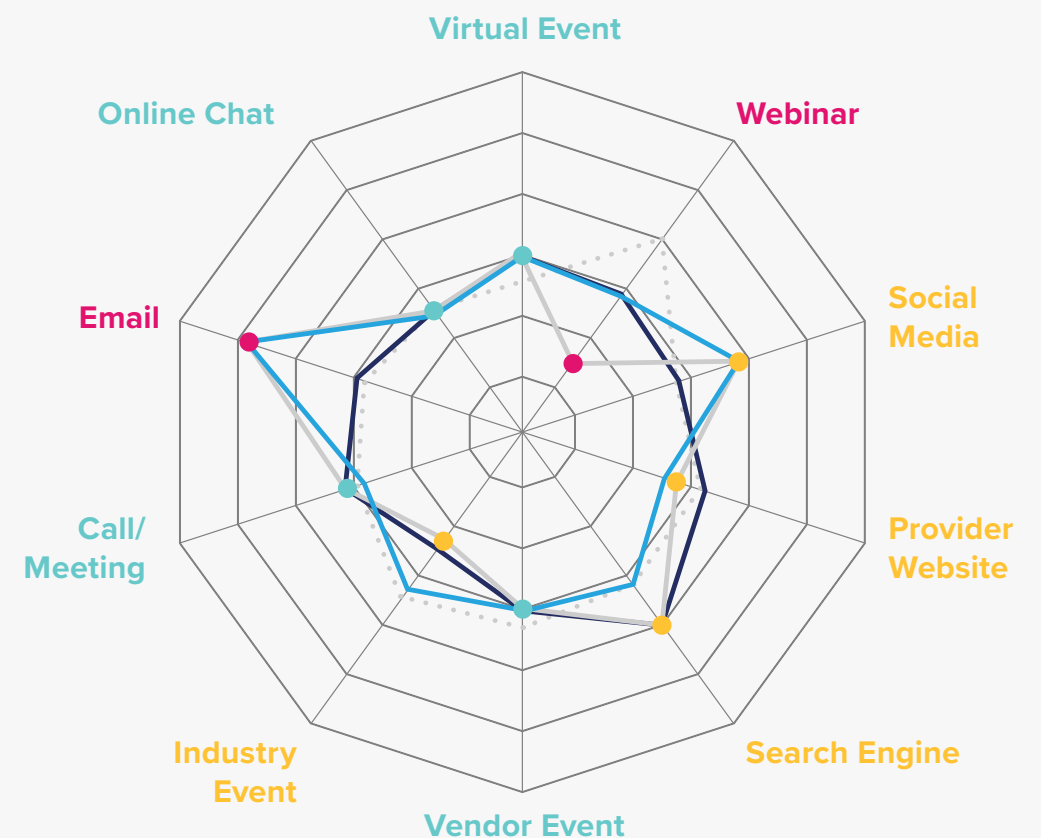
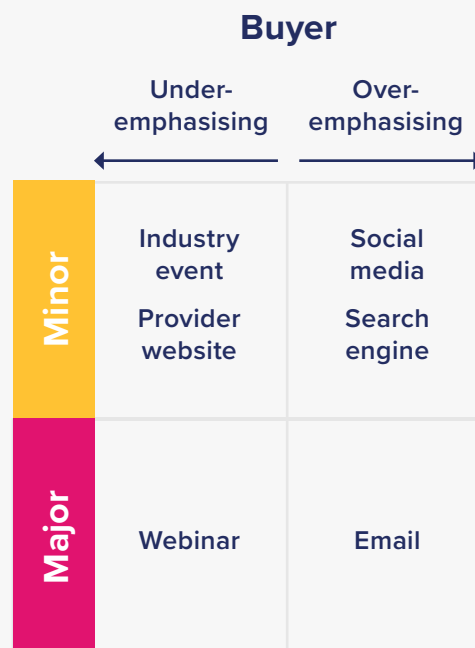
INTRODUCTION

Would it surprise you to learn that many companies fail to maximize the investment in their websites?

They often don't consider it to be one of their most powerful instruments for generating new business – and while they may commit marketing dollars to getting the look, feel, and user experience right, too many neglect to optimize their site to generate new customer leads.

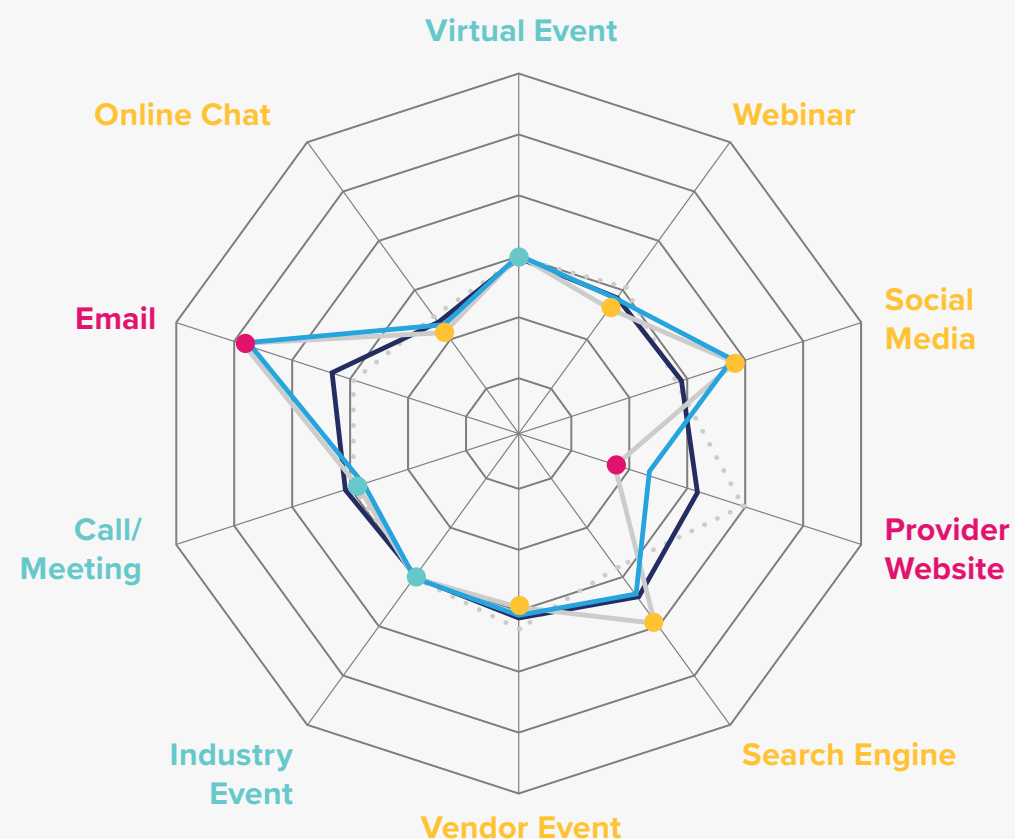
Research by SiriusDecisions shows that when they asked sales, buyers and marketers which marketing channel had the biggest impact at the education, solution, and selection stages, both sales and marketing underestimated the importance of the website to buyers.

EDUCATION STAGE



Key Takeaway:
 Marketers may over-rely on email and under-utilize webinars.
 Note the takeaways in the next two graphics on page 5.

SOLUTION STAGE



Buyer

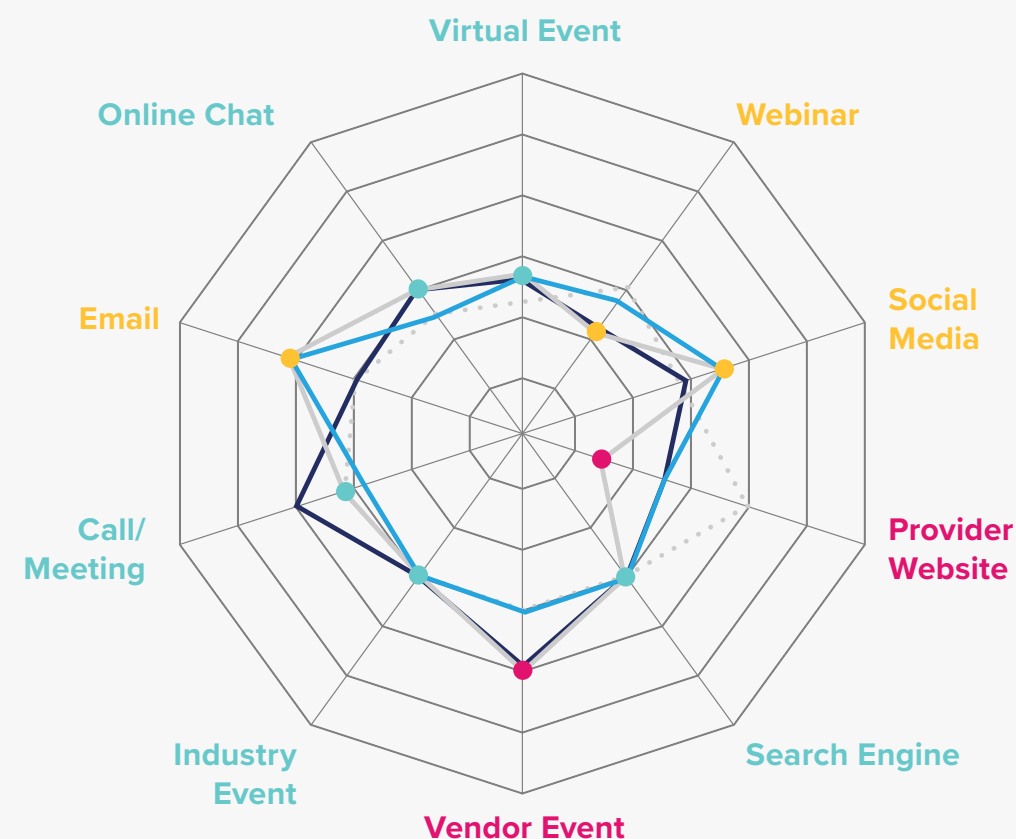
Under-emphasising Over-emphasising

	Buyer	
	Under-emphasising	Over-emphasising
Minor	Webinar Vendor event Online chat	Social media Search engine
Major	Provider website	Email

Key Takeaway: Marketers continue to over-rely on email and under-utilize their website – where buyers are looking for more information.



SELECTION STAGE



Buyer

Under-emphasising Over-emphasising

	Buyer	
	Under-emphasising	Over-emphasising
Minor	Webinar	Social media Email
Major	Provider website	Vendor event

Key Takeaway: Marketers continue to under-utilize their website – and have an opportunity to better align with sales on own brand events.

WEBSITE DEMAND GENERATION: THE CHALLENGES

There are several reasons why businesses fail to capitalize on the lead generating capabilities of their websites.

For example, corporate marketing typically takes ownership of the brand and all the ungated channels through which company information is distributed. That means the person managing the site may have strong brand skills but lacks the necessary motivation when it comes to lead generation.

Also, traditionally, businesses have prioritized other channels for lead generation. For example, while 70 percent of marketers say their

demand generation budgets will increase in 2018, 79 percent credit email as the most effective distribution channel for their demand gen efforts.

The reality is that websites are powerful tools for demand generation, too. We also know that web-sourced leads are typically higher quality, self-qualified, and can be generated at very low cost. That's because individuals are proactively providing their details to a company – signaling an interest in their services!

As such, organizations should invest more resources in existing channels that have proven returns, such as their website.



BACK TO BASICS

There are a few things that you can do to start generating higher-quality leads:

1. RECOGNIZE

Recognize that the website doesn't stand alone. It's an important place to find information and have your buyers engage with your brand, your content, and where you can capture digital body language or buying signals.

2. REDEFINE

Redefine the website's place in the customer's journey; remember buyers use different channels at different stages of the buying cycle to educate themselves and get what they need.

3. SIMPLIFY

Always be available to talk or chat with your customers, at their convenience. Your website isn't a brochure, so the more interactive, the better.

4. INVEST

While organic traffic is the lifeblood of your site, you still need to invest in encouraging re-visits. Individuals who come back to the site are just as important as first-time visitors!

5. BALANCE

Don't go all in on one channel – find the right balance between social media, paid search, display ads, chat, events, and more.

ADDRESS PROSPECTS ALL ALONG THEIR CUSTOMER JOURNEY

It's important to address your potential customers' needs at every stage of your engagement.

At the beginning of the customer journey – or the top of your sales funnel (TOFU) – you want to attract a wide audience of potential leads, through content such as blog articles, for example. From there, calls-to-actions should lead prospects to conversion opportunities, like tip sheets or eGuides that encourage leads to offer their information in exchange for content.

Once a lead converts on an initial TOFU content offer, they'll progress into the middle (MOFU) tier where you can position your business' product

or services through case studies and white papers.

The final, bottom, part of the funnel (BOFU) may involve a free assessment or trial to begin to fully qualify your most interested leads.

**CONTENT
MARKETING
ATTRACTS 3x**

**more leads than paid search
advertising so develop
content your prospects will
find valuable.**

51%

of B2B buyers rely on content now to research their buying decisions

73%

viewed a case study during their research

96%

want content with more input from industry thought leaders

47%

viewed three to five pieces of content before engaging with a sales rep

Source: [2016 Content Preferences Survey](#)

UNDERSTAND YOUR PROSPECTIVE CUSTOMERS

Today customers have high expectations when interacting with suppliers – a report by PwC claims almost a third of us will stop interacting with a favorite brand after just one bad experience.

To connect with prospective customers, it is necessary to gather as much information about them as possible. One of the best ways to engage your target audience is by creating a buyer persona – a profile that represents your ideal customer.

Once you have your buyer persona identified, it's time to use that information to deliver an experience that addresses their needs and

interests. Personalization is an opportunity to demonstrate that you understand the challenges facing your visitors and why they're visiting your site. Your users are leaving a digital trail as they visit your website. You can use this intelligence to serve them relevant content that helps them along their buying journey.

Personalization is also intrinsically linked to delivering a fantastic customer experience (CX). Indeed, according to [Forrester research](#), 68 percent of digital experience leaders prioritize personalization as they understand that customers that feel appreciated will reward brands with repeat business and greater loyalty.

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By creating your own buyer personas, you'll gain the ability to tailor your marketing efforts and connect with your target audience to meet their needs and solve their problems.”

—[Digital Marketing Institute](#).

“

Today's consumers have more options than ever before and high expectations of the brands they choose. Leave them unsatisfied or betray their trust, and they'll go elsewhere. As the marketing landscape becomes more competitive and demanding, marketers need the very best insight, tools, and resources to compete.”

—Closing the CX Gap: Customer Experience Trends Report

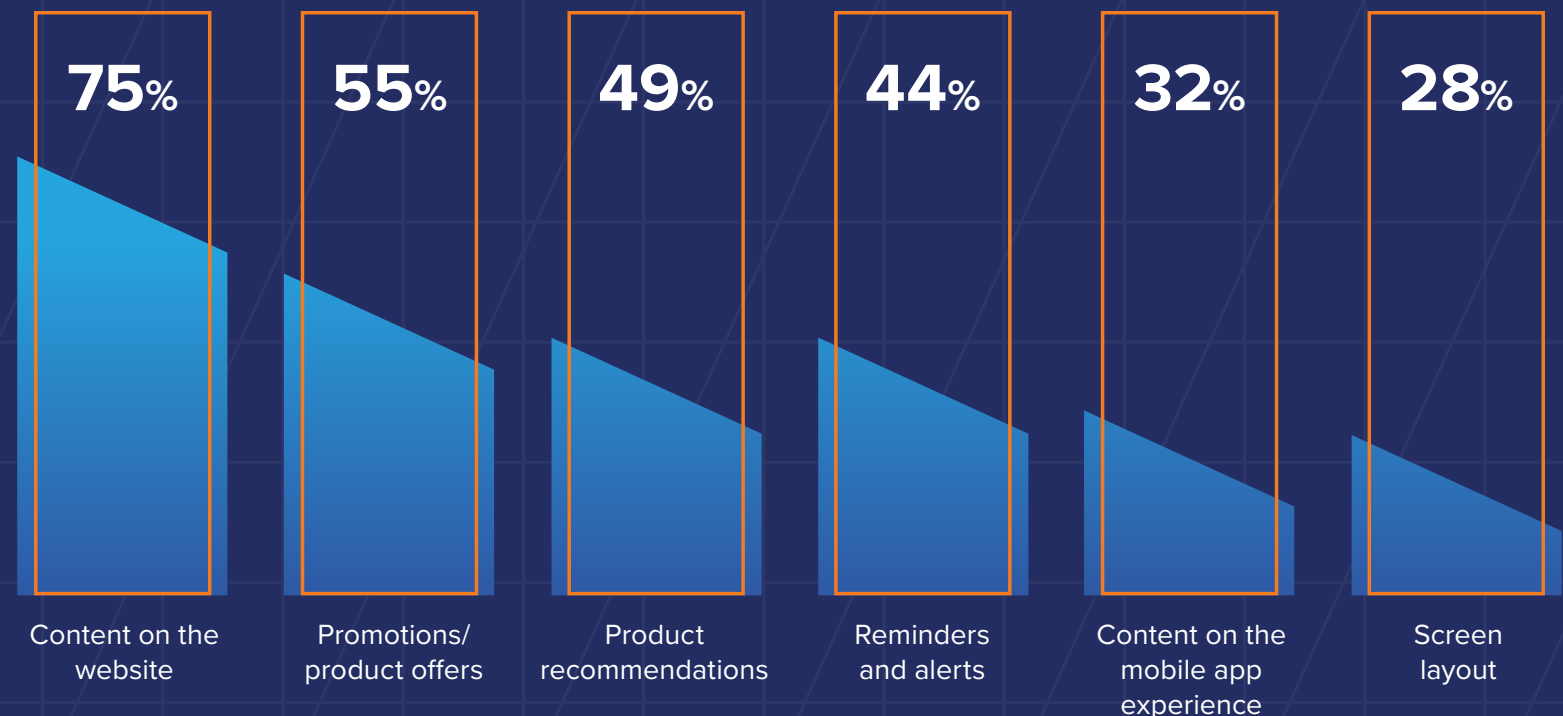
DEVELOP CONTENT YOUR PROSPECTS WILL FIND VALUABLE

Content fuels and fills every digital experience. Personalization cannot happen without content to support each buyer persona:

“Marketing content to engage with customers is the most critical area that firms look to personalize: 75 percent of firms doing personalization aim to personalize content on their website,” says Forrester.

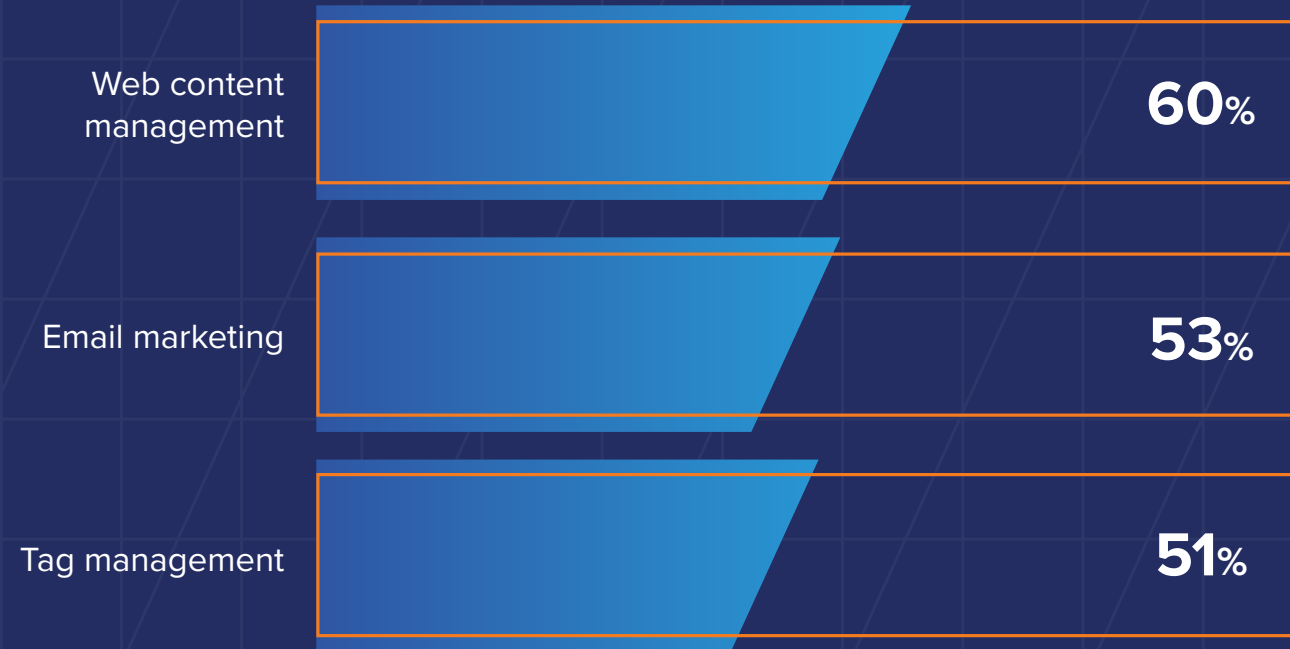
Content-driven personalization is the priority ... for now

“What parts of the experience are you personalizing?”
(Please select all that apply)



Web and email are top personalization software investments

“Which technologies do you currently use to support your personalization goals?”
(Multiple responses accepted)



Base: 70 to 115 digital experience delivery decision-makers

Source: Forrester's Q1 2016 Digital Experience Delivery Online Survey

Based on what you know about the challenges your prospects face and the solutions you offer, ask yourself, ‘what information of value can I provide prospects at each key juncture in their customer journey?’

The answer lies in getting your content correctly aligned to each stage of the

customer’s journey. Successful brands find it useful to create customer journey maps to visualize their interactions with the customer throughout their engagement with them. This can also help identify priorities for improvement and opportunities for innovation and differentiation.



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From your customer journey maps – and intimately understanding your customer’s persona – decide what information could be most useful and usable during their path-to-purchase and beyond.

For example, if you’re in the travel industry you might develop content around inspiring destinations early in the customer’s journey, then offer them personalized travel insurance options later on. Go with your customers’ emotions at every stage.”

—Daryn Mason, CX & Technology Thought Leader

A [2018 Content Marketing Institute survey](#) shows that among content types, eBooks and white papers, case studies, videos and infographics are considered most effective at helping content marketers achieve specific objectives. These are assigned to provide the most value to the customer at the different stages of their journey, whether that's TOFU or MOFU, as discussed earlier.

Remember, you'll need more than one piece of great cornerstone content to make your content count. A good lead will want to see three to five different pieces on average before they contact a sales rep.



ORGANIZE YOUR CONTENT WITH PURPOSE

There can sometimes be friction between the demand generation professional and the web team as to what content should be gated.

The web team may not want to gate any content if their metrics are calculated using visits and engagement rather than actual lead generation, so it's important to strike a balance.

Visitors consider whitepapers, webinars, and case studies as the most valuable content, so look at gating and testing these assets first. You can also use techniques like progressive profiling which enables you to ask additional questions every time someone engages with your gated content.



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Early in the B2B buying cycle, shorter formats work best as customers may be ploughing through many competing options. Inspiring customers using storytelling narrative techniques may also invoke a better emotional response early on too. Remember that most customers still buy on emotion and then justify with facts. This would be a good rule-of-thumb when designing your content marketing flow.”

—Daryn Mason, CX & Technology Thought Leader

OPTIMIZE RESULTS BY TESTING OFFERS AND ITERATING CAMPAIGNS

Remember, successful demand generation is a process, not an event. It is important to define strategy, channels and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – but keep them flexible.

Optimize results by testing offers and iterating campaigns. For example, you can use A/B testing to show two sets of users two different versions of a piece of content or two different modes of consumption – a free sample of a whitepaper or brochure versus a download option for example – to figure out which performs better.

Use the data available across your channels to track leads from touchpoint to sale and leverage those insights to refine and improve demand generation strategy.



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In simple, layman’s terms, A/B testing is a way of testing different scenarios to see what works best/most effectively for the customer.”

—Ian Golding, Certified Customer Experience Professional

INCREASE BUY-IN FROM INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

It's time to close that gap between the website and demand generation manager.

Work to increase inter-department collaboration – particularly those responsible for branding, awareness and demand generation.

Involve the different stakeholders as early as possible in your journey mapping and content marketing programs. Ensure that every activity involves a representative team of every function responsible for the delivery of the customer journey. Think about your organization; what are the different team member's goals or KPIs? How can you help them to help you? The beauty of this approach is that if you get it right, you can optimize the site, so all stakeholders feel included in the process, and all requirements are met!



“
The journey is the accountability of **EVERYONE** in the organization – this must be understood on day one!”

—Ian Golding, Certified Customer Experience Professional

Customer story:

centrica

Centrica is a British multinational energy and services company with its headquarters in Windsor, Berkshire.

THE CHALLENGE

In an effort to achieve an ambitious global rollout, Centrica needed to build seven regional sites in less than six months. If that wasn't challenging enough, Centrica also needed to consolidate over 15 customer relationship management tools and five content management systems into one platform.

THE SOLUTION

In partnership with IMB iX, Centrica worked with Acquia to set up configuration for its Drupal CMS. This included integration with Pardot and Salesforce. With Acquia, Centrica was able to execute multi-site capability and governance with Acquia Cloud Site Factory.

THE RESULTS

- 65 percent of visitors return to the site
- Unique visitors per week: 5k (B2B average for 200 or more employees is ~2k per week)
- Home page bounce rate: 41 percent (typical is 40 to 50 percent for B2B)
Traffic on site increase 20x vs legacy pages on Centrica.com

“

Centrica Business Solutions has been established to provide large energy users with end-to-end solutions to help them better manage and control their energy use. The successful roll out of Centrica's distributed energy & power business has been supported by the deployment of our nine regional Centrica Business Solutions websites,” said Sam Hoyland, Commercial Operations & Marketing Director at Centrica Business Solutions. “Over 65 percent of visitors return to the sites, with some markets' visitor numbers reflecting 15 times higher since the launch of the Centrica Business Solutions brand.”

—Video: Engage Award Spotlight with Mike Bossard

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Your website's ability to generate new leads and ensure the loyalty and satisfaction of your existing clients is one of the most powerful weapons in your arsenal. Remember:

1. Your website is an excellent channel through which you can generate new business by converting prospects into new customers

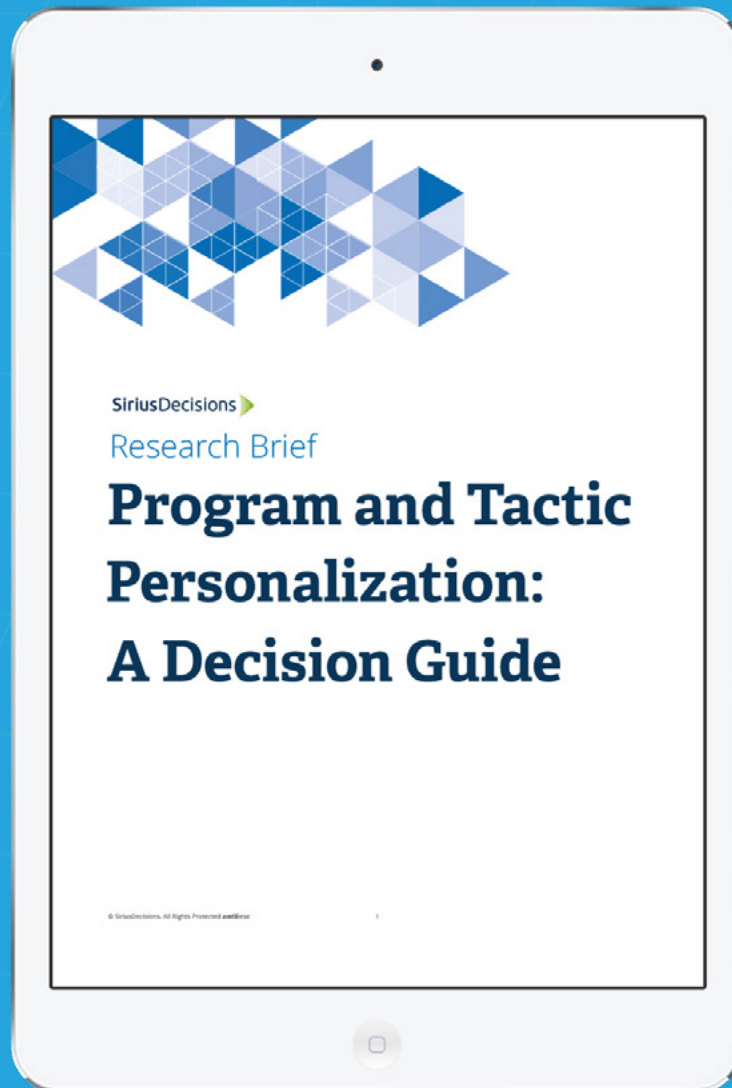
2. Understand your prospects' needs and ensure you provide value to them at every stage of their engagement with you

3. Always be available to advance the conversation with a potential customer

4. The experience should be intuitive, interactive and personalized

5. Bridge the divide between the lead generation and web teams by involving all stakeholders in the process





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Every business wants to deliver more personalized messaging and experience for their customers. But how do you know whether the resources you invest in it will be worth the reward?

TO HELP GET THE BALANCE RIGHT, DOWNLOAD YOUR COPY OF THE FULL RESEARCH REPORT.

ACCESS NOW

acquia.com

