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DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

5 Tips to Unlock ROI

for Building Products Marketers | 2017

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for Building Products Marketers



Digital marketing trends change year after year, but one thing is consistent: Our ability to track and optimize marketing gets better and better. And 2017 is no exception. Digital marketing tools like social media, advertising, SEO and marketing automation are working together more efficiently to make your marketing more effective and connect you with more customers.

So how do you stay on target and make the most of your marketing? Here are five tips to unlock ROI for your marketing programs:

1. Determine the value of marketing programs
2. Empower sales staff
3. Add stronger digital marketing tools
4. Segment audiences
5. Embrace education and content marketing

These tactics, combined with a strong strategic foundation, will elevate both inbound and outbound marketing to shorten the sales cycle and earn more customers.



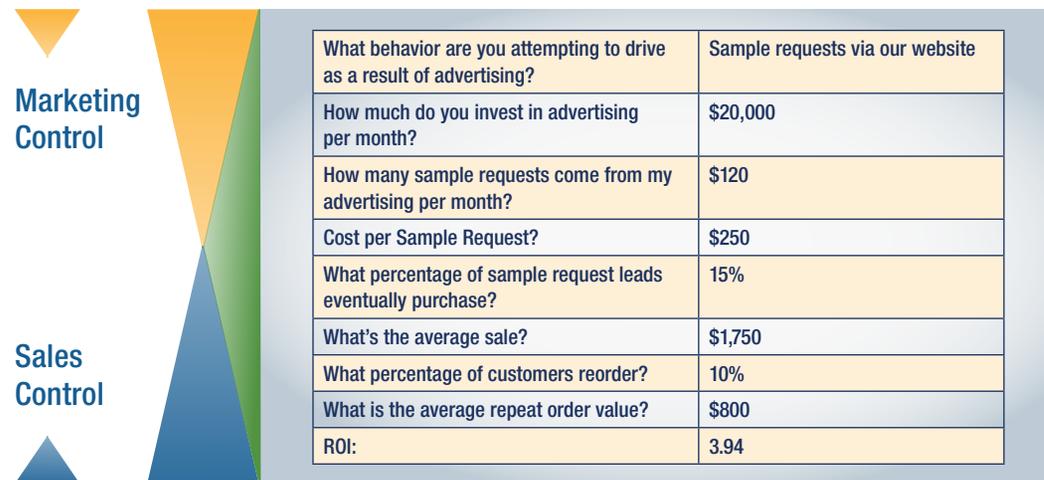
1. Determine the Value of Marketing Programs

More engagement with digital marketing means more accurate ROI. Even traditional materials include URLs and social calls to action that take customers online. In recent years, our ability to analyze user behavior and determine how Facebook, SEO, email and other tactics affect the purchase decision has improved.

However, two-step distribution makes determining ROI especially difficult for most building products manufacturers. It can seem impossible to account for all the variables that lead to purchase when you have little influence at the dealer and contractor level. That's why marketers are focusing on what can be quantified, rather than what can't. When a direct connection can't be made between marketing efforts and offline sales, an intermediate, online conversion – like a sample request – can help connect the dots. Simple calculations for online conversions are the first step toward demystifying ROI.

Sample ROI Scorecard

There are several pieces to the ROI puzzle. Begin isolating and solving for individual metrics. Factors under marketing's control are typically easier to determine. Input from sales becomes important further down the chain.



Determining front-end marketing costs and outcomes based on online conversion points is easier. Later steps like close rates, order value and rate of repeat customers are more difficult to pinpoint. Communication with sales and insights into the sales cycle are key for identifying any level of accuracy.



2. Empower Sales Staff

Looking for a sales rep to give you an accurate close rate? How about asking for feedback on your latest marketing program? A lot of marketers are reluctant to open these doors. The dynamic between sales and marketing can be rocky for a few reasons. Both parties can have a different understanding of the marketplace, the audience and the definitions of success. The only problem is, marketing technology is quickly taking us to a place where we all look to the same success metric – **Sales!**

Working together, marketing can easily break down barriers and look for common ground. A simple path to success looks something like this:

1. **Start with communication** – Knowing what's happening in the field is crucial if we want to tailor messaging to the end user. Sales people are often the shortest path to key insights into customer behavior. Initiating the conversation to find out what sales reps are hearing builds trust and helps marketers refine messaging.
2. **Position marketing as a resource** – Both sides can benefit from a relationship between sales and marketing. Quickly add value for sales reps by framing your questions as an opportunity to learn more about their pain points and barriers to sales.
3. **Create tools to simplify sales' job** – Now that you understand the common challenges sales reps face, use that information to tailor resources to address them. Once you've restructured a sell sheet or developed a comparison chart that makes it easier for reps to communicate with potential customers, your sales team will quickly understand you're on their side.

These three steps can align sales and marketing and open the door for much bigger conversations. The taboo close rates will just become another metric for helping make their job easier. Next, add a CRM to the mix and you have a recipe for success.

Other Tips

- Ask sales reps to share email addresses so you can begin to qualify leads.
- Show reps what tools are available online, and show them how to bookmark them on their phones and tablets for access in the field.
- Share your marketing metrics and successes with sales. It might help fine-tune their strategy.



3. Add Stronger Digital Marketing Tools

While it's getting more important for sales and marketing to work together, it's also getting easier to work together. Market technology can be the glue that holds the pieces together and brings us closer to ROI. And in 2017, these tools are more affordable and approachable than ever. Technology every marketer should have on their bench includes:

CRM – A CRM is more than a contact database. Smart businesses are using CRM as a liaison between marketing and sales to find exactly where leads come from and how valuable they are. Fewer leads fall through the cracks, the best leads rise to the surface and marketing can see which of their tactics are driving the best leads.

Email Marketing – Builders and contractors are attached to their phones, meaning they are only a click and a compelling subject line away at any moment. Most solutions are now powerful enough for segmenting audiences, a/b testing and conversion tracking. Some email tools, like automation platforms, even allow sales people to send direct messages when relevant.

Marketing Automation – Marketing automation takes your CRM and email insights to the next level. If your sales team is reporting information, automation can make decisions about how to target potential customers on the fly. The biggest benefit is the knowledge you bring to your sales team. You'll have interaction history on an individual level, so only the most qualified Web leads are passed along to sales.

Web Analytics – Marketing analytics are no longer something we have to fear. Tools like Google Analytics are free and offer limitless insight with little experience. In recent years, Google has invested heavily in simplifying Analytics and developing resources to teach users of all levels how to get the most out of the platform.

CRM, web analytics and automation give marketing and sales more information and insight into how potential customers interact with you online. See how channels affect ROI and give the sales team the background they need to close.

Insight without Marketing Technology

User enters website



User requests contact from sales



Sales rep notified

Insight with Marketing Technology

User enters website

- Reads a commercial case study
- Views pricing page

User requests contact from sales

- Discloses company size
- Receives sell sheet via email

Sales rep notified



4. Segment Audiences

Builders and architects speak different languages. Contractors and dealers have different values. Tools like email and advertising give us the ability to efficiently tailor messages and value propositions to individual audiences.

The likelihood of purchase can also change for each of these audiences. Understanding how to target and influence the decision makers in your industry is key to determining the ROI of any program. Tools to find and understand your targets include:

- **Search engine audits** – Search behavior tells us the terms customers use to find you. What questions are they trying to answer? What problems are they trying to solve? Looking at how each audience finds you can tell you a lot about how to position your brand.
- **Content analysis** – How many unique audiences do you speak to on your website? Clearly separating content for builders, architects and dealers makes your website easier to digest and gives you more insight into how your prospects and customers think.
- **Competitive intelligence** – The building products industry is rife with competition. You may not segment audiences and tailor messaging, but your competitors likely are. Reviewing their websites, blogs and social media is a great way see what resonates with an audience.



5. Embrace Education and Content Marketing

What's the one thing that builders, contractors and architects want from building products manufacturers more than anything else? Information about how and when to use your products. Unfortunately, this key information commonly isn't available.

Creating new content can be a tall order when you're short-staffed and on a budget. But there are two key points to remember when you get started:

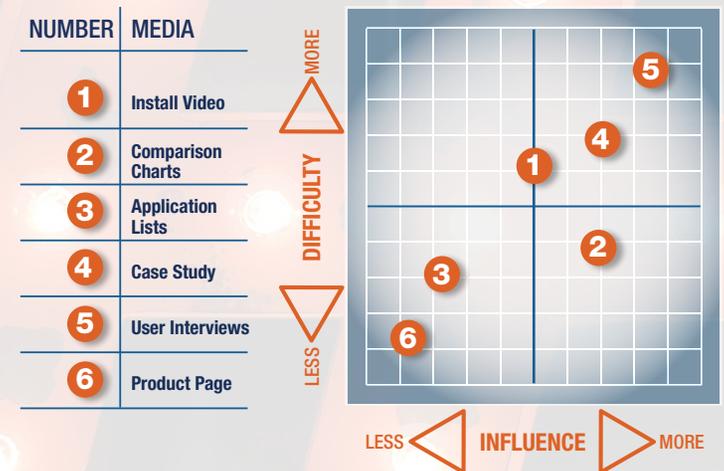
Start simple – Most builders, contractors and architects are looking for the basics. Installation, specifications and how-tos are some of the most sought after information. Think of the questions you and your sales team answer regularly.

Trust is earned and it takes time – The larger the purchase, the more time it takes to influence and earn trust. It can take several interactions with different types of content before your audience is ready to purchase.

Content doesn't convert customers alone, but answers to common questions will feed into sales team materials, marketing automation strategy and ultimately unify all the pieces that lead to ROI. Advanced ROI models can even begin to determine the value of your content over time.

Consider potential influence and ease of development in your content marketing strategy. Depending on your resources, some items may be more or less difficult. Plot out all options to understand value before beginning.

Content Development Matrix





About True Digital Communications

We have more than 20 years of experience in the building products industry. True Digital Communications' Brand Construction division is a complete digital and traditional marketing service suite designed to generate sales leads.

We use our understanding of two-step distribution, home center marketing and builder behavior to develop a results-oriented approach. Then we add digital tactics to track leads, generate sales and bring the program to life.

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