



LAIRE®

The Ultimate Guide to Marketing for Manufacturers

Manufacturing Marketing Best Practices to Attract and Convert
More Leads, Delight Your Customers, and Increase ROI

Introduction:

This guide is a strategic roadmap to help your manufacturing company leverage the power of marketing to generate high-quality leads and increase conversions.

Marketing plays a crucial role in enhancing brand visibility, establishing a strong market presence, and driving sustainable growth. By implementing the marketing strategies presented in this guide, you'll learn how to effectively communicate your services and offerings, differentiate yourself from competitors, and engage authentically with your target audience.

From email marketing tactics to optimizing current content, this guide provides actionable insights and helps you get started on building a powerful marketing strategy to build long-term, positive customer relationships.

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Getting Started: Understanding Inbound Marketing for Manufacturers

Customers are constantly engaging with brands online. From exploring a company website to liking the company's posts on social media, customers interact with businesses online in various ways. The more valuable online touchpoints your brand has, the more opportunities your customers (and potential customers) have to engage with you. This is why inbound marketing is key.

Inbound marketing is the process behind creating value-driven content, attracting potential customers online, and nurturing customer relationships through the buyer's journey.

Manufacturers can benefit more significantly from inbound marketing than traditional marketing for three main reasons:



Better Reach: Sharing your content online and setting up digital marketing campaigns give your business a wider and more powerful reach than traditional marketing. There are 5.3 billion people on the internet — you're selling your company short if you don't fully utilize the power of your online presence.



Lower Cost: Digital marketing is significantly more cost-effective than traditional marketing because you can target your exact audience with the medium they are already using.



Accurate Tracking: You can accurately track the success of your digital campaigns in real-time and easily calculate the ROI and other necessary key performance indicators (KPIs) of your marketing initiatives.



Over the past decade, businesses have had to pivot their marketing strategies to meet the rising demands of having an online presence. Because of this, many companies are moving toward using social media, paid ads, content marketing, email, and other forms of digital marketing to attract new potential customers and bring in more revenue.

Let's move on to the other forms of marketing your manufacturing company can leverage, starting with your website.

Your Manufacturing Company Website

We've said it before and we'll say it again: Your website should be a lead generation machine — but many manufacturing brands are lacking in this arena.

By using an integrated approach of digital marketing tactics, you can revolutionize the way you attract, secure, and analyze leads, and ultimately achieve significant business growth and build long-term relationships with your customers.

Manufacturing companies in particular are notoriously far behind other B2B industries in terms of using digital marketing tactics to attract new business. This is where an optimized website and marketing strategy can significantly enhance your marketing efforts.

For a more significant uptick in lead generation and conversion, consider establishing the following on your website:



Lead forms: Conducting business virtually creates a goldmine of opportunities to learn more about your prospective or current clients. Simple lead forms integrated with incentives like whitepapers, consultations, guides, eBooks, or content can capture valuable lead information to help you strategize and nurture potential deals.



CTAs: A call to action (CTA) is an engaging direction that entices the user to take a specific action, including directions to “sign up,” “learn more,” or “request a demo.” Research shows that strategically crafting and placing your CTAs has meaningful results: According to a 2023 Hubspot study, personalized CTAs perform 202% better than generic options.



Optimal UX/UI: User experience (UX) and user interface (UI) are website design elements relating to how easy your platform is for users to access, navigate, and use from a variety of devices. By modernizing your website with high-quality contemporary design and intuitive navigation, you improve your virtual first impression and automatically entice users to interact with your brand.



Why HubSpot Is an Ideal Platform for a Manufacturer's Website



Digital marketing opens up millions of doors, but it can be hard to tell which methods and platforms are right for your business. When it comes to the manufacturing industry, HubSpot is the best solution on the market, and here's why:

Ease of Use

HubSpot is designed for scalability and an easy user experience. Even if your staff is not incredibly tech-savvy, the program is fairly easy to understand and has a dedicated support team and knowledge base you can reference at any time. HubSpot is meant to meet your business needs as your business grows without adding unnecessary features and functionalities that make it too complex and time-consuming to use.

Convenient Tracking

Keeping track of emails, social media interaction, and clicked links can seem daunting. Platforms like HubSpot simplify this process and provide a top-down view of interactions with every lead and customer. This not only provides a thorough picture of how long your company's sales cycle tends to be, but it also makes it easy to effectively calculate the ROI on your digital marketing efforts.

Versatility and Customization

HubSpot's extreme versatility and customization options are one of its main attractions but so is its integration ability. HubSpot can integrate with numerous programs and functions that give a "bird's eye view" of the sales, marketing, and customer service functions, all in one platform. Other functions can be integrated as well, and these robust features provide in-depth insight and visibility on the entire customer journey.

Time-Saving Capability

Manufacturers have incredibly long sales cycles, which can often take up to a year or more. This makes inbound marketing a top priority in the manufacturing sector. By amping up inbound marketing efforts with HubSpot's help, sales cycles can be drastically cut.

HubSpot is known for transforming the old "sales funnel" model into the Flywheel, which centers around quickly blurring the lines between inbound and outbound marketing with strong search engine optimization (SEO), content, and customer experience to continually delight prospects and make them frequently revisit your website.

HubSpot for Manufacturers

strives to make customer relationship management simpler while improving the customer experience and addressing inefficiencies throughout your sales and business processes.



Content Marketing for Manufacturers

With an inbound approach to content, you can capture the attention of your ideal audiences online and provide solutions that address your customer's pain points. Manufacturers are quick to think in terms of products and features, rather than focusing on thoughtful solutions and growth-driven results.

The goal instead is to offer more of a helpful approach that positions your business as a trusted, industry leader. You can do this by providing educational content that is quick to teach, rather than sell. To put it bluntly — it's about them and not you.

Think about it: If your potential customer can easily identify what your manufacturing business is providing and how you plan to solve their problems, then they are more likely to make a buying decision. If manufacturing customers are looking for deeper insights and more customized content, then the proper response is to find ways to captivate their attention with engaging pieces that delight and, ultimately, convert.

1. Plan

Start With the “Why”

Answer these questions:

- Why does your business exist?
- Why should your customers care about what you do?
- Why are you different than your competitors?
- Why do you bring value to the manufacturing industry?

The answer to these questions will be the driving force for the rest of your initiatives. You need content that addresses customer pain points and provides a unique value proposition to set your business apart.

Identify the “Who”

To craft valuable content, it's crucial that you understand and accurately define your audience. Creating buyer personas can help you target prospects and customers on a deeper level.

The success of your content strategy hinges on the fact that you're marketing to the right people. The process of defining a manufacturing persona might require a little bit of digging and tweaking, but the end result will be well worth your time.

- To identify your personas, start by writing out their:
 - Personality traits
 - Buying habits and behaviors
 - Job roles and responsibilities
 - Pain points
 - Methods for searching for answers online



**People don't
buy what you
do, they buy
why you do it."**

Simon Sinek,
**Business Leadership
Author & Speaker**



To take it a step further, provide insights into the types of customers that you're already attracting, any common purchasing objectives they may have, and the ultimate reason they are seeking out your manufacturing company.

The patterns and habits of the personas you discover during this process should lay the foundation for every piece of content that you create. It will take some finessing to get these stereotypical buyers correct, but the result will be the ability to craft personalized, effective, and impactful content that speaks directly to your ideal audiences.

Setting SMART Goals

Goals give us direction and focus and provide a benchmark by which we can measure our success. There's a goal-setting concept in inbound marketing that breaks down the process into easy-to-follow steps:

- **S** - Set **Specific** Goals
- **M** - Set **Measurable** Goals
- **A** - Set **Attainable** Goals
- **R** - Set **Relevant** Goals
- **T** - Set **Timely/Time-Bound** Goals

Smart manufacturing marketing strategies always include SMART goals. The SMART framework helps you create and achieve goals that are carefully planned, clearly defined, and trackable. Use this formula before jumping into the content creation process to ensure that you stay on the right track.



2. Create

Creating effective content is the next step toward a wildly successful marketing plan. As a manufacturing company, you should provide your leads with valuable content that helps promote their ability to make informed decisions based on their needs.

Perhaps you already have content on your site right now that answers the questions of your buyers and shares valuable information that can be reworked. Let's start there.

3. Optimize

Informational PDFs or embedded Word documents on your website may have great information, but they're most likely not helping you at all because Google cannot see or read that content.

We recommend using a process called ROPS, which stands for Rework, Optimize, Publish, and Share. Instead of focusing only on creating new digital content, make your current pieces work smarter for you — this includes your current product, service, and industry-specific pages. There is immense value in your existing marketing assets if optimized correctly.

Make sure that your web pages house content that informs, educates, and appropriately links the customer to where they need to go next in their journey.



Blogs: Blog posts can be a great way to introduce audiences to specific manufacturing concepts in which your manufacturing business is an industry leader. Blog posts can include educational topics that can help bring traffic to your website or can discuss more granular topics that focus on your specific manufacturing niche.



Case Studies: Your customers' experiences carry a lot of weight when it comes to influencing the decisions of prospects. Case studies are a powerful resource that can allow you to share your success stories and highlight your close relationships with your partners and customers.



Videos: As manufacturers, seeing your processes in action can give prospects an added level of insight that may influence them to learn more. Product videos and demos help visualize your capabilities and your technical expertise, while a factory tour or customer interview helps show a behind-the-scenes look at what a partnership with your business looks like.



Examples of Content Your Manufacturing Company Can Create for Lead Generation



Spec Sheets and Brochures: From a first glance, customers want to know the essentials of your product offering — performance characteristics, component materials, size and weight, etc. Spec sheets and brochures give your customers the information they need to determine if your offering is what they're looking for. Make these as detailed as possible, as customers may refer back to them even after their purchase.



eBooks: For content that is more in-depth than a blog, eBooks can serve as a one-stop source for detailed information about your business, your products, or the services that customers are seeking. eBooks are a great content piece for your lead generation efforts since they're high-value and may be worth gating.



Infographics: Content with smart design elements can make a huge impact on customers. Infographics enable you to share helpful information and statistics in a concise, visually appealing way. In the same vein, checklists involve a level of engagement that traditional content pieces don't. When executed well, both will be memorable to your customers.



Pillar Pages: Pillar pages serve as a hub of information for a single topic, product, or service. They provide a comprehensive overview of your areas of expertise and offer a great way to generate clicks for your other content pieces, as you can incorporate links to additional resources.



Buyer's Guides: Content marketing is not just for top-of-funnel prospects — plan to create content for prospects that are in the consideration phase of your buyer's cycle as well. Content such as buyer's guides that help compare your product offerings can make decision-making easier for customers and help them move toward a purchase.



Pricing Calculators: Some customers visiting your website want to cut to the chase. Does your product or service fit their budget? Creating pricing calculators for your products offers insight into whether your offering is a good fit for your customers' budgets. Additionally, showing transparency in your pricing can help build trust with prospects.





FAQs: Not sure where to begin with your content development? An FAQ page can be a great place to start. By creating a resource for your customers and prospects to answer their immediate questions, you can help accelerate the buying cycle and get them engaging with your sales and engineering teams faster.



Social Media: See what your manufacturing audiences — and your competitors — are sharing online through social media channels like Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook. Social media allows you to find and create hashtags that correspond with your manufacturing niche and build an audience with similar interests. Plus, with the interactive element of social media, you can talk directly to your audience in a friendly, approachable way.

Content for the Manufacturing Buyer's Journey

Your personas will follow a specific path through the buyer's journey to move from awareness, consideration, and ultimately to a decision phase. We want to prioritize delivering the right content to the right audience(s) at the right time. A successful content marketing strategy seeks to reach manufacturing leads at all stages of this process.

For the users in the awareness phase, consider crafting blog posts, an eBook, or providing general industry-specific news and insights. Frequently update your manufacturing company's blog with thoughtful content that matters most to your target audience.

Consideration phase buyers could benefit from product comparison guides or case studies to move them further through the sales funnel. For example, a great case study proving that your B2B business knows how to solve a customer's pain would be a valuable piece in this stage.

For a user who is ready to make a decision, offer product videos or brochures, specification sheets, or a pricing calculator just to name a few ideas. The options truly are endless.



Email Marketing for Manufacturers

Email marketing is a type of direct marketing that involves sending emails to prospective or current customers.

There are countless benefits to email marketing for manufacturing companies. It can help you create a direct line of communication with your target audience, which helps your business build rapport and establish a relationship with prospective and current customers. Crafting thoughtful and strategic messaging via emails can be one of the most valuable assets in your manufacturing marketing plan. But first, let's go over the steps needed to create email campaigns that convert.



Email has an ability many channels don't: creating valuable, personal touches — at scale."

David Newman,
Marketing Expert & Author

1. Know Your Audience

It's imperative that you understand your target audience and their needs to show them you're right for the job.

Here are some tips to identify your audience to segment your email list:

Research your potential audience: Find out what makes your audience tick with demographic and psychographic insights to make your campaigns as effective as possible.

Create buyer personas: Crafting an idea of your business's ideal customer can help you effectively identify who to send your emails to.

Check website and social media analytics: Understanding who your business's website and social media accounts are attracting can provide context to who you should target for new business.

Once you identify and get to know your audience, your manufacturing business can tailor your email campaigns to each segment. Every customer is different and presents a unique set of challenges they are looking to solve. By showing you understand their business, they are more likely to engage with your emails.

Here are some ways you can tailor your campaigns to different business segments:

Demographics: Divide your email list based on your target audience's demographics such as industry, geographical location, and business size to ensure your distribution remains relevant to your audience.

Buyer stage: Divide your email marketing for manufacturing businesses by their stage in the sales process. For example, divide by existing customers, new prospects, and old customers so you can base your messaging around the likelihood of conversion.

Behavior: No one likes getting emails they don't want to read. You can segment your target audience based on how they have interacted with your content in the past to gauge their interest.

2. Craft Compelling Subject Lines

With so many emails coming into your customers' mailboxes, you have to make a good impression. Say something that will catch their attention immediately so that they click "open." Crafting an eye-catching subject line can do exactly that. Here are some tips to consider when crafting your compelling subject line in email campaigns:

Highlight a promotion: Creating urgency and calling out a special or timely promotion can entice your audience to engage and convert quickly.

Personalize the subject line: Highlighting someone's name, job, or skills in the subject line can make your routine campaign seem more personable and targeted.

Get to the point: Keep your subject line short and sweet to ensure your message is noticed and resonates with your target audience.

Here are some examples of effective and powerful subject lines for your manufacturing industry email campaigns:

- *New Product Alert: Introducing Our Latest Innovation*
- *Limited Time Offer: 24 Hours Left to Save!*
- *Hey Steven, Here's How Our Products Can Streamline Your Operations*
- *Check Out the Top-Selling Products of the Year*

Implementing these tips can have a profound impact on your email marketing campaign's overall engagement.

3. Make It Easy to Unsubscribe

By providing an opt-out link in your emails, subscribers have the option to adjust their preferences and unsubscribe if your content is no longer relevant to them. This can improve email engagement rates and create a positive user experience.

Here are some tips on how to include an opt-out link in your emails:

- *Make the opt-out link easy to find and avoid using tiny text*
- *Send a confirmation after a subscriber opts out*
- *Use a one-click opt-out to make the process easy for subscribers*

4. Focus on Relevant Content

The content in your emails must be relevant to your audience's needs and interests. Many people receive hundreds of emails a day. You want to make sure your content is engaging and relevant to your target audience's needs. Here are some tips to keep in mind when creating content that resonates with your audience and encourages them to interact:

Provide a solution: Be upfront with which challenge your services are solving for your target audience. By addressing the initial challenge, you can establish credibility and drive inquiries.

Add calls to action: Encourage your audience to take action by using clear CTAs throughout your emails, whether they be in the subject line or body copy. CTAs can engage your audience and drive them to contact your business, visit your website, and more.

Personalize the messaging: Much like subject lines, tailoring the body content of your email can remind your audience that you understand who they are and how you can help them achieve their goals.

Incorporate visuals: Keep your audience's attention by breaking up big walls of text with different types of visual content such as images, videos, and GIFs.

In this day in age, we all digest various types of content. When crafting your manufacturing marketing campaigns, it's important to be mindful of which types of content will resonate with your audience the most. Some examples of different types of content to highlight in your email marketing for the manufacturing industry are:

- *Case studies*
- *Industry news*
- *Testimonials*
- *Videos*
- *Webinars*
- *Podcasts*

There are endless possibilities for the types of content you can use in your email campaigns. However, being mindful of your audience and ensuring you are tailoring your messaging to their needs should stay at the top of the list.



5. Optimize for Mobile Devices

It can be difficult for some recipients to read and navigate emails on their phones. When an email doesn't load or is unresponsive and slow, recipients may delete the email or not engage with the content sent. To avoid a situation like this, here are some tips to optimize your emails for mobile devices:

Use a mobile-friendly layout: Create a responsive design that can adjust to fit the screen size of the mobile device on which your recipient is viewing the email.

Use large fonts: Enhance your email campaign's mobile-friendliness by using 16-pixel font size for easy readability.

Be mindful of attachment size: Using large images, videos, or files can make the page speed on mobile slow down and may deter people from continuing to read.

Keep subject lines short: Mobile devices only show 25-30 characters in a subject line, so be mindful of how long your subject line is when optimizing for mobile.

6. Measure and Improve

It's important for your business to always track email campaign metrics to understand how your emails are being delivered and the level of engagement. By tracking the success of your email campaigns, you can make improvements based on your results and, in turn, drive more business.

Here are some key metrics to track for your email campaigns:

- *Bounce rate*
- *Clickthrough rate*
- *Conversion rate*
- *List growth rate*
- *Open rate*
- *Unsubscribe rate*
- *Sharing/forwarding rate*



Social Media Marketing for Manufacturers

Identify Your Champion

Your social media champion is like the project manager for every action taken on your social platforms regarding strategy. They'll need to be organized, able to set and meet deadlines, and delegate tasks — like copywriting and graphic design — to other team members.

They also need to work to build authentic connections that turn leads into conversions and ensure that your company's messaging reaches the intended audiences.

Pick the Right Platforms

Meet your prospects on their platform of choice. If you've been putting all your eggs into the Facebook basket, and your customer base mostly spends time on LinkedIn, you're missing the opportunity to connect with them.

Each social media platform has its own nuanced approach. Your posts should follow suit but with your own unique spin. If you're not knowledgeable about navigating a certain platform, chances are that there is someone on your team who's a pro at it. Delegate the posting to them.

Communicate Your Value

Believe it or not, your viewers don't know everything about you. Remind them what your business does and that you do it well.

And don't just tell them in a social post that goes nowhere — give them a link to learn more on your website, while getting answers to questions they might have about specific services. An added bonus: They'll be that much closer to your contact form.

Additionally, you can reinforce your 5-star quality by sharing your company reviews as posts on your social media channels. If you have a testimonial page on your website, even better. Your post can point the social media traffic back to your site to engage and eventually convert.

Lean on Content Curation

Most social media platforms prioritize posts that are authentic over clickbait or "sales-y" ones. One of the best ways to be genuine is to share educational or helpful content. That said, a big drawback to this is finding the time to create mass amounts of high-quality original content. Instead, many companies rely on content curation.

Content curation is essentially sharing others' content alongside your original work — providing credit to the original creators, of course. This could be anything from simply sharing an in-depth post from an industry publication to providing expert analysis on a relevant news article. Curation allows you to share content that your readers and clients will enjoy while still managing your time wisely.

Keep Up With Video

Video is the best way to pack a punch in a minute or less. Because video tends to be more engaging and memorable than other forms of content, it's more likely that your audience will remember your brand and take action based on the content they've seen.

Video content can also help build trust and credibility with your audience by showcasing your products or services in action, featuring customer testimonials, or demonstrating your industry expertise. Further, it can help boost your social media reach and engagement, as more and more platforms prioritize videos in their algorithms.



Feature Your Team

Showcasing your team offers a more personal, humanizing, and behind-the-scenes look at your business. True social media magic is made when you have a mix of organic and strategic posts, such as sharing a company blog article or talking about your services.

You can post about Susie's birthday, but your feed shouldn't only be pictures of balloons and cake or smiling faces. Mix it up and guide users back to your website by posting about the free resources you provide, what industries you serve, and more.

Tag Strategically

There are two types of hashtags: the fun ones (think #TGIF) and those that can get you found when viewers are searching hashtags by topic (such as #DigitalMarketing).

It's okay to use a mix of both for personality, but don't give up the chance to be more easily found by your target audience. Including relevant and descriptive hashtags in your posts can be a great way to put your business in front of the eyes of new prospects.

Remember: Don't include too many hashtags at once, and don't use ones unrelated to your business or industry. Otherwise, it can look like clickbait and discredit you in the eyes of viewers.

Be Consistent and Schedule

Probably our favorite social media marketing hack is to plan and schedule content for your social channels well in advance. Doing so allows you to use your time effectively and ensure your accounts are regularly updated with content.

Social media schedulers such as Hootsuite, Buffer, Sprout Social, Everypost, and Social Oomph allow you to plan, write, and schedule your social content calendar with ease. With evergreen content scheduled in advance, you can focus on the real-time, highly relevant posts that keep you looking well-informed and up-to-date with the latest news.

Show Your Personality

You have an incredible opportunity to connect with your audience through social media marketing, but with so many brands vying for attention, it's critical to stand out by showcasing your business's unique personality. This means defining your brand's values, voice, and style and infusing them into your social media content.

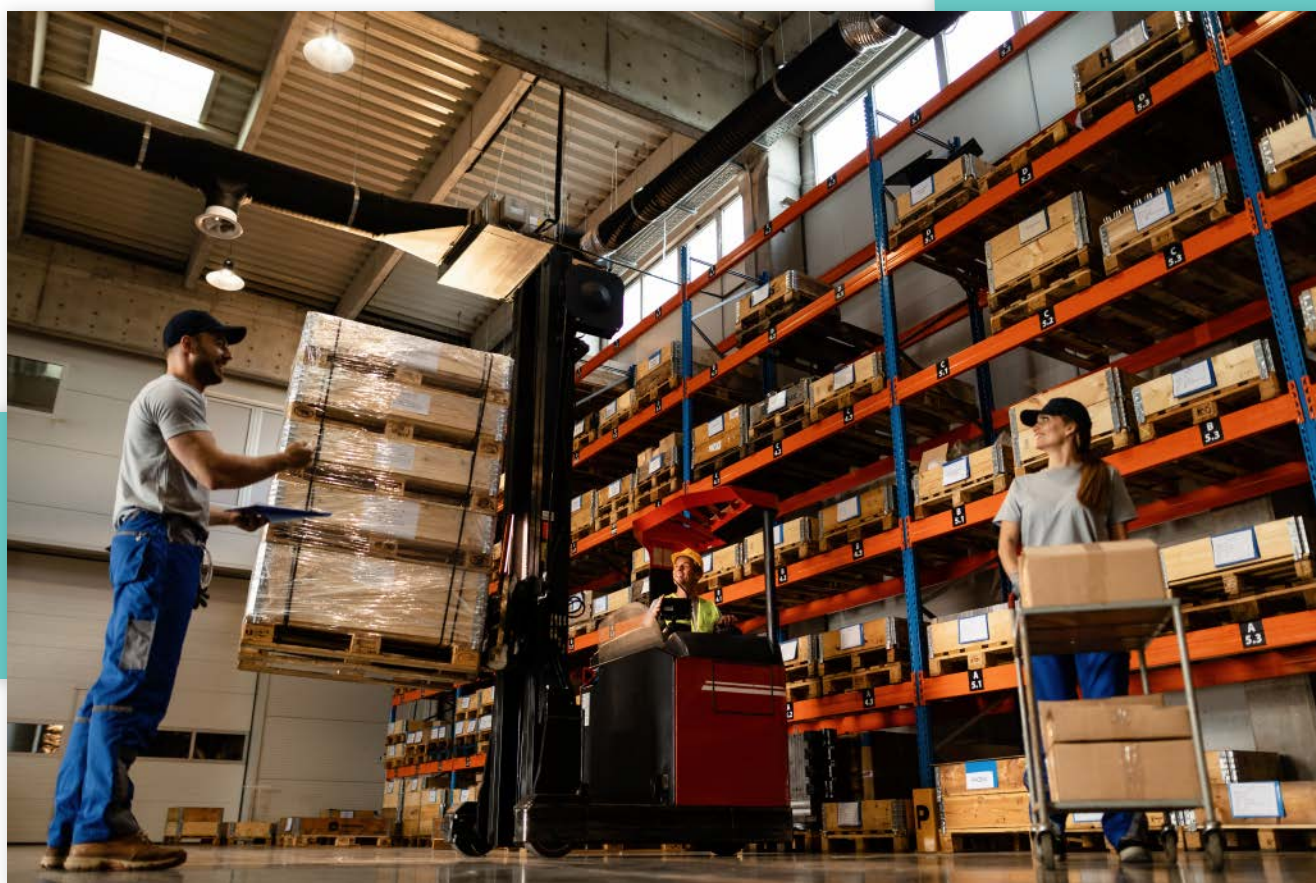
Be authentic, relatable, and engaging with your audience by using humor, storytelling, or visual elements to convey your brand's message. Don't use social media as a simple broadcasting tool to blast advertisements and promotions. Use it to create a strong emotional connection with your followers, increase engagement, and ultimately build brand loyalty.

Track Results and Adjust

Make sure you're also utilizing the analytics and data provided by your social media channels to track your performance. These tools give you insight into what currently interests your audience, what types of content you should be producing, and where you can make improvements.

Keep in mind that organic social isn't always directly attributable to sales — but that doesn't mean it doesn't have an impact.

For example, posting about Tyler's work anniversary or sharing an industry leader's article may not lead to a surge of new buyers, but it can make your brand appear more credible and approachable in the eyes of your audience, which can build and strengthen customer relationships over time. Think of it as social networking.



The Benefits of Video Content for Manufacturing Companies

Nowadays, prospective clients are increasingly relying on online research before reaching out to a company.

Video content emerges as a pivotal opportunity not only to showcase products but also to establish genuine connections with potential customers. Consistent video production for sales and marketing teams results in a substantial library, a lasting resource for prospects and customers over the years.

Beyond expanding exposure and clarifying business operations, video content facilitates personalized messaging for specific buyer personas. It serves as a dynamic tool to guide potential leads through the sales funnel at precisely the right moment.

To stay competitive in the manufacturing industry, delivering hyper-targeted content to prospects is vital, and video creation provides the means to achieve precisely that.

The right video content becomes a conduit for your brand's personality, offering a diverse range of engagement unmatched by blogs or static content alone. For those seeking to provide audiences with comprehensive insights into common product-related questions, creating video content proves one of the most captivating approaches.



Video is an effective form of communication that needs to be integrated into each and every aspect of your existing marketing efforts.”

James Wedmore,
Business Performance Coach



Sales Enablement for Manufacturers

Sales enablement is a practice that promotes manufacturing sales growth through planning, content, and technology that's designed to empower your sales teams. Effective sales enablement can help shorten sales cycles, improve buyer interactions, and increase sales team efficiency.

The responsibilities of sales enablement can be broad and include activities such as:

- Sales training and coaching
- Creation of sales assets
- Sales and marketing communication
- Reporting and measurement of sales success

In an ideal business structure, marketing and sales enablement work hand-in-hand to create a consistent message for the consumer across all channels. This sales and marketing alignment can allow both teams to capitalize on their strengths and lean on each other to develop a strong message for the consumer.

Three Core Elements of Industrial Sales Enablement

1. Sales Enablement Planning

Planning is an essential first step in the process of building a solid sales enablement structure within your organization.

Any changing process requires a strong foundation that your sales reps can lean on when learning a new way of selling or revamping their existing strategies. Above all, your planning needs to outline your sales team's areas of need, define your growth goals, and create a roadmap for how to achieve those goals.

2. Sales Enablement Content

Arm your sales team with content that tells a story.

As manufacturers, you know your customers are looking for precision, quality, and value when choosing a manufacturing partner, and this should be reflected in every piece of content you create.

Here are just a few examples of the types of content an expansive sales enablement program would produce for their sales team:

- Case studies/customer testimonials
- Competitive research/battle cards
- eBooks/whitepapers
- Blog posts
- Executive presentations
- Sales scripts

Throughout your content library, you should always aim to answer a few key questions that your buyers may have:

- What is the value of this product or service?
- Will I see the ROI I want?
- Why is this product or service the best option for me?

Anticipating what your buyers are going to ask can help you create content tailored to the customer, not to your offering — and you can add on to your content as your sales team gets more experience with a new framework.

3. Sales Enablement Technology

Investing in the technology for your sales team will support a more efficient and effective sales process. There are many sales enablement tools out there, and each offers a different benefit to help your sales team further develop their skills:

CRM Integration can help reduce manual data entry and more efficiently connect potential leads to manufacturing sales reps.

Examples: HubSpot, Marketo, Salesforce

Sales Content Management software offers a centralized platform for salespeople to access all the content they need, both in the office and on the go.

Examples: Highspot and Seismic

Video Coaching and Practice platforms can offer even the most experienced salespeople the benefit of additional practice from an outside perspective.

Examples: Mindtickle and Brainshark

Sales Intelligence platforms allow your salespeople to collect insights from their interactions and apply their data toward making improvements in their processes.

Examples: LinkedIn Sales Navigator, Apollo, ZoomInfo

Tip: Keep It Buyer-Focused

Throughout your sales enablement development, from creating your buyer personas to investing in helpful tools and technologies, you are setting your sales team up to foster a better buyer experience, from their first impression to a closed sale.

Building meaningful relationships with your customers will not only result in increased satisfaction with their buying experience but can lead to even further sales opportunities in the future. Getting customers is one thing, but creating loyal customers will take your sales to the next level.



Tracking Your Marketing Efforts

Leveraging your manufacturing analytics can mean the difference between boosting your business growth and spending extra money while getting subpar results.

Good data can show you information critical to success. Gathering and interpreting analytics allows your company to understand what you're doing well, what you need to improve on, and how to specifically improve without costly guesswork.

Let's talk about how to effectively use marketing analytics to drive revenue, build customer trust and loyalty, and meet — or exceed — your business goals.

Visual Analytics

Visual analytics help you quickly identify issues that you can't see with Excel sheets. They employ artificial intelligence and automation to make sense of mounds of data and provide you with weekly, monthly, and, in some cases, daily comparisons.

Track your most important KPIs in marketing activities like social media, SEO, paid advertising, and email to measure success over time. See how your marketing impacts lead generation, deals won, and revenue. With that said, it's important to be selective with visual analytics. Only put your most important KPIs on a visual dashboard that you'll look at every day, week, month, and quarter. Then, pull on-demand reports for other KPIs as needed.

Some of the most important KPIs to track visually include:



Sales growth: Adjusting for seasonality, sales should steadily rise year over year. Sales growth not only demonstrates the effectiveness of your marketing; it shows you're delighting customers who buy more and tell others. A healthy company experiences YoY sales growth of 15% to 45%.



Organic traffic: Organic traffic indicates you're findable online. You're delivering the right message at the right time to the right audience. A steady climb in organic traffic indicates that you know who your target audience is and are generating the resources they need to navigate their personal buyer's journey. While it takes work to achieve this, a healthy website generates around 40% or more of its traffic organically.



Conversion rate: The conversion rate represents the number of visitors who provide contact information, usually in exchange for something of value like a whitepaper, free sample, or case study. Once you generate a lead, you can nurture them through more targeted email segmentation and automation to move them through the pipeline. The average landing page conversion rate is around 2% to 3%. However, a landing page optimized for conversion can generate upwards of a 5% to 10% conversion rate.



**That which is
measured
improves.”**

Karl Pearson,
Mathematician & Biostatistician



Lead-to-sale ratio or lead-conversion rate: What percentage of leads you generate become paying customers? A good lead-to-conversion ratio is around 5%.



Customer acquisition cost: Effective digital marketing causes acquisition costs to decrease over time. That's largely because you're paying attention to analytics and optimizing performance based on your data. Savings can vary greatly based on the business model but typically range between \$100 and \$500 per account for B2B manufacturing.



Marketing ROI: The higher your marketing ROI, the more revenue you can generate from your marketing budget. If you're earning \$5 for every \$1 you spend on marketing, that's considered a good ROI. However, studying your analytics and optimizing can achieve a ratio of 10:1 or even higher.

Excel allows you to keep data over a long horizon. You can refer back to it and compare, and with some advanced Excel know-how, you can create charts and graphs that auto-populate and turn numbers into visual analytics.

However, Excel isn't as useful as tools specifically designed for marketing analytics. You still have to do a lot of manual work to create and maintain your spreadsheets, and nothing is automatic.

Any time you retain a manual process, you increase your risk of error. A tiny mistake in the data then becomes misinformation in a graph. It can completely change what you think you're learning from that data, and you end up with flawed and outdated analytics.

Automated visual analytics are only available through advanced analytics tools.

Social Media Analytics

As a manufacturer, you must keep channels of communication open. People won't always call you up to tell you their needs have changed or why they chose to switch manufacturers out of the blue. Social media analytics keep you informed.

To glean maximum insights, regularly review the following social media KPIs:



Reach: This is the percentage of your followers who saw a post. A low reach indicates you have disengaged followers. This is essential information that helps you leverage engagement to generate leads, promote activity, and boost sales.



Audience growth rate: This is the percentage of increase in followers on a specific social media platform. A healthy social media presence is continually growing while increasing its reach.



Social share of voice: This measures your brand mentions compared to your competitors on a social media platform. Having a share of the voice builds trust with your audience. Leverage it to generate more leads and customers.



Aligning these three with a unified message improves company performance and fosters company growth. You're seen as a business that keeps its promises. Social media analytics measure how effectively all of these elements work together to meet buyer expectations.

Digital Marketing Analytics

The ability to clearly distinguish between what's working or not in marketing is paramount to any company's performance.

When you understand the buying behavior of customers, you know which demographics to market to and how to market to them. Additionally, you understand how your product may need to adapt over time to meet customer needs.

With digital marketing analytics, a company can identify what's driving revenue, see benchmarks for KPIs, and have documentation of trends within the company. You can leverage your analytics to make more informed decisions about next steps while lowering the risk involved in any action you take. This reduces wasted spending on moves that you later have to abandon because they're not working.

Digital marketing analytics help you attract and retain ideal customers to grow your customer base. Leads are a vital part of a company. See how many leads you have, the progression of a lead, and even how many new leads you're getting to anticipate demand so you can ramp up production and reduce supply line issues.

Collecting Data Isn't Enough — Understanding Analytics Is Key

Analytics help you create and execute effective, scalable processes, so whether you have 100 employees or 10,000, you can apply what works.

This isn't just about collecting more data. Deploying the right manufacturing analytics enables your people to put that data to work to get things done.

To have a successful company, you need to maintain sustainable growth. Manufacturing analytics show you how to hit that sweet spot and project, predict, and plan to achieve this steady long-term company growth.

You can develop an effective marketing strategy that will drive your company forward regardless of supply chain struggles or staffing shortages that come your way.



Should You Hire an Internal Marketing Team or an Agency?

The choice between hiring an in-house marketing team and engaging a marketing agency is an important step in your marketing journey. Each option has its own set of advantages and considerations.

Hiring an in-house marketing team provides the benefit and convenience of internal control and immediate responsiveness to evolving needs. Conversely, opting for a marketing agency offers the expertise of seasoned professionals, a diversified skill set, and a fresh external perspective.

Let's get into the considerations of each option to help you decide what's best for your manufacturing business.

Deciding to Hire an Internal Marketing Team

When opting to hire in-house, many smaller manufacturing companies are looking to hire two to three employees maximum to complete the marketing action items required. Several essential roles make up a strong marketing department. They are:

Team Lead: This individual is responsible for creating plans and assigning tasks based on role and meets with top-level management to discuss priorities, needs, and results. The team lead also embodies characteristics and has experience in all or most of the areas listed below, maintaining an understanding of the processes needed to complete action items.

Copywriter: The copywriter handles all company copy, including website content, blogs, emails, social media posts, and more. Copywriters specialize in specific industries, so while one may excel in medical writing, they may not effectively capture the voice of your manufacturing business.

SEO Specialist: SEO specialists are well-versed in all things SEO. They know the ins and outs of how to improve search engine visibility through calculated tactics and best practices. While web developers, analysts, and copywriters may have some experience and knowledge in SEO, specialists have much more in-depth knowledge and insight.

Web Developer: Web developers are responsible for building website templates, placing new landing pages, creating blog templates for copywriters to use, and fixing any errors that might present themselves along the way. Web developers can be considered "website linguists," as they can read and produce code to keep your website functioning optimally.

Analysts: If you want to know which marketing efforts are working and which ones are not, an analyst is crucial for your team. Analysts have the skill sets to read and interpret data and then make recommendations based on the data provided.



Creative/Graphic Designer: This team member is responsible for all graphics, logos, colors, imagery, and any other creative services needed for your initiatives. These individuals work hand in hand with writers and developers to create stunning visuals that produce additional engagement for your audience while solidifying your brand.

Many companies quickly realize that to scale their efforts, a two- to three-person team simply does not have the wide range of expertise needed to successfully implement a marketing strategy. Not only that, but the amount of work that goes into building and maintaining marketing initiatives can cause serious burnout with a small team.

Remember: Successful marketing requires more manpower.

The pitfall of this is that marketing professionals can be costly to hire and retain internally. With the average marketing salary coming out to \$60,000, and more for additional experience and higher levels of knowledge, many small manufacturing companies do not have the capital to retain internal marketing teams.

This is not the case for all companies and each independent business should decide if keeping marketing efforts internal is the best choice for their team.

Opting to Hire an External Inbound Agency

Inbound marketing agencies excel at lead generation, particularly when they have substantial experience in the industry they work with. They are focused on generating qualified leads that will turn into revenue-generating customers.

Through partnering with an agency, you have a full powerhouse of a marketing team ready to conquer your goals. Creative directors, account managers, content writers, graphic designers, and web developers are dedicated to seeing your company scale revenue.

Many agencies do offer reasonable compensation rates compared to hiring an internal team. This is one of the most attractive benefits to smaller companies looking to expand their marketing efforts.

Capabilities of Marketing Agencies

Inbound marketing agencies are well-oiled machines full of varying experts working to deliver goals. Because of their experience, inbound agencies can provide valuable insights about your industry that your company may not yet be aware of. In addition, the teams are made up of passionate individuals who have spent years perfecting their craft.

Here's a list of some specialties and how they work to increase your revenue:

Lead Generation: Inbound agencies are built on the foundation of delivering more leads. They're equipped with strategies and resources to take your manufacturing business to the next level and attract your ideal audience right to you.

Email Marketing: Inbound agencies prioritize delivering leads to sales that meet the team's criteria. They achieve this by crafting targeted email marketing nurtures to convert leads into customers and building long-term relationships through nurture campaigns. With a team of specialized writers, designers, and editors, these agencies ensure clear messaging and numerous enticing conversion points for your audience.

Marketing Automation: Through marketing automation, inbound agencies create additional revenue through decreased manual work. For example, by implementing workflows, your leads are nurtured with content downloads, blogs, and other resources without your sales team stepping in until the lead is ready for them.

Social Media Marketing and Monitoring: Promoting your manufacturing services goes beyond having great blogs and resources on your website. Social media is a powerful (and cost-effective) way to market to your audience. Your inbound agency will be up to date and on top of current trends, best practices, and relevant messaging appropriate to your ideal customer. This helps to build your brand awareness and bring in leads and conversions straight from social media itself.

Content Marketing: Your leads aren't just looking for information about your company, they're looking for information on the products you use, the processes you choose, and the benefits they'll receive by choosing you. That is where content shines. Insightful downloads, eBooks, and webinars are a sure way to increase awareness about your brand and provide your leads with concrete reasons why they should partner with you.



Graphic Design: Content would not be what it is without beautiful graphics to complement it. If inbound agencies were chefs, the content would be the main course, and the graphics would be the side dishes. No one wants a main course without any sides! That's what graphic design provides for your audience.

SEO and Keyword Research: Inbound firms work to make your website the number one choice on relevant search engine results pages (SERPs). The plans inbounders create for SEO and the research done on keywords that are relevant to your company work harmoniously with other initiatives in your marketing strategy.

Web Design and Development: Digital marketing would be lost without a place to host all of your efforts. The number one thing inbound firms focus on is turning your website into a pure lead-generating machine. One of the foundations of inbound marketing is that your website should be your best salesperson.

Any information that your audience might need about your company should be found easily on your website in a beautiful and user-friendly manner. With CTAs to capture lead information and a layout for showcasing your best content, your leads will end up wanting to stay on your site and continue to refer to you as one of the top manufacturing experts and providers.

As you can see, effective marketing is a catalyst for increasing leads, ROI, and overall success for manufacturing businesses. But remember: The marketing world is constantly changing. Working with an experienced marketing agency like LAIRE will help you stay up-to-date, embrace technological innovation, and continually refine your approach to stay ahead of your competitors.



From optimizing digital presence to leveraging data-driven approaches, you now have a go-to resource to refer back to for elevating your marketing game. But our commitment to your success doesn't end here.

We understand that each manufacturing business is unique, and personalized support can make an enormous difference. With our tailored marketing solutions for manufacturers, we can help you take the next steps toward transforming your marketing efforts.

Our team of experts is ready to enhance your online visibility, streamline lead generation, and strengthen your brand. [Reach out to us today](#) and let's build a strategic partnership that propels your manufacturing business forward.

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