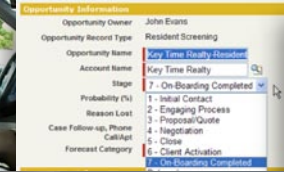


HOW YOUR PROSPECTS BUY TODAY



Search

Opt-In

Purchase

WINNING THE NEW B2B SALES GAME WITH GREAT CONTENT AND SMART TECHNOLOGY



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Your World Has Changed in B2B Sales and Marketing

Sales growth may not be as strong as some companies hope for these days, but don't be so quick to blame a slow economy. B-to-B buyers have fundamentally changed how they learn about and purchase products and services; and many sellers have simply not kept pace. How much has the buyer landscape changed? Consider these findings from a recent Demand Gen Report on buyer behavior:

- **Buyers doing more research:** 55% of buyers are performing more product research than they used to, with 78% saying that Web searches and vendor Web sites influenced their selection of a vendor;
- **Buyers deferring contact with sellers longer:** Only 6% of buyers are interacting with a contact from the vendor immediately when beginning their research. Over half of buyers (51%) delay initial contact until after they have at least established a preferred list of vendors;

55% OF BUYERS PERFORM MORE PRODUCT RESEARCH THAN THEY USED TO, AND ONLY 6% OF BUYERS INTERACT WITH A CONTACT FROM A VENDOR WHEN BEGINNING THEIR RESEARCH, ACCORDING TO DEMAND GEN REPORT



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56% OF B2B BUYERS ARE “LESS THAN SATISFIED” WITH THEIR BUYING EXPERIENCE, CITING POOR TIMELINESS OF VENDOR RESPONSE AND POOR RELEVANCE OF INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THESE SELLERS

- **Buyers consuming more content:** 94% of buyers are viewing multiple pieces of content from the vendor they ultimately select;
- **Buyers more dissatisfied with the buying experience:** Almost 56% of B-to-B buyers say they are “less than satisfied” with their buying experience, compared to 36% in the prior year’s study. This dissatisfaction is mainly caused by poor performance in the two areas they find most important: timeliness of the vendor’s response, and relevance of the information provided

These trends clearly indicate that B2B buyers are now highly focused on receiving credible and relevant information from sellers, even before they make direct contact. But despite these changes, many companies are still running business-as-usual sales and marketing programs and wondering why they’re not getting as many sales leads as they need, and don’t understand why they’re not converting enough leads into buyers.

Prospects are now finding you online—and doing their own background research before they contact you:



The New World of B2B Marketing and Sales

Yesterday	Today
<p>Prospects Rely on Salespeople to get the information they need to make their product purchase decisions</p>	<p>Prospects Perform Their Own Online Research to educate themselves on products, solutions, and vendors to solve their problems or business issues</p>
<p>Company Owns Information The company owns control and distribution of all information on its products and their uses</p>	<p>Information is Freely Available from many online sources in addition to your company, including news sites, vertical industry forums, and social media</p>
<p>Prospects First Learn About the Company through advertising, trade shows, etc.</p>	<p>Prospects Access Relevant, Educational Information to begin their buying process, and pay less attention to company marketing</p>
<p>Ad Hoc Prospect Follow-Up No organized sales process; salespeople neglect many prospects, focusing mostly on “low-hanging fruit” selling opportunities from prospects ready to buy</p>	<p>Strategic Follow-Up Using Marketing Automation Content mapped to structured stages of the sales process enables companies to build relationships at the prospect’s pace, providing the right information and attention to move them closer to their buying decision</p>
<p>Salespeople “Touching Base” With Prospects Sales reps make many calls to prospects, but have few meaningful prospect conversations, particularly when prospect is not yet ready to buy</p>	<p>Content Transforms Salespeople Into Trusted Advisors Prospects welcome contact with salespeople who can provide content to solve the prospect’s unique problem or business issue</p>

PROSPECTS NOW
DO THEIR OWN
RESEARCH ON
YOUR COMPANY'S
PRODUCTS ONLINE
BEFORE THEY
CONTACT YOUR
SALES TEAM

Instead of initially contacting your sales reps like they did before, these buyers now search online to get information for solving the problems addressed by your company's product.

And because these self-educated prospects can access virtually all the information they want online, they tend to trust the most compelling and educational **content** more and conventional promotional materials or company-centric marketing less. As Doug Kessler of UK-based marketing firm Velocity Partners says: "Prospects care more about their problem than they do about your product."

How Buyers Buy Today—And How to Get Their Attention

Where prospects used to initiate their learning with a salesperson, today's buyers do their own research, creating "short lists" of companies they're interested in following up with. They base this on what they've learned online from a variety of sources—product info on company Web sites, industry news sites, and comments from their peers on industry forums and social media sites.

Next, armed with this higher level of product knowledge, these prospects contact the companies on their list, to begin a new kind



of sales process where buyers know more from the start, and expect your company's sales reps to provide the kind of tools and information that support their business case to purchase.

And if you haven't made this prospect's short list based on the freely-available content seen by this prospect, then it's likely this prospect won't contact you. Even worse, you'll never know you didn't make their list. Both facts mean you've lost out on this sales opportunity before you even had a chance.

This is why conventional B2B marketing programs, which may have been successful just a few years ago, aren't working as well—or at all—today. And this means you must adapt your processes to make relevant and valuable information available to prospects early in their buying process, long before you may know they're looking.

Prospects Care More About Their Problem Than They Do About Your Product

So what is relevant and valuable content?

Today's content isn't like the usual brochures, sales sheets, ads, sales letters, and other promotionally-oriented

YOUR PROSPECTS
COMPILE THEIR
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PROSPECTS CARE
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ABOUT YOUR
PRODUCT

material produced by most companies. Effective content is non-promotional information in the form of articles, reports, briefings, case studies, videos, white papers, e-Books, etc. whose purpose is to help the prospect understand their business problem, and how to solve it. Such content showcases your company's unique expertise, and demonstrates how this expertise, embodied by your product or service, provides value to them.

In the Demand Gen Report study cited previously, respondents identified several particular types of information they sought out in their initial search, including:

- Articles and resources targeted to my industry;
- Case study examples of other companies similar to mine;
- Research briefs

Clearly, effective content, made readily-available, is necessary to initially attract prospects. But a focus on providing the right content at the right time throughout the sales cycle is also required to ultimately convert prospects to customers.



Combine Content With New Sales Technology to Give Your Prospects the Right Information at the Right Time

The recent advent of marketing automation technology makes it possible to deliver relevant problem-solving content to prospects, based on their specific buying stage, product interests, even their individual role in the decision.

That's why successful marketing automation launches begin by breaking your common buying processes into logical stages, starting from the prospect's initial interest and moving through to the final purchase decision. Then, available content (or content that needs to be produced) is defined and mapped to each of these stages, so that a prospect's specific needs and issues at each stage are addressed. For example, prospects in their early buying stage may require educational content to help them understand the broad business issue they face, while prospects further along in their buying process might be more focused on case studies or technical detail.

CONTENT IS
REASONABLY
OBJECTIVE, FACTUAL
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WHOSE PURPOSE
IS TO HELP
THE PROSPECT
UNDERSTAND
THEIR BUSINESS
PROBLEM, AND
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CONTENT IS DELIVERED TO PROSPECTS BY **MARKETING AUTOMATION** SYSTEMS, BASED ON THEIR BUYING STAGE, PRODUCT INTERESTS, EVEN THEIR INDIVIDUAL ROLE IN THE DECISION

Putting Smart Sales Technology to Work to Engage Prospects and Convert Them to Buyers

Marketing automation adjusts the content to the prospect:

While you may choose to send some content automatically to these prospects at set intervals (every few days, weekly, etc.), other content can respond to the prospect's individual behavior. For example, marketing automation can identify a prospect who has indicated an interest by visiting a specific product page on your company's Web site, and can then send additional content to this prospect on applications relating to that particular product line.

Prospects are assessed for their readiness to be contacted by sales: In the early stage of the sales process, as prospects access and download information (content) from your company's Web site, marketing automation logs these accesses to begin creating a profile of the prospect's interests regarding your company's products. Here, scores can be assigned to each prospect's actions (e.g., the frequency, quantity or type of content accessed) and fit (e.g., their title, company size, location). Once a pre-determined "lead score" threshold has



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THREE STEPS TO ADAPT TO TODAY'S B2B BUYERS

1 Give Prospects The Information They Want

Relevant **content** helps prospects find you in their initial research process and positions your company as a provider of useful solutions to their problem or business issue

2 Use the Tools You Need To Be More Effective

Marketing automation executes individually-relevant and simultaneous interaction with multiple leads, enabling you to improve and scale your lead nurturing processes

3 Map Your Content to the Buyer's Stage

Convert prospects to sales-readiness by delivering the right interaction and content to each prospect, based on their stage in their buying process

How You Win

- **Generate More Sales Leads** at far lower cost
- **Optimize Your Sales Team's Efficiency** by focusing them on prospects who are ready to be contacted by sales
- **Advance Prospects Toward a Purchase** by nurturing them effectively throughout their buying process
- **Gain an Advantage Against Competitors** not using these optimized sales processes



Opportunity Information	
Opportunity Owner	John Evans
Opportunity Record Type	Resident Screening
Opportunity Name	Key Time Realty-Resident
Account Name	Key Time Realty
Stage	7 - On-Boarding Completed
Probability (%)	1 - Initial Contact
Reason Lost	2 - Engaging Process
Case Follow-up, Phone Call/Apt	3 - Proposal/Quote
Forecast Category	4 - Negotiation
	5 - Close
	6 - Client Activation
	7 - On-Boarding Completed



MARKETING
AUTOMATION
HELPS IDENTIFY
PROSPECTS WHO
ARE READY TO BE
CONTACTED BY
YOUR SALES TEAM

been reached, the prospect can be passed along to sales for personal contact by a rep. This prevents sales reps from contacting prospects who aren't ready to talk to them, and ensures that prospects will be contacted at the optimal time.

Marketing automation helps to convert prospects to customers: The capacity for marketing automation to adjust to the buyer improves your ability to navigate them through your sales cycle, automatically executing the next best step in the process. For example, a prospect who accesses a fact sheet on a particular product can then be sent a case study describing a customer's successful use of that product.

In the later stages of the sales process, marketing automation works alongside your company's sales reps as they interact with prospects to address more specific issues and concerns closely related to the prospect's final purchase decision. For example, a sales rep can be sent an alert whenever a prospect has accessed a price list for a product, possibly indicating a heightened interest in the product.

For even more efficiency, marketing automation can be integrated with CRM (Customer Relationship Management)



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systems, giving sales reps a direct view to the interactions between the company and the prospect, and how they align with the company's sales process.

Improve Your Sales Performance by Aligning Your Sales Process With Your Buyers

By utilizing content and marketing automation in your company, you are not only meeting the needs of today's prospects who do their initial research online, you're also establishing a new and far more systematic and efficient process within your own company for converting these prospects into paying customers.

Most important, adjusting your sales process to the way prospects buy today gives you a major competitive advantage over other companies in your business who have not yet put content and marketing automation to work themselves.

USING CONTENT
AND SMART
TECHNOLOGY GIVES
YOU A STRATEGIC
ADVANTAGE AGAINST
YOUR COMPETITORS



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THESE CHANGES
ARE AN INVESTMENT
IN HIGHER SALES
FOR YOUR COMPANY

Making These Changes is Not a Cost, But an Investment in Higher Sales

Implementing content-based marketing programs and marketing automation requires a concerted effort to change the way you market and sell your products, but the good news is these changes are within reach of any company. And while there are costs associated with developing content and adding marketing automation systems, companies who successfully make these changes are able to transform this cost into a worthwhile investment in higher sales, a long-term investment to meet the ways their buyers want to buy from them today.



What is RAMP?

RAMP is a turnkey program designed to help business-to-business companies successfully adapt to a marketing and sales landscape that has changed dramatically in recent years. RAMP executes the all-important tasks required to attract prospective buyers into the top of the sales funnel, nurture them through their buying process, and convert them to sales qualified leads, which are passed on to the sales team. Likewise, RAMP can nurture interactions with current customers, thereby growing them into larger and more profitable customers.

RAMP applies best practices in a customized, yet highly-defined program:

- Marketing and sales strategy
- Search and online marketing
- Content marketing
- Marketing automation
- Sales process development
- Sales training
- Measurement and analysis

For more information, visit gamechangingsales.com or call us at: **1-866-478-7783**

RAMP Founders:

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The Pursuit Group
WSI B2B Marketing**

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How Your Prospects Buy Today: Winning the New B2B Sales Game With Great Content and Smart Technology
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