



Bizperity



QUICK START Marketing Strategies

GROUP 5C:
**B2B Professional
Sales**

**What Are You
Missing?**

**Managing The
Customer Journey**

GROUP 5: B2B Professional Sales

5A: Local Business Services

5B: Small Manufacturer, Suppliers, & Vendors

5C: National/Regional Business Consultants

CATEGORY	Professional Sales (B2B)
Types of Businesses	Wide range of products and services for businesses
Examples	Many small to medium sized businesses serving other businesses, some broad based services like printing, electrical and machine repair, and many others.
Sales Process	Professional
Sales Team	Sales Manager with Professional Sales Staff
Transactions	Account Based Sales with some large single transactions and some with recurring sales
Marketing Budgets	\$250K - \$10M
Marketing Staff & Services	Direct media buys/Digital Agency/PR/Video Prod.
Ad Agencies	Digital Agency/PR/Video Prod.

#1 Marketing Challenge	Capturing Marketing Qualified Leads
#2 Marketing Challenge	Growing Accounts
CAC	CAC is High
CLV	CVL is High
Customer Loyalty	Customer Loyalty is High
Strategic Needs	Difficult customer acquisition requires continuous searching on and offline for new leads. Revenue rich models support marketing & sales efforts.

B2B companies with professional sales focus on capturing qualified leads and converting them to new accounts. Account Based Management defines the sales process. A difficult customer acquisition requires searching for leads using multiple strategies and high level of collaboration between your marketing team and your sales team. When new clients come onboard, they often generate recurring revenue. These can be very large accounts requiring long-term maintenance to maintain customer loyalty.

Group 5C: National/Regional Business Consultants

This group consists of consulting firms and individual business consultants. The number one marketing challenge for Consulting firms is generating **Marketing Qualified Leads**. Often companies rely on the sales staff to engage in business development using their own strategies and personal business networks to find and develop leads. Sales generated leads can and should be supported by your marketing team, which can greatly increase conversion rates for leads generated by your sales team. Your marketing team should independently seek to generate qualified leads through brand marketing, content marketing campaigns, and by participating in industry conferences and through other marketing channels that you have tested and produce positive ROI.

Individual lead strategies can be created by your sales team. These may fall into a handful of common practices, but they can also be driven more eclectically based on the experience and relationships of individual salespeople. Marketing should do whatever it can to support individual business development strategies driven by individual salespeople, or by the sales team in general.

Account Based Management is required to maintain long-term client relationships, and this requires a high level of collaboration between your sales team and your marketing team. Exactly how this plays out can vary from one type of business to another, so it takes some special attention to build the right combination of collaborative relationships to maintain long-term customer loyalty. Special attention should be paid to developing strategic approaches to achieve maximum customer loyalty and training the sales team to provide the support necessary to achieve this important business goal.

Companies that have not yet broken through the scaling barrier find it difficult to do so in part because the business owner is managing this wide range of disparate business requirements by themselves. The way to break through the scaling barrier is by hiring professional marketing and sales managers and delegating the lion's share of these duties to them. Individual Business Consultants often find they have to team up with other consultants to build an effective business model. Individual consultants who work as a sole operator struggle with Customer Acquisition and often find themselves stuck between selling or serving their clients. Few independent business consultants can pull this off. The exceptions are those who begin their practice with a handful of existing clients who they maintain indefinitely. This is akin to hiring yourself out for contract labor. Unless you feel secure in your relationships with your clients and remain confident that you can maintain long-term relationships, we recommend independent business consultants consider teaming up with similar consultants to start a partnership, much like many law firms do.

Best Marketing Practices for Local Business Services

- ✓ Define your **Brand** with a focus on the benefits provided by your services and the value you add to the customer experience.
- ✓ **Define your Brand around a superior customer experience, and the value you create for your clients.**
- ✓ Define a powerful value proposition based on the quality of the customer experience and seal it with a **strong slogan**.
- ✓ Build a **website** that features your brand narrative and your unique value proposition. These define what you do for your members. These two elements define a theme for your brand narrative. This tells your customers who you are and what you do for them. Include product information by category.
- ✓ **Run Branding campaigns** in industry media and online platforms that focus on your brand identity and presenting your brand promise and your unique value proposition, especially as this relates to creating a superior customer experience. **Test industry media including industry journals, conferences and trade shows for special sponsorships that provide the means to build your brand awareness.** Measure ROAS directly and indirectly, through lift to your lead generation (by both marketing and your sales team).
- ✓ **Event Marketing** typically focuses on **conferences and trade shows** but consider adding online virtual **business tours** to help convert qualified prospects into sales conversions.
- ✓ Most business consultants are Subject Matter Experts. As such, seek out **speaking opportunities** at conference and trade shows. Be aware that many conferences may be dominated by other subject matter experts and other consulting firms. Use these speaking opportunities to build your personal brand and reputation but limit your expenses because these opportunities will not generate leads. In other cases, organizations may indeed have prospects. In that case, double down on the opportunity and network aggressively at the event to find as many prospects as possible. **FREE**
- ✓ **Run Content Marketing Campaigns** to capture and nurture leads. Rely on individual consultants in your business to help create original content, including blog posts, LinkedIn articles, and video interviews with other subject matter experts in industry organizations. Educational content (in print and video) is some of the most powerful content you can create for content marketing campaigns. **FREE CONTENT**
- ✓ **Work with a full-service agency** to help you create more content by leveraging the expertise of your consultants. Consider multiple formats including **eBooks, Infographics, Tutorials** and other educational content in print and video formats.
- ✓ **Set up a LinkedIn Business** page and use posts to promote your content marketing efforts, including curated content and original content you create. Individual

business consultants can build their personal brand and reputation by creating original content. **FREE**

- ✓ **Run LinkedIn Ad campaigns** to extend your content marketing campaigns, with a focus on nurturing leads into sales conversions to the top of your sales funnel.
- ✓ Set up a **YouTube Channel** to upload original video content, including marketing videos, educational videos, and interviews with subject matter experts. **FREE**
- ✓ Identify naturally occurring **Customer Segments based on the industries you serve**. Mass media campaigns don't work well for separate customer segments because of the expense of running multiple commercials. Use online media to market to individual customer segments so you can manage budgets across multiple segments.
- ✓ **Run Google Search Ad campaigns** to reach more prospects. **Tie keywords to customer and industry segments you serve**. Test these campaigns for positive ROAS. This may take several months to produce positive results so keep your media buy low until you are satisfied with your ROAS. Again, focus on individual customer segments with your Search campaigns and key conversions in separate campaigns, including Subscribers (for your non-promotional content), Marketing Qualified Leads (for product related content), and Sales Qualified Leads to fill up the top of your sales funnel.
- ✓ **Test industry journals for branding campaigns**. *Continue to use any that produce positive ROAS to maximize your reach.*
- ✓ Run **Email Campaigns** from your CRM to share interesting content with prospects in your database to help drive conversions, and to help support customer loyalty. **Run separate campaigns for individual customer segments. FREE**
- ✓ **Create a Newsletter for your Existing Customers** to keep them engaged with your brand and expand your services with them. Use the same content from your email campaigns. A single newsletter can link to 3 or 5 pieces of content. Deliver one newsletter per week or per month, depending on how much content you have. **FREE**



Quick Start Marketing Strategy

Business Consulting Groups main marketing challenge is generating leads within a target market that can be hard to reach and geographically dispersed regionally, nationally, or even internationally. Industry journals provide one marketing channel that should be tested if their audience is within your target market. Google Search provides another marketing channel that can reach business audiences with specific interests in your products or services. Experiment with key words to find which ones work best. Rely on a digital agency to help you with keyword campaigns. They have the best tools and experience to optimize search campaigns for keywords. LinkedIn can also reach business markets based on interests in

business topics or their own industry codes that map to SIC or NAICS codes, but LinkedIn codes are limited and very broad. One of the best ways to create a custom audience in LinkedIn is to research LinkedIn Groups. There are thousands of Groups in LinkedIn, including multiple industry organizations. It requires some time researching groups (using search terms in LinkedIn) to find groups that map to your target audience, but the right combination of groups can provide an effective way to create a custom audience. Some groups have members numbered in the tens of thousands. You can also create multiple audiences using different combinations of groups to better match your customer segments.

Recruit your consultants to help create content for LinkedIn (blogs and articles) and for your content marketing campaign (in multiple content formats). Few businesses have the opportunity to create professional content for content marketing campaigns. Leverage your internal Subject Matter Experts to help create highly valuable content. Consider creating a content library to store content with a long shelf life. Some content should be designed to attract prospects (top 10 lists) while other content should be of real value (articles and educational content). If consultants are employees, you can require they help create content. In a partnership, consultants will have to agree to the level of content production they will engage in creating. Also work out agreements for how consultants will participate in the sales process. If you have a separate sales team that closes new accounts, consultant participation may be minimal. In other cases, it may require a larger commitment from the consultants. If your consultants close their own accounts, they will likely be experienced sales professionals themselves. Your marketing and sales team will need to collaborate to create successful workflows for these important processes.

Whether your consultants are acting as salespeople, or only providing consulting services, train them on the importance of building their personal brand and reputation as a Subject Matter Expert. Speaking engagements can content creation help consultant build their reputation in their profession and the industries they serve. Consider creating specific projects, like tutorials or more in-depth educational products, or even whole courses and invite consultants to participate in exchange for some benefit, either in bonuses, extra fees, or paid time off. Content projects of high value and long shelf life can help rev up your content marketing campaigns. In some cases, if the content is valuable enough, you can even consider offering it in paid formats, such as CEI credits, product training or certifications, and other educational courses.

Train your consultants on how to market themselves in LinkedIn and the professional organizations in which they participate. Create a Talent Development program to oversee the building of your consultants' professional careers and support them with speaking and media opportunities. Successful business consultants often have large LinkedIn followings, numbering in the tens of thousands. Your consultants may be business influencers who you can leverage in all your marketing campaigns, by showcasing them personally. You can also design LinkedIn campaigns to help them grow the followers.

Business Development Strategies

Your marketing team should collaborate with your sales team to help find and support specific business development strategies. Here are just a few basic strategies that can be effective. The best strategies may work better for some salespeople than others, based on their experience and the extent of their contacts in the industry. Support all the strategies that your sales team has found effective.

1. Individual sales reps' Business Networks

Some companies only hire salespeople who bring a large network of contacts with them, based on years of work within an industry. Because developing these prospects relies on their personal relationships, they can be powerful ways to convert clients.

2. Individual sales reps with Experience

Salespeople who have extensive industry experience may have experience working with niche markets or special industry groups or organizations that enables them to prospect with these groups or markets. *Support them with customized content to help them nurture and convert leads.*

3. Individual sales reps who are Subject Matter Experts

Some experienced salespeople have acquired a lifetime of industry knowledge and may even be recognized as Subject Matter Experts by colleagues, or even have industry certifications. Support these salespeople by finding opportunities for them to speak on industry panels, to participate within industry groups as committee members or in other special roles, and in media interviews (with some media training). These salespeople can be superstars that can leverage these opportunities to bring in more prospects and close bigger clients.

4. Consultative Sales

If your sales team is using a consultative sales process take the time to understand how they are providing this service. Is it formal or casual? Is it monetized by your company or is it offered for free as part of the sales process? Collaborate with your sales team to support these activities with custom content and integrated content marketing campaigns. Check to see if these create new Customer Segments.

Develop campaign strategies for reaching directly into your target market through whatever marketing channels produce positive ROAS and consider creating custom campaigns to support individual business development strategies (described above).

Campaigns

[Campaign numbers refer to our list of 15 Basic Campaigns]

#1 Lead Capture (with content)

Create a content marketing campaign to capture leads that you can convert to Marketing Qualified Leads. Test it with online campaign channels (Linkedin, Google Search Ads). Drive prospects to a landing page where you can capture their contact information and follow up with a phone call to set up a sales meeting. The content should focus on the solution you offer, and the client needs it fulfills.

CHANNELS: *(Linkedin, Google Search Ads; Industry journals)*

#4 Brand Awareness (multiple channels)

Run a brand awareness LinkedIn Ad campaign using a long term, slow-drip strategy. Brand Awareness campaigns typically work indirectly by providing lift to your other campaigns (increasing conversions), but brand awareness campaigns can directly produce conversions that can be tracked to sales. Try to measure both direct conversions and lift in your other campaigns. Simply run your brand awareness campaigns in cycles, on and off, for several weeks or months at a time. If they provide lift to your other campaigns it will show in the elevated ROAS in those campaigns.

Test the ROAS of your Brand Awareness campaigns by marketing channel. If the ROAS is positive, continue running it throughout the year. Alternate between different marketing channels to see which performs the best, then focus your Ad Spend on the best two or three. **Increase your ad spend if have positive ROAS.**

CHANNELS: *(Linkedin Ads, Google Search Ads; Industry Journals; Industry Conference Sponsorships)*

#6 Online Search (SEO)

Optimize your website to match keyword searches for your brand and products, and the needs and concerns of prospective customers. Work with your digital agency to maximize your SEO on a monthly basis. Spend about 5% to 10% of your marketing budget on SEO.

This will enhance organic search without paying for Google Search Ads. It can also improve your paid search ROAS.

Be sure to optimize all your content for SEO.

CHANNELS: *(Organic Search; Google Search)*

#7 New Lead Nurturing

New Customers may spend some time investigating your business. That is why it is good to create a Subscriber Conversion. This would apply to anyone who downloads content or watches any of the videos on your YouTube channel.

A Subscriber is an important part of the Customer Journey. A **Subscriber** consumes non-promotional content that addresses their needs and challenges but does not promote your products or services. You can include brand information to increase their brand awareness. When they are ready to find specific solutions, they will convert to a **Marketing Qualified Lead** which needs to be converted with product information, promotional content, and offers. It takes multiple engagements to achieve both of these key conversions. Use separate Lead Nurturing campaigns for each of these conversions. Use content to identify needs and concerns then tag them with the appropriate customer segment. These should be natural customer segments for you. These may fall into categories defined by **industry, profession**, or by the **customer's needs and challenges**. Once you have identified customer segments, **run additional campaigns for each Customer Segment with content customized for each segment**.

CHANNELS: *Linkedin Ads, Google Search Ads; Industry Journals; Industry Conference Sponsorships*)

#8 Existing Prospects (email campaigns)

Use a lead nurturing campaign with your existing Prospects to keep them engaged with content they may miss in other marketing channels. You can use the same content used in new Lead Nurturing campaigns.

#9 Product Education (content marketing)

You can create a separate product education campaign directed at your entire target market. Run it just like a Lead Nurturing campaign. The only difference is you are potentially reaching everyone in your target market, not just Subscribers or Marketing Qualified Leads. These leads can create a Subscriber Conversion, a Marketing Qualified Conversion, or go direct to a Sales Conversion at the top of the sales funnel. If you have a blog or videos on a YouTube channel, these leads may first become subscribers, which is why you want to have a Blog or post curated content in social media and post YouTube videos. Track all three of these key conversions, “Subscriber”, “Marketing Qualified”, and “Sales Qualified lead” and tag them in your CRM. You can track these leads and retarget them in online ad platforms. **Do not run these as separate campaigns because you are using product education in a way that is not promotional. Do not include promotional offers in these campaigns. You can do that in follow up campaigns that focus on individual conversions in the Customer Journey.**

CHANNELS: *(Linkedin Ads, Google Search Ads; Industry Journals; Industry Conference Sponsorships)*

#11 Event Marketing

Conferences and trade shows are standard marketing channels for large businesses. Consider attending and exhibiting at a booth at major industry conferences. Test out your exhibit for positive ROI. The investment includes the cost of a booth, the cost of an exhibit

including displays, printed marketing collateral to give away, and some modest branded products. Have your marketing team collaborate with your sales team to manage the booth and collect leads. Create a landing page just for the trade show that your salespeople can open on their phones. Include marketing and product videos that can run on a laptop connected to a larger TV screen.

CHANNELS: (*Linkedin Ads, Google Search Ads; Industry Journals; Industry Conference Sponsorships*)