The Dos & Don’ts of Lead Generation

6 BEST PRACTICES
An in-depth read or a snapshot – it’s up to you.

Read in full, click on a section below to jump ahead or click on the link below for a one-page summary.

Piecing together the Lead Gen picture.

The currency of attention.

1. Define Lead Gen.
2. Clearly define and communicate your objectives.
3. Get to know your audience.
4. Use multiple list sources.
5. Be contextually relevant.
6. Automate... everything.
Don’t run your program in a silo.

Don’t have a lot of time? Click here to view a one-page quick read of these best practices.

These pages provide context to our POV and set expectations for the read.

These pages are the six best practices.

This page provides research stats to help you see how your efforts compare to the market.
Piecing together the Lead Gen picture.

The B2B acquisition game has changed at a pretty rapid pace. And even more so for B2B technology marketers – technology changes, buyer perceptions change, the buying process becomes more complex and buying groups more dynamic.

As marketers, we play a very small role in the life of our audience until we get them fully engaged. We see a snapshot of them – and them of us – not the entire picture.

Think about your efforts – the day-to-day internal collaboration, planning, strategizing to vie for your buyer’s attention. You’re competing to become a small piece of their overall day. Keep that in mind when reading through these best practices and manage your expectations. New customer acquisition takes patience, and there is a lot to be learned along the way.

Dos & Don’ts

provide best practice directives and learnings to enhance your Lead Gen efforts.
The currency of attention.

The dearth of availability and the overabundance of information means that each of your targeted audience members has less and less time for you to break the information bubble.

And because buyers continue to find new ways of self-educating, you need a compelling, customer-centric approach to get through to them.

That means providing information they want to consume rather than pushing information you want to distribute. The price for a qualified lead is content that the audience deems valuable.
1. Define Lead Gen.

A simple Google search will show you a number of different ways Lead Gen has been defined. We’ve taken the core premise behind Lead Gen and simplified the definition.

“Lead Gen focuses on capturing contact information for follow-up. A lead has a known data profile and can be counted, scored and traced to specific financial outcomes.”

It’s important to make sure everyone on your team understands the definition you’re working from so they know what they are working toward. And, equally as important, what they should do, and what not to do.

Do: Define Lead Gen in the context of your organization’s needs. Develop a vision for your strategy and make sure your team fully understands both.

Don’t: Expect it “to do too much.” Your Lead Gen strategy should have one goal – driving interest and collecting contact information for Sales follow-up.
2. Clearly define and communicate your objectives.

Quantity or Quality? Or both? Are you looking to increase a revenue number or are you measuring outbound sales call activity…or is it a combination?

No matter what they are – define, communicate and quantify your objectives so Executive Leadership, Marketing and Sales know what you’re working toward. That way, you’ll have the same understanding when it comes to measuring performance.

Once defined, you may find that you have to reiterate these goals throughout the process. This is a good thing – and it gives you the opportunity to restate your objectives and to track results based on agreed guidelines.

Do: Define parameters of your Lead Gen program and set realistic expectations for performance. And then communicate both to your team. &

Don’t: Let the goal posts move – you may have to set and reset expectations, but communicate your objectives consistently.
3. Get to know your audience.

Your audience data profile tells you who they are. But do you know what is important to them? Do you know how they make buying decisions or who’s included in their buying group?

These questions (and more) will help you create an audience-relevant campaign. Tailor your message to their needs and increase the opportunity to drive higher quality leads.

Use your audience’s data profile to develop individual personas representing different segments of your audience. Personas don’t have to be elaborate, but they should put a “face” on your buyer so you have a greater chance to humanize your approach. Develop the personas based on an unbiased view of their needs and align your offering accordingly.

**Do:** Make sure everyone knows who you are targeting and why. Confirm you audience’s data profile, develop personas and tailor your approach to them.

**Don’t:** Expect that because you’ve identified your audience that your Lead Gen efforts will close sales for you. Stay on top of your personas and revisit them periodically.
4. Use multiple lead list sources.

Audience is everything. How they find you, and you them, matters. Inbound strategies will inform your audience who is actively seeking solutions. For the passive buyer, you need a more direct approach – one that includes partnering with list providers.

Identify a core set of credible list sources, then put your data profile to work by developing a set of audience-specific selection criteria.

The more detailed your criteria, the greater the opportunity for reaching the right audience. Ask how the lists are compiled and how frequently they are updated. Make sure you understand the list’s usage rights and what additional fees may be associated with them.

Do: Use multiple sources and test sources against one another. Also test your audience criteria to adjust to changing market dynamics.

Don’t: Depend on one source. Your sources should be as diverse as the audience your targeting. And they should also be reputable – all opt-in, no SPAM.
5. Be contextually relevant.

Ultimately, you want your leads to make a purchase, but their goal is something quite different. Business buyers are self-educating and consuming content as they narrow their consideration set. So how does your point-of-view differ from your competitors?

**Do your research to infuse your POV with contextual relevance.**

Providing your unique solution in a way that addresses the practical and emotional aspects of the problem. Go beyond educating to relating. As readers continue to explore your content, they want to glean new insights that they find applicable to their lives – and you can provide it to them with your unique outlook.

**Do:** Plenty of research. Whether it’s indirect on roles and responsibilities or direct from the source interviews. Develop contextual relevance for your POV with quality insights.

**Don’t:** Take a cookie-cutter approach that prioritizes quantity over quality and loses sight of the relevance with which you communicate your POV.
6. Automate... everything.

Successful integration of your marketing automation platform (MAP) and customer relationship management (CRM) platforms can enhance the speed and accuracy of your program and eliminate manual processes that steal time from your resources.

Implementing these tools into your Lead Gen workflow can also help improve the quality of your leads and offer direction on how to treat them, as well as provide valuable tracking data for the overall health of the program.

Do: Integrate a MAP and CRM solution that can be geared to help you most effectively meet your goals. Then use the technology to its fullest potential.

Don’t: Depend on MAP or CRM tools as a replacement for strategy. They can only be as effective as the strategies that put them into practice.
Don’t run your program in a silo.

Always know what is going on in the market – content marketing trends, buying behavior, Lead Gen strategies and tactics. Don’t limit your exposure to the four walls of your office. Below, we’ve provided a handful of timely and relevant stats that, seen in the context of your business, can provide insights that lead to program-enhancing change.

80% of marketers report their lead generation efforts are only slightly or somewhat effective.¹

93% of B2B companies say content marketing generates more leads than traditional marketing strategies.²

61% of B2B marketers say lack of resources, such as staff, funding and time, remains the biggest obstacle to successful lead generation.³

61% of B2B marketers consider “generating high-quality leads” to be their biggest challenge.⁴

42% of B2B marketing professionals state that a lack of quality data is their biggest barrier to lead generation.⁵

Sources: ¹ BrightTALK, ² Forbes via Marketo, ³ BrightTALK, ⁴ B2B Technology Marketing Community, ⁵ BrightTALK
**About Gain:** We’re a direct, digital and data-based marketing communications agency that brings the people-perspective back into acquisition and lifecycle marketing. Learn more about Gain by visiting [hellogain.com](http://hellogain.com).

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