

Follow my lead

B2B marketers are increasingly sophisticated in their lead generation and nurturing activity, according to the results of B2B Marketing's latest Benchmarking Report, sponsored by The Newbury Group

Lead generation and nurturing are among B2B marketers' top priorities for the next year, according to B2B Marketing's latest Benchmarking Report.

Eighty seven per cent of respondents describe it as either their top priority or 'one of their top three priorities' for the coming year (see Figure 1).

This focus is reflected in budget allocation. Sixty per cent of companies responding to the survey allocate a specific portion of their overall marketing budget to lead generation and nurturing, and of those companies that do not, the majority have integrated these functions across all of their marketing activity. Furthermore, when a specific budget is allocated to lead generation and nurturing, the share is significant, with 53 per cent spending at least 20 per cent of their total marketing allocation on these activities.

Looking ahead, 43 per cent of companies expect to increase their investment in lead generation and nurturing over the next 12 months, while

38 per cent expect investment to remain roughly the same as last year. Only 12 per cent expect to reduce investment. Clearly this issue is growing in importance.

Telemarketing is best for lead qualification

B2B brands use a broad range of techniques as part of their lead generation and nurturing activity (see Figure 2) although with a bias in terms of popularity towards online, according to the Benchmarking Report. The web and email proved most popular, followed by social media, which is surprising for such a new medium.

However, a different picture emerged when respondents were asked about the effectiveness of the different channels, in terms of the quantity and quality of leads that were generated. In terms of volume, email came out on top, presumably because of its ability to reach large volumes of users, cheaply and quickly. Email also scored well in terms of quality of leads, although was outstripped by telemarketing, presumably because of the ability of telemarketing agents to



The Lead Generation & Nurturing Benchmarking Report

The full report, featuring comprehensive results and analysis, form part of B2B Marketing's Benchmark series. Available to Premium Members for free, or £150 plus VAT per report for non-members.

To buy this product, go to www.b2bmarketing.net/benchmarking/leads
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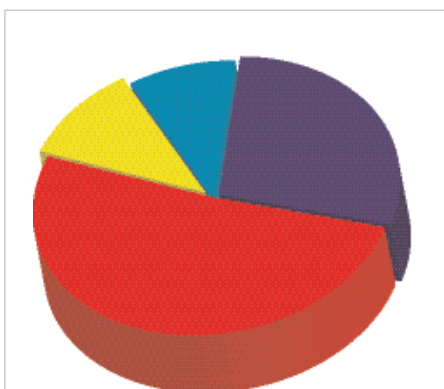


Figure 1.
In terms of your priorities for 2011, how important is lead generation and nurturing?

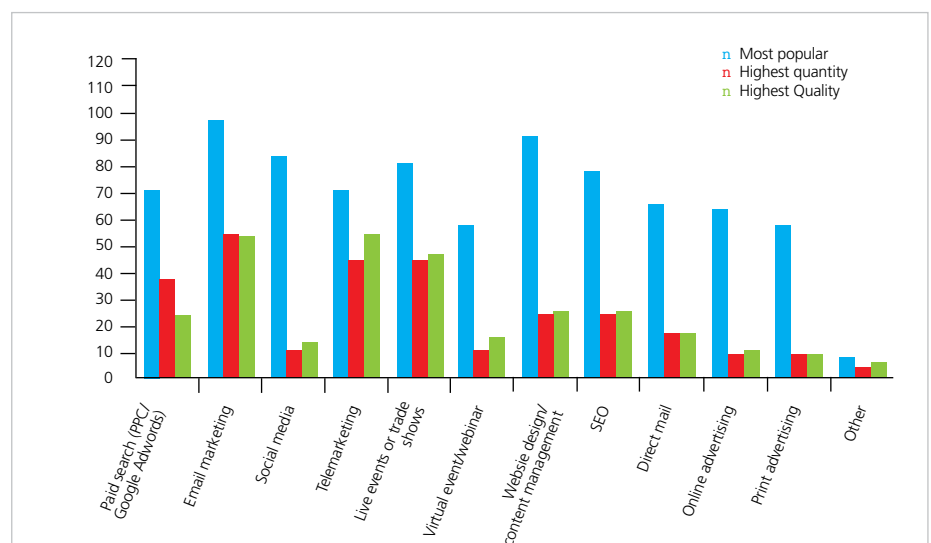


Figure 2.
Which of the following metrics do you use to measure the success of your lead nurturing activities? Which is most important?

better gauge the level of interest on the back of a personal conversation.

Events also scored well in terms of lead quality, and generally it was interesting to note that – on this method of comparison at least – so-called ‘traditional media’ remained highly effective, while new fangled tools like SEO and social media performed poorly.

Looking ahead, the three marketing tools that look set to benefit most from an increase in spend over the next 12 months look likely to be email (unsurprisingly), social media and pay-per-click (paid search). This reflects the ongoing migration of spend towards digital activity, and it will be interesting to watch how social media evolves as a viable lead generation tool, given its poor showing to date.

Volume is not important for leads

According to the results, marketers are using a broad range of metrics to chart the success of their lead generation and nurturing activities (see Figure 3) with all five options provided being used by at least 40 per cent of respondents. The most popular metric was ‘the number of leads generated’ (in other words, the information that goes into the top of the funnel) closely followed by ‘sales opportunities’ (which could be described as ‘mid-funnel’) and perhaps surprisingly was more popular than ‘sales qualified leads’.

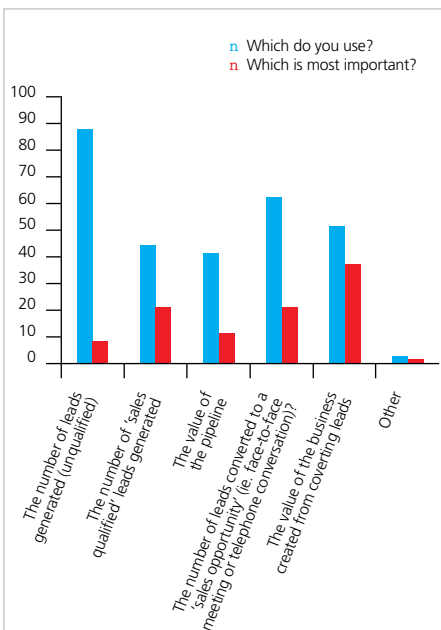


Figure 3. Which marketing tools do you use for lead generation and nurturing? Which are most effective in terms of quantity and quality of leads?

Paradoxically, in terms of which metric was most important, the sheer volume of leads generated came bottom of the list, closely followed by ‘value of the pipeline’ while ‘value of the business created’ was seen as the most important metric. These results show marketers have a healthy attitude to leads and nurturing, and recognise that raw, unqualified data is far less important than a lead that can be assigned a specific monetary value, relating to its worth to the business.

Marketers shun technology for nurturing

Marketers were less savvy or progressive in terms of their attitudes towards marketing automation technology, which is designed to assist in the process of lead nurturing. Only 20 per cent of respondents survey currently have a marketing automation platform in place, with a further 20 per cent considering it for the future.

Over half of respondents either described marketing automation as ‘not relevant’ or had not even considered using this technology. This result is surprising given the considerable hype surrounding applications of this type, and their ability to transform B2B marketing.

It seems these vendors still have a considerable task on their hands to educate their audience regarding the benefits that they can bring.

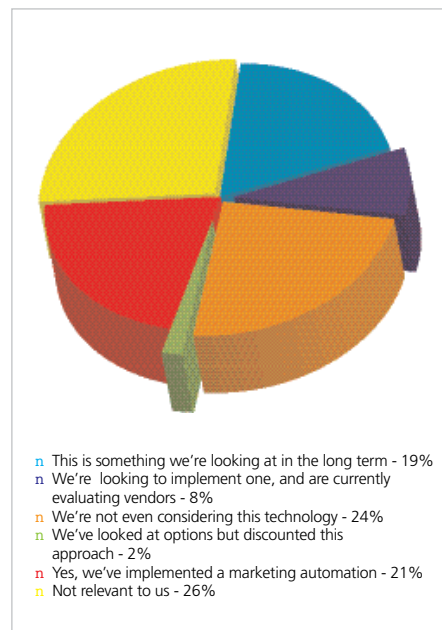


Figure 4. Are you using demand generation technology, or a marketing automation application, to help support your lead generation activity?

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Is 2011 the year when winning new clients becomes a real priority?



IAN RAWLINS
MANAGING DIRECTOR OF
THE NEWBURY GROUP

When asked ‘What will be your high priority objectives from planned 2011 lead generation activities?’ results from this survey revealed that “increasing new customer acquisition” was the top ranked objective.

Charged with the responsibility of providing a steady flow of ‘good’ quality new business leads, B2B marketers will feel the pressure of making sure that they make the right choices, in terms of which types of new business lead generation activities they should spend their hard-fought marketing budgets on. Get it wrong could not only be bad news for the company's new business revenues but it could also be ‘fatal’ for the individual(s) concerned.

Results clearly indicate that email and telemarketing ranked highly in terms of performance impact, while more popular and in-vogue online activities such as social media, webinars (i.e. virtual events) and SEO performed poorly.

So what does ‘good’ new business lead generation look like in B2B marketing?

It's important to remember that effective lead generation needs to deliver on two fronts:

- Activities generating the right quantity of leads.
- Activities generating the right quality of leads.

At the Newbury Group, our experience shows that establishing a ‘blended’ multichannel approach, which combines email and telephone activity while using ‘online tracking software’ to prioritise targeting, consistently generates the best qualified leads, resulting in shorter sales cycles and higher conversion rates. The results don't lie.

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New business generation for the 21st Century

When our directors, who together bring decades of experience in B2B sales and marketing and telemarketing, started the business, they identified a gap in the market for an agency that specialised purely in new business acquisition. Our belief is that finding and winning New business presents distinctly different challenges to customer retention. This is our 100% focus.

Success for us is delivering to our clients continually improving ROI: by supplying a consistent flow of high quality leads, driving down cost per lead over time and supporting improved sales conversion rates.

Pure B2B focus

The Newbury Group is a new type of agency, 100% focused on the process of new business acquisition in B2B. We've made it our business to become specialists at B2B lead nurturing and lead generation. Because it is all we do our whole team has an in-depth understanding of the techniques and strategies that are specific to B2B lead generation.

Our multi-channel Lead Nurturing philosophy

In our experience New Business acquisition is most successful when it is carried out as a multi-channel programme based on Lead Nurturing methodology. Our goal is to deliver qualified new business opportunities by ensuring various channel activity is integrated into an effective lead nurturing programme, all focused on driving New Business acquisition. Whatever your starting point or the level that you wish to engage in digital and offline marketing activities, we will work with you build a blended programme that suits your current situation and your budget, and will deliver your new business targets.

Expertise

Multi-channel programmes require a wide range of skills and experience. At our core we have expertise in Lead Nurturing, New Business and B2B programmes, and a highly trained and focused in-house team of telephone advisors, database analysts and researchers. We harness specialist expertise in online, creative, copywriting and email through our small and tightly integrated partner network. Together this enables us to deliver true multi-channel lead nurturing programmes that deliver highly qualified new business opportunities to all of our clients.

The Accelerator Programmes

Whether you want to Ignite, Nurture or Boost your New Business Lead Generation – B2B telemarketing and email in silos is no longer enough. The Newbury Group Accelerator programmes are powerful multi-channel lead generation and sales conversion programmes that will

- Nurture your Prospect Base
- Find and create sales opportunities for your sales team
- Generate highly qualified appointments
- Drive down your cost per lead and increase your ROI on lead generation
- Maximise the potential of your sales pipeline

Revolutionise your view of B2B lead generation today by harnessing the power of lead nurturing with blended B2B telemarketing and email marketing to accelerate your new business.



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