



## WHITEPAPER: Fix Your Marketing Funnel

Attract in-market audiences, stop the leak of leads,  
and streamline engagement for optimal conversion



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## Introduction

Factors influencing buyer behavior have changed significantly in the rapidly changing digital era. Savvy marketers are shifting strategies to best leverage opportunities to reach and engage targeted audiences – and the marketing funnel is getting remodeled in the process.

How are today's consumers engaging with media? How can marketers cut through the chaos to get a persuasive message to connect with potential buyers? How do data, advertising, and lead generation intersect in a rising tide of online activity?

This whitepaper explores answers to these questions and reveals powerful strategies to evolve a marketing funnel to serve performance-driven goals, as well as optimize effort and spend to produce valuable leads that would excite marketing and sales teams.

## Driving Decision-Making

Digital advertising is more frequent, targeted, and multichannel than ever before. This is due in part to the surge of consumer screen time and increased hours audiences engage with media. In fact, many Americans routinely spend 10+ hours a day looking at some type of screen.

Mobile advertising, social media, and technology innovations have been particularly instrumental on influencing behaviors and consumer decision-making<sup>(1)</sup>:

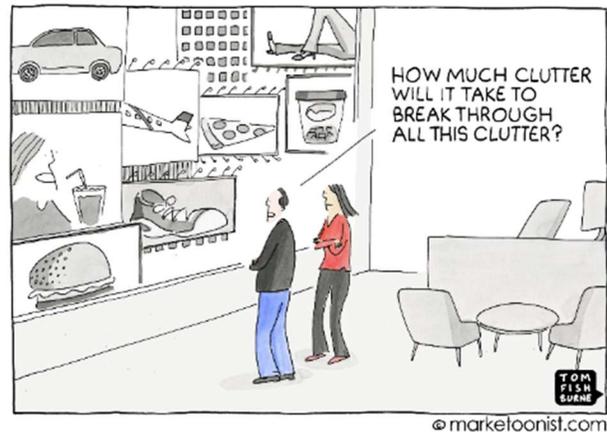
- 82% of searchers will use their phone to help them decide about an in-store purchase
- 86% of women will look at social media before deciding to make a purchase
- 64% of online shoppers say that a video on social media helped them make their decision
- Video content is 50 times more likely to drive organic search results than plain text will
- By 2020, half of all searches will be voice-driven



To quote a *New York Times* article, “Anywhere the eye can see, it's likely to see an ad.” As the digital ad space continues to be increasingly expensive, offline advertising is also booming. For marketing professionals seeking to influence buyer decisions, this oversaturated marketing environment is both a challenge and an opportunity. To navigate through this shifting marketing landscape, it's worth looking beyond the sheer volume of ad impressions and understand findings in the latest consumer research data. Doing so exposes important distinctions marketers must grasp to develop and deliver high-impact campaigns.

### More Exposure Doesn't Mean More Impact

Simply adding more clutter to the existing advertising clutter is both expensive and ineffective. A study by Media Dynamics<sup>(2)</sup> found that “although commercial clutter on TV has risen steadily, today's viewer has more avoidance options like remote controls and DVRs, and many more channels to choose from.” Adults are exposed to about 360 ads per day (across all five media – TV, radio, Internet, newspapers, and magazines). Of these, only 150-155 are even noted by the viewer, and far fewer make a strong enough impact to be recalled, make an impression, and ultimately, make a sale.



This research uncovers the fundamental constraint that all marketers are currently facing – namely, our marketing technology has advanced at an incredible pace, but all this technology has not changed how many hours there are in the day; nor has it increased the capacity of the human brain to process marketing messages!

Interestingly, while media time (and likewise, media channels) has increased dramatically since the 1940s, the total number of noted, meaningful messages has risen only slightly. In fact, on any given day, only around a dozen ads make an actual impression in the minds of consumers. That's only a very small fraction of 1% of ads! Think of all that marketing effort and spend ... and for what?

According to the Media Dynamics study:

- Average number of advertisement and brand exposures per day per person: **5,000+**
- Average number of “ads only” exposures per day: **362**
- Average number of “ads only” noted per day: **153**
- Average number of “ads only” that we have some awareness of per day: **86**
- Average number of “ads only” that made an impression (engagement): **12**



*Marketing is a contest for people's attention. – Seth Godin*

Given this media-saturated environment, marketers seeking campaign success need to rethink their core strategies for generating impressions, acquiring leads, and driving sales. Here are three ways to move marketing strategies forward and execute with cost-effectiveness and optimal campaign performance in mind.

### **1. Focus on Active Engagement, Not Endless Impressions**

For marketers looking to truly move the needle, this distinction between exposure rates, noted awareness, and actual engagement is critical to build campaigns that generate active leads and ultimately drive conversions. While some consumer staple brands with massive budgets generate “top of the funnel” awareness through constant exposure-based advertising, most B2B marketers must be much more selective and targeted with their advertising spend.

Obviously, Google ad campaigns and SEO optimization are effective in helping B2B marketers generate measurable levels of engagement and click-through traffic. The challenge is that in many markets these click-throughs are extremely expensive due to competitive AdWords bidding – and the conversion rates from click-through to sale are often disappointing at best.

SEO and traditional content marketing can be effective in the longer term, yet also require significant commitment and budget. The key for breaking out of these constraints and turbo-charging campaigns is to deeply understand a customer's buying cycle and then obsessively focus on providing points of truly meaningful engagement.



*That's been one of my mantras - focus and simplicity. Simple can be harder than complex: You have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. But it's worth it in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains.*  
– Steve Jobs

## 2. Leverage In-Market Data to Dramatically Boost Initial Lead Quality

Smart targeting of initial leads has tremendous ROI impact across an entire campaign. By focusing efforts on only those potential customers who are in an active search mode, you can:

- Engage with customers before your competitors
- Create a handful of very specific and relevant lead capture content pieces (saving time and money)
- Significantly drop your cost of paid advertising
- Boost your funnel conversion metrics
- Develop a lasting position of market authority

### Looking for answers to these up-at-night questions?



How do you get your message in front of those looking for what you're offering?



Can you connect when they're ready to buy?



Can you do it without spending a fortune?

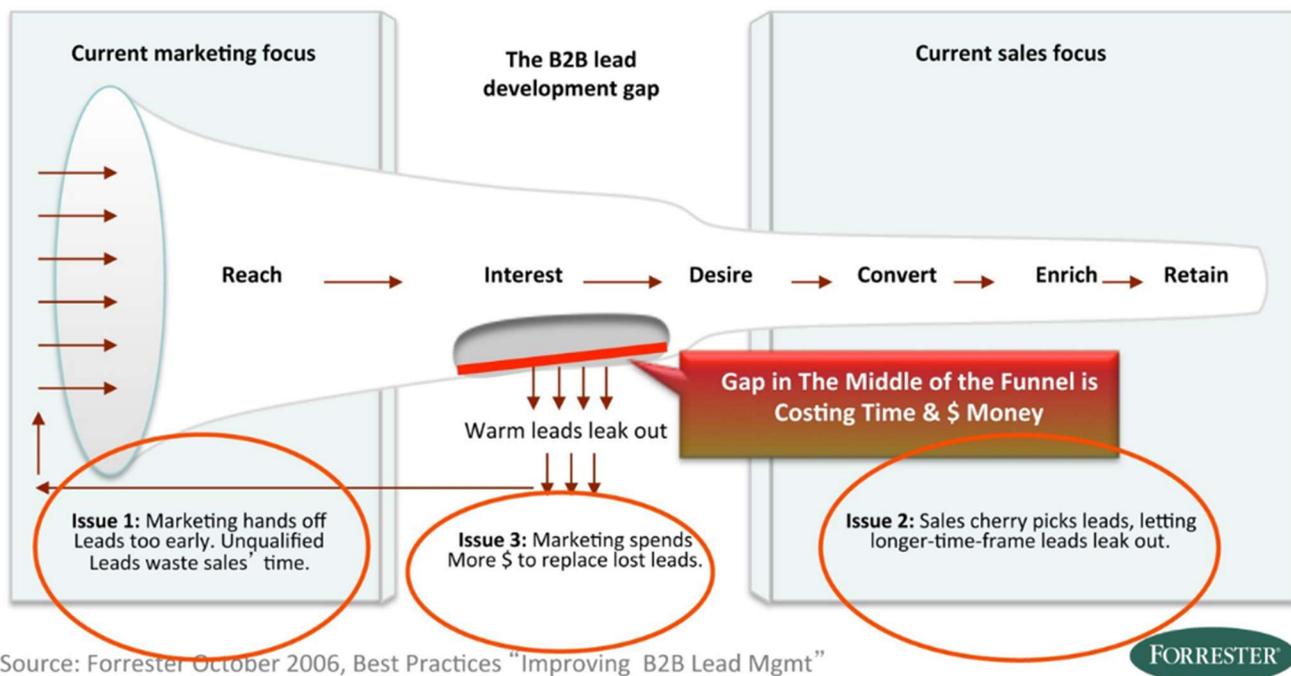
Then learn about Data Smart Marketing. Watch a short video and request more information at <http://campaigns.cmsconnections.com/DSM-request>.

### 3. Massively Increase Efforts on Lead Nurture & Conversion

Whether leads are acquired through paid search, organic SEO, or a data-fueled in-market strategy, they may present a similar problem – the drop-off of “warm leads” in the middle of the sales funnel.

Although investing heavily to generate initial engagement, many firms fail at successfully moving customers through the entire length of the sales funnel. Refer to ‘Image: Sales Funnel’ to see how Forrester clearly illustrated this challenge. Note how leads that are sent to sales too early in the process tend to be ignored. Likewise, the lead nurturing process between the top of the funnel and sales engagement is typically an overlooked opportunity.

Image: Sales Funnel



It's certainly worth fixing that leak! Data shows a significant potential to optimize conversions in the middle of the funnel. For instance, according to HubSpot, Google has found that in-market customers represent only 5% of searches yet drive 50% of sales; and for every \$92 spent acquiring customers, only \$1 is spent converting them.<sup>(3)</sup>

To address this challenge and take advantage of the untapped opportunities, marketers can apply new tools and tactics to cost-effectively generate awareness and engagement, and nurture leads through the entire lead funnel.

## PUTTING STRATEGIES INTO ACTION

The true measure of any marketing strategy is in its execution and results. Consider 'Image: In-Market Campaign' as an example of a campaign that involved a custom lead funnel to drive actions of qualified in-market audiences in real-time.

The business is a leading provider of disability insurance for physicians and their spending for AdWords click-throughs was extremely high due to very competitive and expensive keywords. Reframing the campaign focus to be active engagement led to impressive results. They achieved this by using in-market data to shape how, when, and where the campaign served targeted ads to highly qualified prospects.

The initiative involved continuously optimizing ad copy and selected media channels to drive in-market target audiences to a customized landing page where they would submit details to further inform the target's profile and assist in lead scoring to help the sales team prioritize outreach and expedite the conversion process.

Plus, an automated follow-up tool also facilitated timely engagement by triggering multichannel delivery of emails, ringless voicemails, and text messaging. This streamlined and holistic effort increased lead pull-through in the middle of the funnel.

Bottom line is not only were the leads more qualified and actively in-market, the overall cost per engaged lead was reduced by more than 50%!

### Image: In-Market Campaign

**Targeted Ad**

Browsing the internet for disability insurance quotes can be a nightmare! Many doctors, including physicians, may be surprised by the gap between what their current insurance covers and the medical expenses that can actually arise.

We specialize in helping physicians & residents find affordable disability insurance that fits their needs by providing them with the most relevant information on the most respected, financially secure disability insurance companies in America.

Click here to get affordable disability insurance quotes now >> <https://go.www.doctorability.com/>

**Landing Page**

Doctor Disability

Disability Insurance Quotes For Physicians & Residents

Best disability insurance quote for you. We'll match you with the best disability insurance company to match your needs. We'll also help you understand the best way to get disability insurance for you. We'll also help you understand the best way to get disability insurance for you.

**Form & Thanks**

What is your medical specialty?  
 What is your title?  
 What is your email address?  
 Do you have a phone number to reach you?  
 What is your Date Of Birth?  
 What is your ZIP Code?

**Auto Response (optional)**

Email: Response

"DO NOT RESPOND TO THIS EMAIL. IT WILL NOT REACH THE LEAD!"

**Lead Report**

**Weekly Campaign Summary**  
 February 26, 2019 - March 3, 2019

In the past 7 days, through our optimization, we were able to drive down the cost per lead from \$103 to \$43. This week we will continue to optimize our campaigns to maintain cost per lead. Utilizing our 1-week testing phase, we have generated 13 leads, in which 7 of those leads so far have responded via text, email, or direct phone call. Please see the metrics below.

Budget Summary		
Budget For Billing Period	Amount Used	Budget Progress
\$3,000.00	\$1,347.68	44%

Lead Summary		
# Of Leads Generated	Avg. Cost Per Lead	Lead Response
13	\$43 - \$103	53%

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## Conclusion

As media channels have proliferated, traditional impression-based marketing has become increasingly ineffective at generating active engagement and recall. In this new “always-on” world of endless screen time, successful marketers are focusing on a handful of key strategies to engage with customers, nurture leads, and drive conversions.

By investing in data-driven targeting, in-market audience acquisition, developing highly engaging content, and deploying multichannel lead follow-up technologies, marketers can cost-effectively break through the clutter of today's media environment, as well as build a true foundation for lasting customer relationships and market leadership in a competitive landscape.

## Connect With CMS

**Seeking a creative partner driven by quality data, engaging content, innovative technologies, and performance-driven metrics? Contact Collaborative Marketing Solutions to explore strategies that focus on results.**

**Be sure to ask about Data Smart Marketing – CMS innovated this solution to use in-market data to identify optimal people who are ready to buy right now.**



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### Sources

<sup>(1)</sup> <https://www.omnicoreagency.com/digital-marketing-statistics/>

<sup>(2)</sup> <https://siinsights.net/2014/09/29/new-research-sheds-light-on-daily-ad-exposures/>

<sup>(3)</sup> <https://www.hubspot.com/marketing-statistics>