



The Ultimate Guide to Digital Marketing for the Medical Technology Industry

Introduction

The widespread adoption of electronic health records (EHRs) has led to a massive disruption of the health care industry. Today, trends in medical technology are transforming the way doctors and patients interact. Patient portals make scheduling appointments and filling prescriptions easier. Laboratory information systems simplify billing and testing procedures. Wearables empower patients to track their vital signs or progress on fitness and diet goals.

Telemedicine gives patients greater and more cost-efficient access to health care. Doctors can perform consultations with patients no matter where they are located. First responders can collaborate with doctors on diagnosis and treatment while in the field.

Kaiser Health News reported that patients who use telemedicine kiosks at their workplaces to get a consultation pay \$15 compared to spending \$50 for a visit at an

urgent care center.¹ These kiosks offer video interfaces so patients can talk with doctors face to face, as well as biometric tools that can be used to check vital signs.

With all the advantages telemedicine provides, it's no wonder the market is booming. WhaTech predicted that the global telemedicine market will reach \$40.9 billion by 2021.² The 2017 Telemedicine and Digital Health Survey found that three-quarters of the respondents plan to offer telemedicine services, and 53% plan to increase their telemedicine offerings.³

If companies in the medical technology industry want to take advantage of the market potential, they need to learn how to use digital marketing effectively. This eBook gives details about how to develop a comprehensive digital marketing strategy for medical technology.

A hand is holding a black tablet. The tablet screen is white and displays a large blue '75%' followed by smaller black text. The text reads: '75% of marketing leaders use digital marketing strategies and, on average, they spend a third of their budget on digital marketing.'

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The State of Digital Marketing Today

The key to winning over customers is targeting them with marketing messages when and where they prefer to interact with your brand. Today, that means reaching out to prospects through digital channels. Pew Research Center reported that almost 90% of people are online.⁴ When customers research products and services, they look on the internet. They frequent social media sites and surf the web on their mobile devices.

Digital dominates marketing. According to the 2017 State of Digital Marketing survey, almost 75% of marketing leaders use digital marketing strategies and, on average, they spend a third of their budget on digital marketing.⁵

Most B2B marketers use social media in some form and devote time each week to social networking through sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. They make this effort in pursuit of higher lead-to-close rates. The internet offers numerous

opportunities for content marketing. Blogs and search engine-optimized websites with rich content and premium offers can entice audiences.

The Advantages of Digital Marketing

When customers research online, they initiate the sales cycle before you have direct contact with them. By making valuable content accessible online, you can shorten your sales cycle and reduce the one-on-one time necessary to close the deal. On average, these inbound efforts have a much lower cost per lead than traditional outbound marketing campaigns.

Providing digital content makes it easier for prospects to gather the information they need, giving you a competitive edge. The web is where your customers hang out. According to GlobalWebIndex, people spend an average of 2 hours and 15 minutes online per day.⁶



Digital Content Marketing in the Health Care Industry

Unfortunately, the medical industry is lagging behind most other industries in the adoption of highly effective and cost-efficient marketing strategies. As a heavily regulated industry, health care is slower to change.

HIPAA compliance regulations require that health care organizations limit access to health care information to protect patient privacy. To produce powerful digital marketing content, health care providers need to find ways to promote information about the benefits of medical technology without violating user confidentiality.

Room for Online Growth

The industry is moving forward. In September 2017, the Cleveland Clinic hosted the first Health Summit at the Content Marketing World event.⁷ However, there are still significant gaps in the use of digital marketing in health care compared

to other industries. Health care marketers are more likely to use print magazines and newsletters than blogs or social media to promote services.

While most doctors prefer to read articles in print journals, significant amounts of medical professionals view online content. Younger health care professionals are more likely to turn to online sources of information.

One significantly underused opportunity is LinkedIn, where B2B marketers can share content and network with other industry professionals, prospects, and referral sources. Even if a doctor doesn't frequent Twitter or Facebook, he or she may use LinkedIn to connect with medical professionals and health care organizations.

37%

Only 37% of organizations have a documented content marketing strategy.



Planning Your Content Marketing

Social media posting, website optimization, and blogging are all powerful tools in your marketing toolbox. They allow you to distribute information through digital channels that draw prospects to your website and help convert them. However, as in traditional marketing, digital marketing requires careful planning, integration, and professional execution.

Jumping into social media without clear goals or strategies can be worse than a waste of time. Off-the-cuff interactions may harm your brand. Instead, your organization needs to develop a digital marketing strategy that accounts for the way each tactic contributes to the entire marketing campaign.

Mapping Out a Marketing Plan

Having a documented content marketing strategy ensures that your company develops content for multiple channels and every stage

in the buyer's journey. Workflows can be established and put into motion through a marketing automation platform.

Despite the importance of formalizing a marketing strategy, many companies don't put it in writing. The Content Marketing Institute's 2017 B2B Content Marketing study discovered that only 37% of organizations have a documented content marketing strategy.⁸ Documenting a marketing plan is like mapping out a journey. Everyone on your marketing team should understand the plan and his or her role in executing it.

The rest of this eBook walks you step by step through the planning and execution of an effective digital marketing plan for your medical technology company.

To develop a persona, consider everything you know about that group:

- *What type of information interests the persona?*
- *What are the persona's demographics?*
- *What is the persona's educational and scientific background?*
- *What types of sources and channels does the persona respond to?*
- *What pain points does the persona experience?*



Targeting Your Marketing Message

Every effective marketing campaign is dependent on tailoring the message to the right target market. The first step in the targeting process is to develop a thorough understanding of your audience.

Using Segmentation

Segmenting your audience into different groups of customers will help you individualize your messaging. These different segments may respond to different keywords, design elements, or digital channels. It's important to identify audience segments and create content that speaks to each one. Data from an ERP or a CRM can be analyzed to segment your audience.

Developing Personas

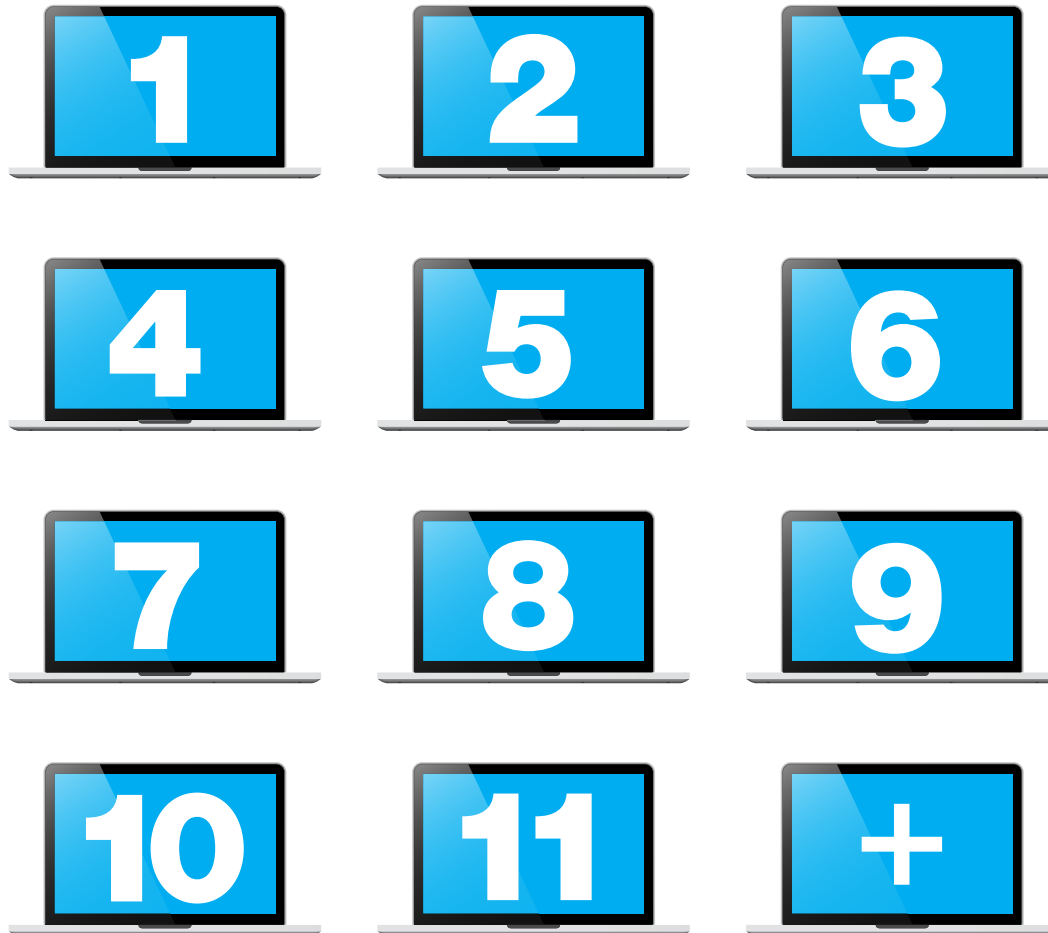
In the medical technology industry, the most common groups you'll be communicating with are physicians, executives at medical organizations, and procurement professionals. While these three groups are on the same team, they may have different priorities,

challenges, and preferred sources of information. For instance, physicians may be more interested in scientific data, while executives may be looking for data that demonstrates return on investment and increased patient satisfaction.

To develop a persona, consider everything you know about that group:

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- What are the persona's demographics?
- What is the persona's educational and scientific background?
- What types of sources and channels does the persona respond to?
- What pain points does the persona experience?

Once you understand your audience, you can focus on creating content for a specific persona. Imagine sitting across from an individual physician or executive and pitching a product directly to him or her.



B2B companies that post more than 11 blogs per month get 1.75× as many leads as companies that post six to 10 blogs a month.¹⁰

Targeted Promotion

Creating solid, targeted content is just one piece of the digital marketing puzzle. Once you've honed your message to appeal to a specific persona, the next step is to promote that content in the correct manner through the appropriate channels to reach that segment of your market.

Reaching your intended audience is a multistep process in which your blogs, landing pages, calls to action, and social media promotion work together to encourage prospects to engage with your content. Targeted promotion drives potential customers to white papers, eBooks, and valuable offers.

Blogging

Blogging is unique in the content marketing arena. It fulfills many of the purposes of other types of long-form content, such as eBooks and white papers, yet takes less time for

you to create and readers to peruse. Regular blog posts educate your market, build your credibility, establish search engine placements, and draw traffic to your website.

Frequent blogging is a cost-effective way to increase traffic and funnel leads into your pipeline. The Cleveland Clinic hosts a blog that boasts 4.5 million visits per month.⁹ Researchers at HubSpot found that B2B companies that post more than 11 blogs per month get 1.75× as many leads as companies that post six to 10 blogs a month.¹⁰

Blogging works hand in hand with virtually all your other content marketing efforts. Blogs provide platforms for videos, opportunities to promote offers, and vehicles for drawing traffic to your website. Fresh links created by blog posts boost the rankings of your web pages when you use keyword-rich anchor text in your links.

Landing Pages

Landing pages play a critical role in generating inbound leads. Placing landing pages on your website encourages visitors to explore your long-form content and gives you valuable contact information that can be used to follow up with prospects.

When it comes to landing page content, it's not just what you say but how you present it. Your choice of layout, colors, fonts, and button styles will affect conversion rates.

To create a landing page that drives conversions:

Keep It Clean

Resist the temptation to fit as much content on the page as possible. Visitors should be able to quickly identify what you're offering them and how to take advantage of the offer. Use a lot of white space, be concise with your language, and place key elements carefully.

Make Your Offer Pop

Placement and white space will go a long way to making your offer and call to action visible. A well-designed landing page will use color, font, and graphics that put these important page elements front and center.

Be Transparent

Ensure the visitors know what they're getting. Use language on the landing page that is consistent with the rest of your content. Feature recognizable company logos so visitors are confident that they are dealing with a recognizable and familiar brand. When prospects trust your company, they are more likely to share information with you.

Remember that the amount and type of information you ask for on the landing page form should be comparable to the value of the offer.



Calls to Action

Before you can create a compelling call to action (CTA), you need to have a clear understanding of what you're asking the prospect to do. Although the goal of all your marketing efforts is to generate sales, exactly what you want from a prospect depends on where he or she is in the sales pipeline and what type of content you're offering.

Your message will differ depending on how much the prospect knows about your company and your product and how far along he or she is in the sales process. HubSpot research found that targeted CTAs produce a 42% higher view-to-submission rate than generalized CTAs.¹¹

If a prospect is unfamiliar with your company or still in the awareness stage, your goal may be to simply get on the prospect's radar and present some information. As

your prospect moves down the funnel, you'll want him or her to take more affirmative action by providing contact information, scheduling a demo, taking advantage of a free trial, or participating in a consultation.

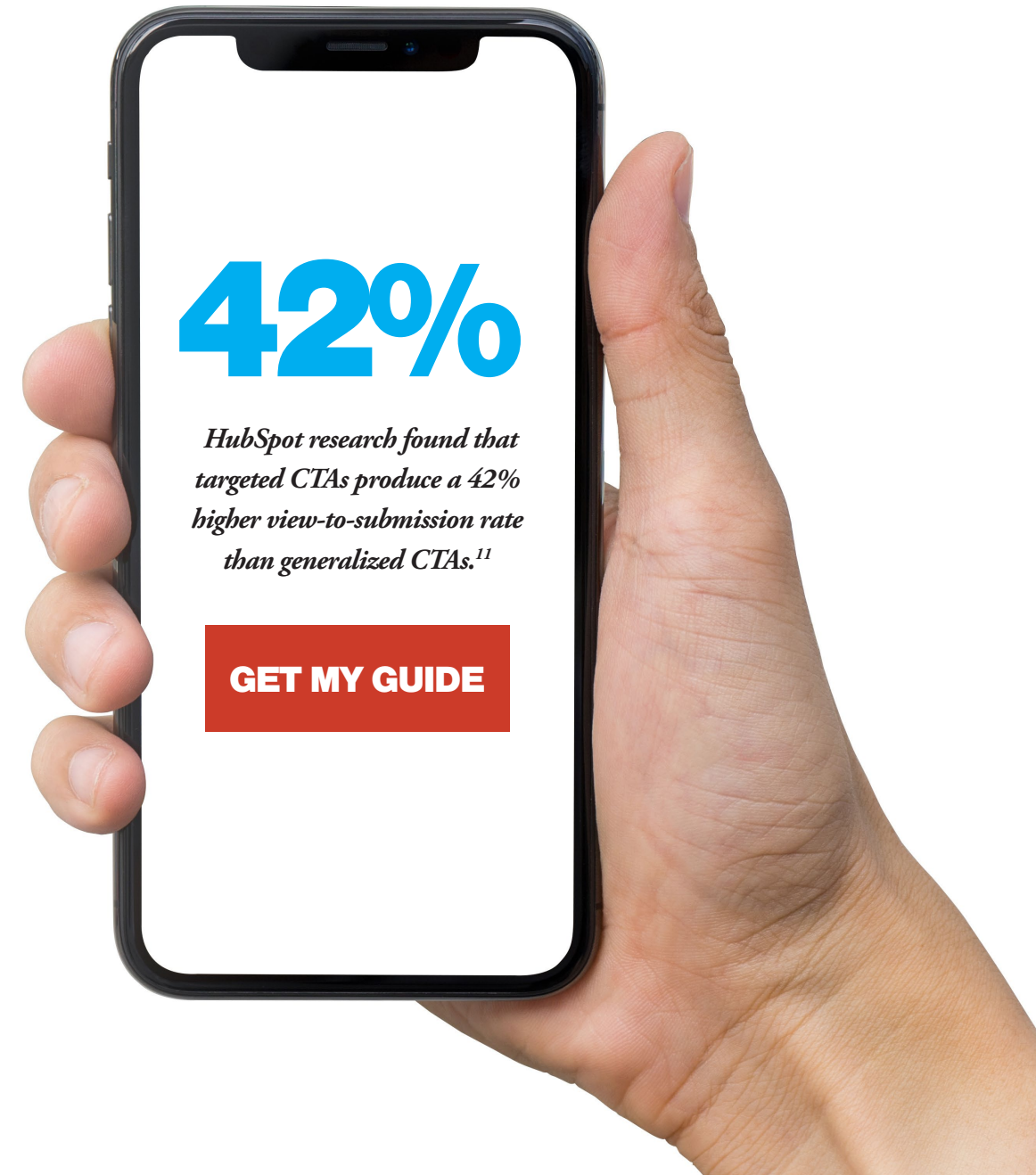
Create effective CTAs by:

Telling Your Visitor to Act

Make the next steps clear. Don't make the prospect work to figure out how to take advantage of an offer. Don't leave an opportunity lying passively on the page.

Being Clear and Concise

Your CTA is an instruction. It should be understandable at a glance. A strong CTA will be brief, direct, and eye-catching. Use a compelling phrase that leaves no room for distraction or confusion.



Social Media

Social media is a great way to access a huge pool of potential customers. GlobalWebIndex reports that people spend a third of their online time engaging with social media.¹²

Targeting is important when making effective use of social media. Free, easy-to-implement social media options abound, but each social network is slightly different. Each hosts different types of content. Twitter is great for images and brief messages or links to blogs. Snapchat, Facebook, and Instagram focus on images. YouTube is perfect for brief videos.

Targeting Your Social Media Following

Another key difference is the type of audience you'll reach on each platform. LinkedIn encourages business networking between professionals and influencers. Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook spark casual interactions between friends and acquaintances.

LinkedIn discourages direct product marketing, so posts should be focused more on educational and informational material. Links to posts that give career advice are appropriate. For instance, your business could post a link to a blog titled "5 Ways to Become a Savvier Lab Tech" that discusses the features of a laboratory information system.

Promoting medical technology on social media might seem like a stretch, but health care organizations have had success building social networks. The Cleveland Clinic has received 1.5 million Facebook likes and has 750,000 Twitter followers.¹³

Remember not to manage each of these channels in isolation. When possible, link posted content back to your website. If you have a well-coordinated and executed content management plan, prospects using a search engine will see results from your company and recognize your company as an expert in your industry.

1/3

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5 Ways to Gather Leads

- *Offer premium content—such as white papers and eBooks—that requires contact information to access.*
- *Offer newsletter and blog subscriptions.*
- *Provide the opportunity for inquiries through your website.*
- *Ask visitors to fill out forms to receive more information about your products.*
- *Require advanced registration for free webinars.*



Lead Generation

Lead generation is about gathering contact information from prospects. Leads are gathered in many ways, some digital and some not. Many organizations struggle with lead generation. According to the 2016 State of Lead Generation survey, only 39% of organizations described their lead generation efforts as superior.¹⁴ 21% called themselves unsuccessful at lead generation.

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- Ask visitors to fill out forms to receive more information about your products.
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Lead Scoring

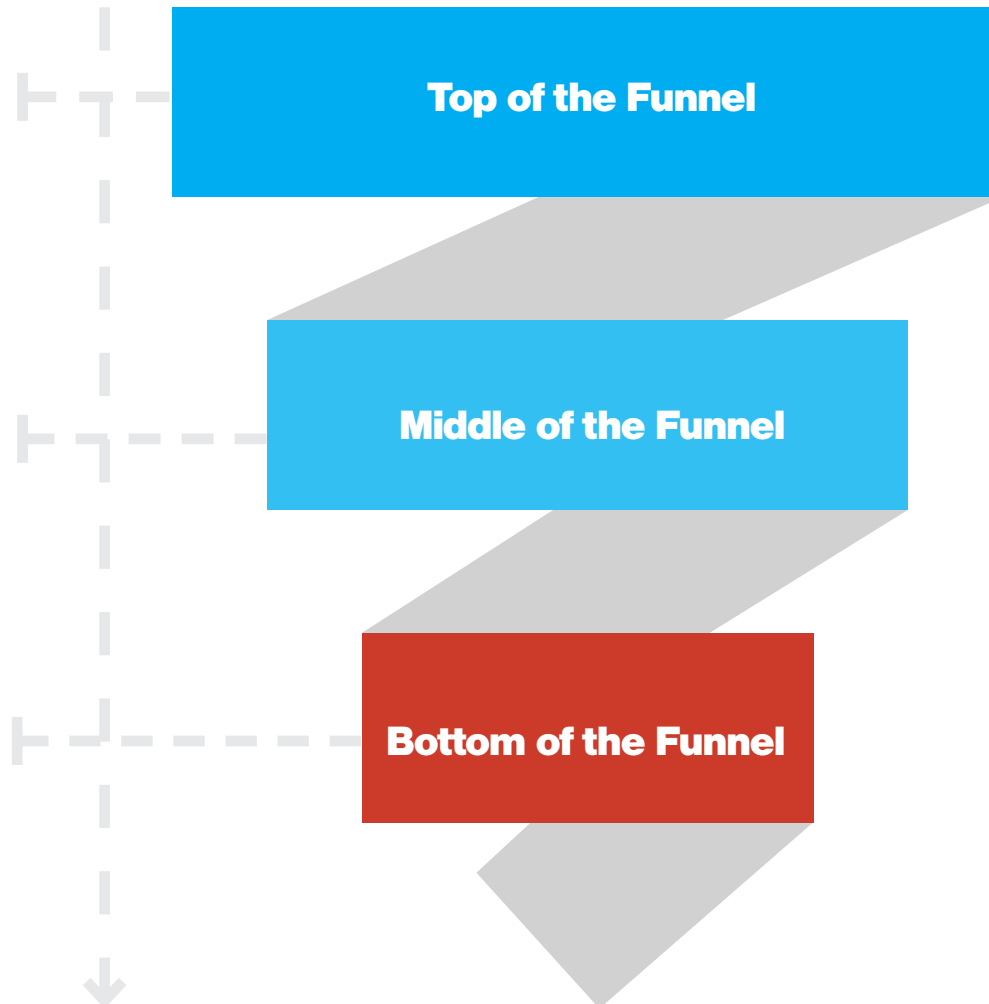
Not all leads are created equally. You should have a lead-scoring system that considers factors affecting the likelihood of converting a prospect as well as the lifetime value of a client if converted. Factors include the prospect's place in the sales funnel, need for products, and position in the company. Most commonly, the lead - scoring scale runs from one to 100.

You may need to do some research before scoring your lead and taking next steps. Asking too many questions on a form deters visitors from downloading content. Depending on the size of your company and your resources, this research may involve direct research via resources such as LinkedIn. Another option is to run your leads through software that mines social media sites or other public information sources for data.

Leads who are just getting their feet wet are looking for information, not a sales pitch. Some of the leads won't turn out to be true prospects at all, while others may require a long nurturing process before conversion.

These leads are qualified in the sense that you know they are within your target market, but they're probably not ready to buy. You'll have to warm them up and lead them along to becoming sales-qualified leads.

These leads are closer to making a purchase, but they still need nurturing to close the deal.



Lead Nurturing and Conversion

Generating leads is an important first step, but the real goal is conversion. Converting leads requires not only time and effort but also a solid understanding of who the prospect is and how to approach him or her at each stage of the process.

Lead Life Cycle Stages

- **Top of the Funnel:**
Leads who are just getting their feet wet are looking for information, not a sales pitch. Some of the leads won't turn out to be true prospects at all, while others may require a long nurturing process before conversion.
- **Middle of the Funnel:**
These leads are qualified in the sense that you know they are within your target market, but they're probably not ready to buy. You'll have to warm them up and lead them along to becoming sales-qualified leads.
- **Bottom of the Funnel:**
These leads are closer to making a purchase, but they still need nurturing to close the deal.

Nurturing Leads

Quick conversion is the exception to the rule in B2B marketing. Doctors, executives, and procurement specialists take their time researching and evaluating options before committing to a solution.

Content marketing presents the perfect opportunity to stay in touch with prospects as they move through the sales funnel. Content allows you to build credibility and keep your company at top of mind without engaging in a hard sell that can drive a prospect away.

In the early stages, neutral information from outside sources such as professional associations and medical journals may carry the most weight. Prospects need to explore the symptoms of a problem and determine an appropriate type of solution before comparing products.

Present a mix of media so prospects can access information in the manner they prefer. Along with written media, you can provide videos, podcasts, and slideshows.

Take Advantage of Automation

Marketing automation makes it easier to conduct lead nurturing campaigns. With automation, your company can reach the right people with the appropriate content on a schedule. An automation platform enables you to segment email lists by the stage of the sales cycle and other factors in your personas. You can trigger a whole nurturing sequence based on a lead category.

Automation also allows you to adjust the campaign if a lead takes a certain action during the nurturing process. This relieves you of the burden of monitoring individual prospects. Prospects don't wait around for you to reach out to them. Delivering regular, useful information can make the difference between closing the deal and watching a prospect slip away.

Measure and Adjust

The marketing automation platform generates data that you can use to measure response and adapt quickly. Paying attention to your analytics will uncover information that you can use to tweak your campaigns and improve conversion rates.

For example, you may discover that a white paper generates a positive response from clinic administrators but has a much lower open rate from doctors. This may be a signal that you need to split these segments and test a different approach with the lower-performing segment.

Extensive information about opens, click-through rates, and downloads gathered on a prospect-by-prospect basis makes it easier than ever to determine what's working for whom and at what stage of the process.



Spreading the News about Medical Technology

As a medical technology company, you can revolutionize the way doctors treat patients, improving patients' overall care. The key is getting the word out.

Digital content marketing is about more than just creating content. It's about reaching out to the right people through the right channels. When used strategically, digital content marketing can reduce your cost per lead, improve conversion rates, and boost your return on marketing investments.

An effective content marketing campaign should help you reach a larger audience, improve relations between sales and marketing teams, and build relationships with prospects that turn them into brand ambassadors.

TSL Marketing has almost 20 years of experience developing digital marketing strategies for technology companies, including those that focus on medical technology.

Our strategists and production team members know how to design and execute comprehensive marketing strategies that meet the unique demands of your business.



How effective is your digital marketing strategy? Let TSL show you how to optimize it.



TSL Marketing
plan • develop • manage

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