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MARKETING GROWTH & DEMAND GEN STRATEGY - START-UP MODE -

As complicated as B2B marketing could be – it is easy to get lost when defining your **DIGITAL STRATEGY**. However, business sales growth has always been and will continue being the main driver behind ANY marketing strategy.

Designing a custom advertising plan is the best way to keep things structured and aligned to the corporate business goals. Whether your marketing plan is meticulous, a little loose, or a combination of both, it is good for keeping marketers on a focused path. Depending upon what market you are targeting, you will need a mix of **inbound and outbound** media tactics to resolve your sales funnel challenge(s).

For B2B marketers, a well-crafted content-driven marketing strategy is key to succeed. But, more importantly it provides the framework to develop the right content for the right audience and mindset – Awareness or/and Engagement - figure out timing, and select the omnichannel strategy.

Market demand informs what content consumers want to read – and this is informed by what questions (or search terms) they are typing into the search engines. When you provide content that consumers are looking for, your business is more likely to grow.

This is a **TRUE B2B STORY...**

INTRODUCTION

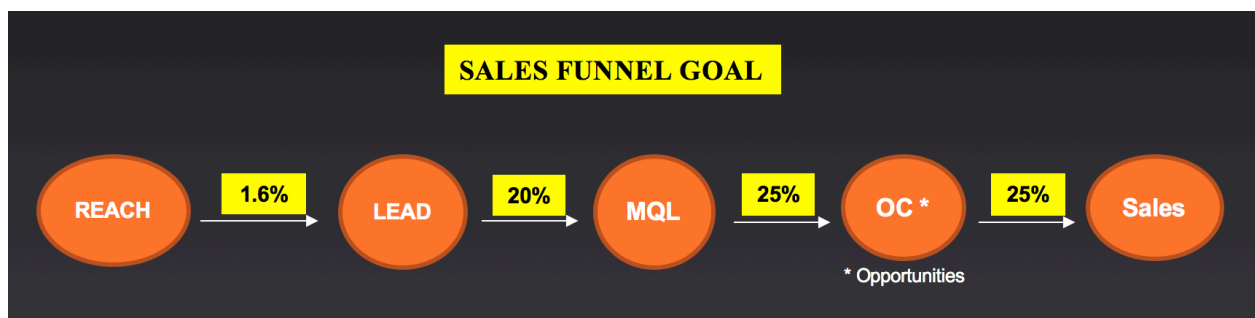
In Q4 2017 we engaged with a start-up to design their marketing strategy and strengthen their marketing effort to generate more qualified leads. The goal consisted of delivering 30 opportunities each month.

To achieve this objective, and based on all budget constraints, we articulate and custom the marketing strategy around the followings:

- Sales funnel challenge
- Lead/opportunity business goals
- Brand communication strategy
- Omnichannel advertising plan
- Inbound & content-driven creatives
- Custom metrics and dashboards

SALES FUNNEL CHALLENGE

It is clear that the Sales Pipeline Optimization is identified as the biggest challenge companies face on the B2B market. In an age of digitalization, companies invest in CRM and sales automation tools, training, AI, and analytics, to significantly improve the Sales Funnel. Here, below is the representation of a B2B sales funnel in numbers:



CURRENT STATE of the BUSINESS

In 2017, the company generated 75K unique visitors, 188 signups, 46 trials and 17 opportunities. They achieved **9% lead-to-opportunity conversion rate**. Most of the web sessions were generated through the blog posts so 81% of website visitors were coming from the Blog.

Cohort	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Total 2017	Model
Unique Visitors	9,182	8,818	8,216	9,491	9,885	9,364	10,438	9,876	75,270	
Conversion Rate (%)	0.33%	0.27%	0.44%	0.19%	0.21%	0.25%	0.19%	0.16%	0.25%	
Signups + Contact	30	24	36	18	21	23	20	16	188	332
Conversion Rate (%)	36.67%	25.00%	25.00%	16.67%	23.81%	0.00%	40.00%	25.00%	24%	24%
Activated Trials	11	6	9	3	5	0	8	4	46	79
Conversion Rate (%)	18.18%	66.67%	33.33%	0.00%	40.00%	0.00%	37.50%	75.00%	37%	38%
Opportunities	2	4	3	0	2	0	3	3	17	30
Conversion Rate (%)	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12%	13%
Closed Won	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	4

BUSINESS GOAL

In Q4 2017, the company goal was to generate **30 opportunities per month and convert 25% of them into sales over time**. Based on this opportunity-gen objective, we needed to generate 332 leads. As a side note, this business goal was about reflecting an increase of 72% growth when compared to the existing lead-gen plan running in 2017.

In Q4 2017, the marketing team started implementing and scaling the data and content-driven inbound marketing strategy, we focused marketing effort on increasing brand awareness allocating 20% of the advertising budget. The remaining budget was allocated to generating “bottom of the funnel leads.” As a reminder, the ultimate goal was to generate opportunities and sales, and increase all conversion at **every stage of the sales funnel process**.

DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

We focused on **content-driven and inbound marketing** and created content to raise brand awareness-top of the funnel, and lead-bottom of the funnel to grow sales. Brand awareness was required to sustain long-term business growth, while search advertising plan was in place to generate immediate sales.

Here below is an articulation of the marketing strategy that was established to turn business challenges into sales opportunities:

	AWARENESS	ACQUISITION	CONVERSION	RETENTION
CHALLENGE	Where do the brand seat in the market and industry?	What are the channels that drive leads?	Can people buy anywhere and anytime, online?	Do we value each customer prior and after sales?
OPPORTUNITY	Determine our mission - personality and value proposal	Scale lead gen programs and optimize spend	Make the sales process "hyper" responsive and simples	Implement MarTech to streamline CRM process from first touch to last

Although we did not focus as much as we wanted on rising brand awareness, the content-driven marketing strategy was designed to help start promoting the brand.

That's said, we primarily focused on:

- Increasing leads, free trials and opportunities (short-term focus),
- Leveraging and reducing the sale cycle,
- Growing market shares, winning against competitors,
- Connecting to the community to capture influencers' attention.

BRAND COMMUNICATION & POSITIONING

We agreed on the **framework of the brand positioning and communication** to support the inbound marketing strategy. And, we proposed to articulate advertising and media communication as follow:

- For [**target – personas**] ... people seeking the best products and service
- The company [**mission**] ... provides an amazing experience for the best results
- Offers [**promise - main benefit**] ... a unique product that help you stand out

- Because [reasons to believe] ... we have the expertise to deliver what we say
- Unlike [key competitor] ... that do not invest and engage toward our believes
- We [deliver - differentiator] ... products and services that count for you

OMNICHANNEL ADVERTISING PLAN

In Q4, we proposed to spend the marketing investment of **\$57,877** on Google/Bing search and Facebook/Linked ad platforms to generate a total of **983 net new paid leads** (not including natural leads) for the quarter. And, we allocated marketing spend as follows:

- Google & Bing search: **\$43,077 (74%)**
- Social advertising: **\$7,500**
- Retargeting: **\$3,700**
- Email nurturing: **\$3,600**
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Leads	Reach	Click	Cost	Avg. CPC	CTR	Leads	Lead Conv.	CPL
Oct. 2017	392,721	5,348	14,620	\$2.73	1.36%	232	4.34%	\$63
Nov. 2017	616,957	5,592	18,909	\$3.38	0.91%	316	5.65%	\$60
Dec. 2017	846,450	6,956	24,348	\$3.50	0.82%	435	6.25%	\$56
Grand total	1,856,128	17,896	\$57,877	\$3.23	0.96%	983	5.49%	\$58.88
MOM Proj. % Change	+116%	+30%	+67%	+28%		+88%		-11%

Getting bottom of the funnel lead was the main driver of our strategy, but we also needed to start building brand awareness to sustain business growth in the coming 2018 year. So, the marketing team invested time and some budget in social media advertising to increase brand visibility. In addition, we launched:

- **Account-Based Marketing (ABM)** campaign to start penetrating the enterprise market, and invested \$2,5K to acquire 500 contacts that we started nurturing to get high quality leads.
- **SEO strategy** by optimizing the site structure and content. We identified most relevant search terms that drove "high-quality" traffic and lead conversion by leveraging Google tools, PPC advertising and benchmarking our competitors.

INBOUND and CONTENT-DRIVEN

We built advertising programs to earn attention of the target audience ready to **engage, evaluate, consider and purchase** the solution. We promoted the right content and offered white papers, product webinar, custom demo, FREE POC and consultation, and [How to video](#).

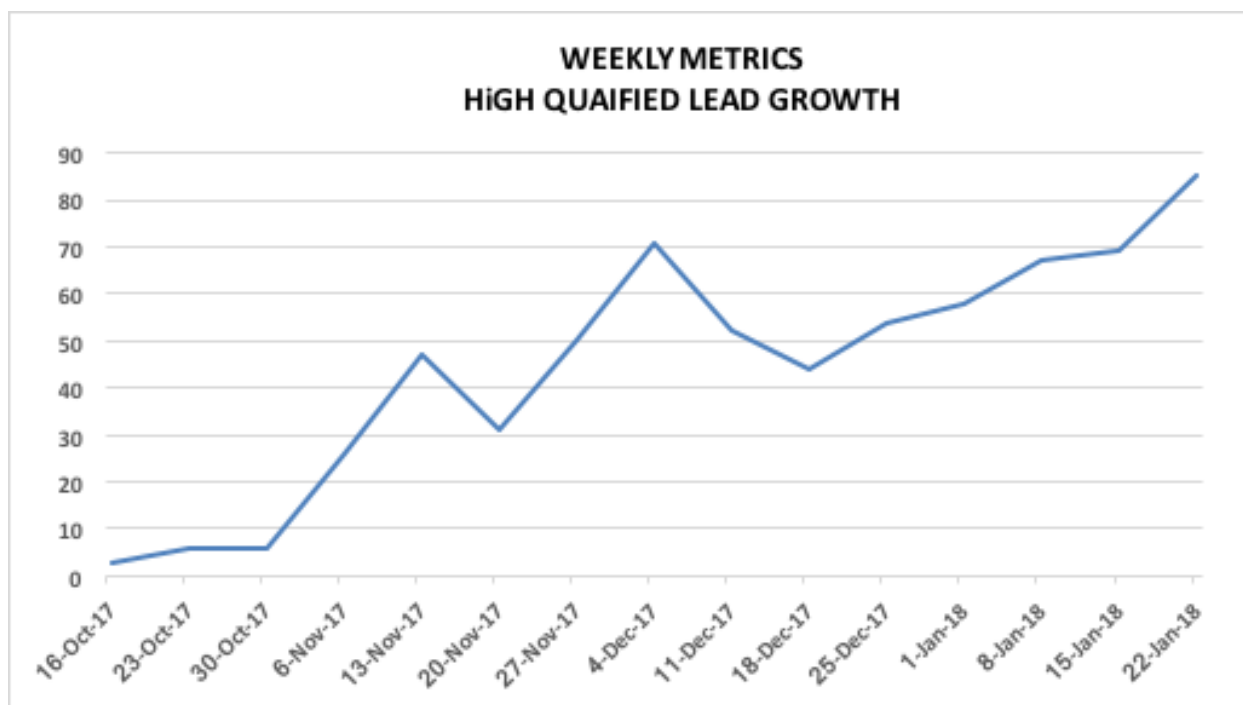
We tailored marketing programs and omnichannel strategy offerings as follow:

Tactics	Channel	Offerings	Key metrics
Engage & Evaluate	Search (tailored keywords) Retargeting (site visits) Email nurturing Social media (FB/ LI) Influencer marketing Account-based Marketing (ABM)	Product webinar 2 White papers Product data sheet How to video eNewsletter	Visits & clicks Open clicks (email) CPL (cost per lead) Leads Lead conversion Social engagement
Consider & Purchase	Search (long-tail keywords) Retargeting Social media Email nurturing	Product data sheet Custom demo FREE consultation FREE Trial	Opportunities & Sales & revenue AOV Sales conversion CPA

DASHBOARD and METRICS

We developed metrics that aligned with business and corporate objectives, and tied the marketing plan to sales and revenue. Growing revenue was the ultimate goal of the entire marketing strategy. We established sales and revenue-tier metrics and compared the **Average Order Value (AOV)** of new customers to **Cost of Customer Acquisition (CAC)**. Revenue and sales KPIs resonated strongly with the top executives and boards.

We implemented metrics that calculated return on marketing investment and map the new customer journey. From first touch to last, we tracked marketing performance.



BUDGET and RESOURCES

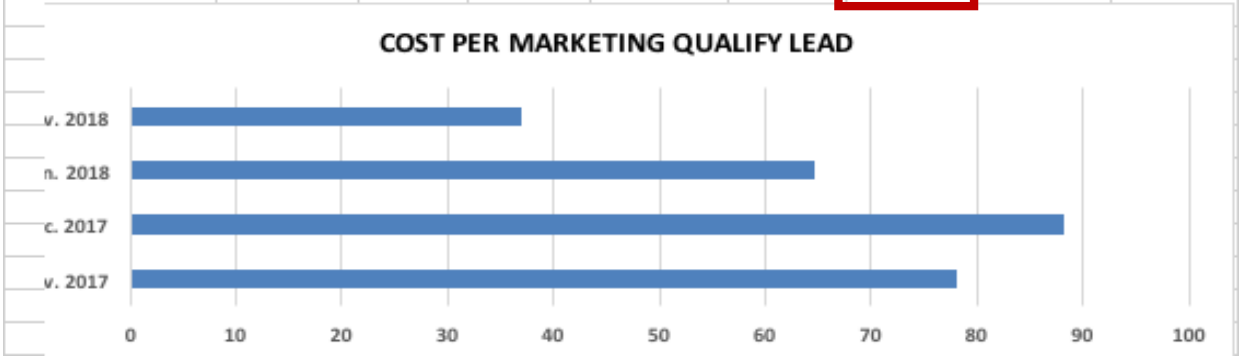
In order to sustain the lead gen growth, we invest \$60,377 in media buy, \$10K in creative design, and \$15K in campaign and web operation management in Q4. Total budget of \$85,377 supported the entire execution of the marketing strategy.

- **Creative marketing designer** to create all ad banners and landing pages for creative assets. This required 37 banners and one landing page per asset. We created a total of 187 banners and 14 landing pages (A/B testing)
- **Operation & campaign manager** to set up all backend system with proper tagging (UTM), and tracking (pixels) to measure weekly and monthly campaign results. This included the use of Hubspot, which was the primary CRM tool to support the inbound and nurturing marketing plan. We also used WordStream to monitor Paid search activities, and GA to measure lead conversion activity.

RESULTS in NUMBERS

All too often, companies invest in paid media but don't take advantage of the insights it produces. They may collect data, but it's fragmented across multiple platforms and requires time-consuming, manual compilation. This can lead to out-of-date reports that prevent teams from taking timely action and conducting deeper analysis. But, here below are the marketing results, and numbers in digital marketing do not lie:

Metric	Reach	Click	Cost	Avg. CPC	CTR	Leads	Lead Conv.	CPL
Nov. 2017	1,400,494	8,394	\$13,342	\$1.59	0.60%	171	2.04%	\$78
Dec. 2017	3,572,815	12,776	\$21,965	\$1.72	0.36%	249	1.95%	\$88
Jan. 2018	3,979,785	11,645	\$24,887	\$2.14	0.29%	385	3.31%	\$65
Feb. 2018	2,216,848	2,562	\$6,775	\$2.64	0.12%	183	7.14%	\$37
Grand total	11,169,942	35,377	\$66,969	\$1.89	0.32%	988	2.79%	\$67.78



*Time period is from mid-November to mid-February

The team scales the marketing spend and successfully reach the goal of 1,000 leads over 3 months. Although we were not able to increase the click-through rate the lead conversion rate increased to 7% while the cost per lead decreased to achieve \$37. That's said, the company started generating more opportunities and sales after the first month.

MAKE YOUR OWN JOURNEY — BRING YOUR PAID ADVERTISING PROGRAMS TO NEW HEIGHTS

The future is now, and digital advertising is more than just creatives. The only thing that keeps us from building profitable marketing programs is focusing too much of our effort on thinking in terms of Return on Ad Spend (ROAS). As leaders we have learned, sometimes in the wrong ways, that ROAS is hard, but ROI is even harder.

So, there is a clear need for a transformational shift in the new advertising paradigm and in the way that we track, tag and measure marketing spend.

ROI has become a new reality in advertising. **We can help you leverage your digital marketing strategy** and generate a positive ROI. We can also develop **PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS models** around lead-sales scoring, and onmichannel attribution practices to predict the future of your business sales.

The convergence of Data, Tech and Science is inevitable in digital marketing. Let's talk if you are interested in recruiting your next talent...