TechTarget | Where serious technology buyers decide

TechTarget Best Practices

The 10 Biggest B2B Technology Marketing Mistakes to Avoid

Based on lessons learned from more than 30,000 B2B marketing campaigns

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TechTarget was founded in 1999. Since then, we have worked with thousands of technology vendors and have run more than 30,000 marketing programs for customers from the Fortune 50 to emerging startups. Over the last 15 years of managing programs, we have seen it all – the good, the bad, and yes, the ugly. Based on TechTarget's vast collective experience and a commitment to making sure that our customers, prospects and partners achieve maximum success, we have put together a list of the top 10 mistakes you need to avoid when putting together your next technology marketing campaign.

1 Don't assume buying decisions are made solely by one person

Technology buying is a team sport and **61% of all buying teams are made up of 5 or more members**. In fact, 30% of teams have more than 8 and almost 20% have 10+ members. The days of focusing on a single contact in a lead spreadsheet are over and it's time for marketers to start taking account-based marketing seriously. In order to get ahead of projects and create the most influence with the entire team, it is absolutely imperative for marketers to surround their target accounts.

2 Don't ignore the power of IT Managers and IT Staff

The idea of a single senior-level decision maker is largely a myth. Senior IT managers rely on their entire team of recommenders, influencers and implementers in order to know they are investing in the right solution for their environment. Furthermore, **65% of ALL technology decisions are actually made at the IT management and staff level**. So why is it that so many technology marketers continue to direct efforts towards senior IT and ignore IT Managers and IT Staff? Remember, it takes a team to say "yes", but only one person to say "no" and ruin your deal.

3 Don't assume all LOB is created equal

When it comes to making technology decisions, all LOB is not created equal. Too often, marketers make the mistake of using general business media to market technology to LOB, assuming that: 1. The LOB pros you reach actually care about enterprise technology; and 2. They are actively involved in the decision to purchase technology for their organization. While research shows that IT is doing most of the heavy lifting, LOB managers are very important influencers in the buying process. **Influencing *the right* LOB stakeholders in the right environments can go a long way towards cementing your place on a shortlist**.

4 Don’t fall short on content to meet buy cycle needs

The majority of **IT buyers view a minimum of 4 pieces of content before they begin to build a shortlist of vendors**. These buyers have different needs as they progress through the buy cycle, and they look to both vendors and third party experts to get the right information to help them get the holistic landscape of solutions as they make decisions related to their current projects. If you don’t produce enough content to meet those needs, you risk being left off the shortlist. Rely on media partners to help you fill these gaps.

5 Don’t make it easy for technology buyers to ignore your content

Your content is only as good as its distribution channel. Any effective marketing plan revolves around having quality content and you have undoubtedly spent a lot of time, effort, and investment creating that content. But just creating good or even great content is not enough. If the right buyers can’t find your content, then your marketing plan is destined to fail. In order to maximize your marketing success, it is critical to **make sure you choose the right content distribution partner**.

6 Don’t just focus on the bottom of the funnel

Those that choose to focus only on the bottom of the funnel will minimize both their influence and opportunities with accounts. The earlier you engage prospects, the earlier you can get in on potential projects, and the more chance you have to shape the RFP process and buy in your favor. If you only reach them at the bottom of the funnel, it may already be too late. **Late stage leads are only a small piece of the puzzle**. Marketers must have a mix of branding, demand generation, and sales enablement solutions to make sure that they are creating influence with accounts throughout the sales cycle.

7 Don’t set your sales teams up to fail

With up to 60% of the sales cycle complete before talking to a rep, buyers are self-educating themselves about your products and they expect the same from you. **Your sales teams *must* be well-informed about buyer needs prior to their first engagement**. Without the right intelligence from both inside and outside your own ecosystem, you are setting your sales teams up to fail. Marketers must arm them with key account and project insight to fully understand the buying signals that can make engagements more productive and lucrative.

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8 Don’t let your marketing programs take a vacation

Technology buying decisions are being made in 6 months or less, so if you are thinking about going dark in the summer, you should think again. Contrary to popular belief, **lead generation does not decrease in the summer, but actually increases**. Are you willing to risk that the deal that could make your year is not happening during the summer months?

9 Don’t mistake reach for relevance when working with media partners

You should **demand a media partner who continuously invests in its content, audience, and product innovation** to deliver programs specialized to your needs and provides the micro-targeting to get in front of projects in very specific technology segments. Unfortunately, some traditional reach-driven media companies, steeped in print heritage have not evolved. They continue to rely on legacy reputation and disregard marketers’ strategic value by providing a generalized approach to marketing.

10 Don’t take a one-size-fits-all approach to global demand generation

Enterprise company filtering is an acceptable strategy in North America, **however marketers should think twice about applying filters when expanding into international markets**. When you look at company size statistics by country, it reveals a great international opportunity, but also many fewer organizations at the largest company segments. Marketing organizations that do not adjust expectations based on this reality often have slower growth because they unnecessarily limit their initial target segment. Before you consider running any international demand generation programs, you must get your market facts straight, or you will most likely be disappointed in the results.

About TechTarget

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