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THE INSIDE LINE ON GENERATING LEADS AND GETTING RESULTS

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Adapt To New Nuances of Building B2B Relationships

by [Andrew Wetzler](#), Yesterday, 5:00 PM

Have you ever heard a B2B marketing person make the following case: "If you just get a single sale out of this campaign, then it will have paid for itself."

To be frank, I am guilty of having thought along those lines at times. That perspective, while plausible, doesn't actually pay the bills. Furthermore, for many companies, the online competitiveness of their industries are so intense that driving qualified visitors has become an expensive and uncertain activity.

How can you both afford and justify the costs of B2B marketing? What counts as an acceptable result?

The perspective I favor involves a bigger-picture view of the sales cycle. A lead is a lead, and most often leads need to be cultivated over a period of time in order to convert to paying clients.

That's not necessarily a novel concept, but what's new are the evolving tools / channels available to help foster those relationships. What's difficult is keeping up with those channels while also having a handle on the basics -- like sending out blogs and newsletters, but also picking up the telephone.

There are many more potential touch points than ever before, but each requires a strategy and execution. Should you be tweeting or blogging (or both)?

Try to take a step back and recognize that even in older eras of b2b selling, consummating a deal took time.

The internet has compressed time in so many ways, but sales is still centered on establishing confidence and building relationships. There is no single formula for converting leads into customers, but a plan with specific communications-oriented action steps needs to be established that incorporates a longer-term mindset.

The sales that occur quickly are very nice, but your bread and butter will remain organizations that get to know you over a period of time and remember to reach out to you when they are ready to get serious about making a purchase.

Develop a workable way to stay in front of your prospects over time. This will make worthwhile the costs associated with generating the leads in the first place.

 This commentary is insightful. I recommend it to others.
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