THE BIG BOOK *of* DOS & DON'TS *of* B2B MARKETING

MADISON LOGIC

THE *DOS* & *DON'TS* OF B2B MARKETING

In the digital, binary world there are only two options: one or a zero. These numbers represent two diametrically opposed options: yes or no, on or off, do or don't. Given that binary code is inherently mathematical, its expressions are subjective. In other words, it makes every string of ones and zeros capable of expressing the exact same thing every time, with absolutely no variation. Binary code is why computers work, why you can stream video to your phone, how you can type a sentence into Microsoft Word

While B2B marketing uses digital assets and resources, it — in and of itself — is not solely binary. There are infinite options and what works for one prospect or account may not work for another. There are binary options, though. Right or wrong, do or don't. We've compiled a list of the most common dos and don'ts based on topics that are at the Madison Logic core: content marketing, lead generation, lead nurturing, and display advertising.

While we deal with these topics daily, we know some of the best new ideas and strategies come from our clients and prospects, which is why we'd like this ebook to spark conversations. Do you agree with our assessments? Disagree? Is there something we missed?

Please let us know. Send an email to sales@madisonlogic.com.
Future editions of this ebook will revisit these topics and others.
We'd love you to be a part of them.

THE *DOS* AND *DON'TS* OF CONTENT MARKETING

Content is the fuel that drives a B2B marketer's lead generation engine.

Without it, or without the right type, your lead gen efforts aren't going anywhere. Here's what you need to do so your content hits the mark — and engages your target — on the first try.

DO create content that reflects the needs of your target audience

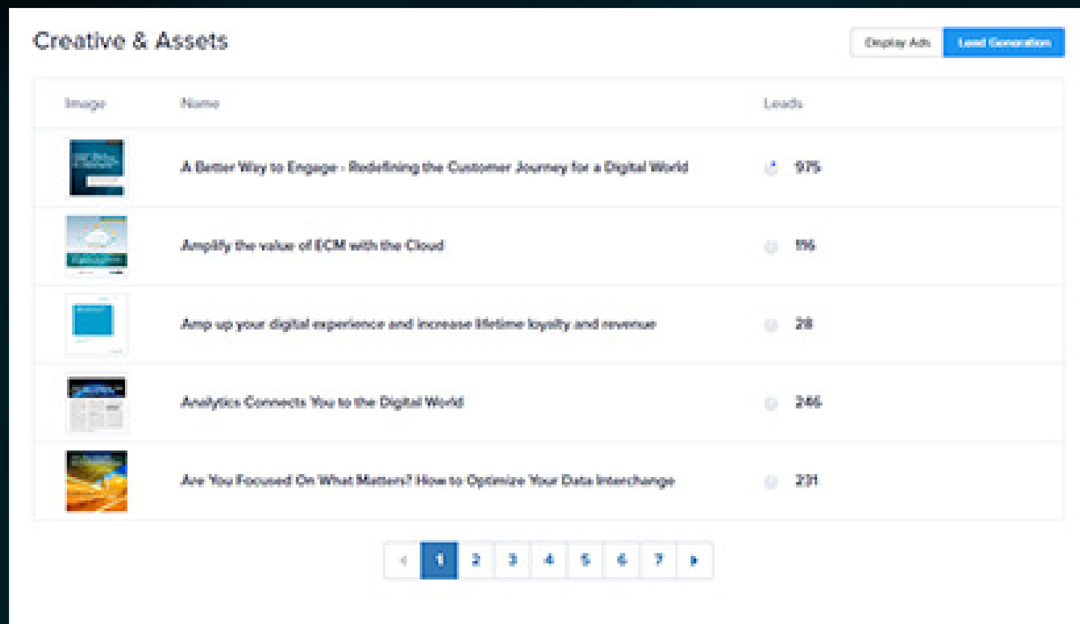
The best conversationalists – and the best Content Marketers – are actually the best listeners. Your prospects have challenges that they face day-to-day and it's up to you to find out what those needs are and respond appropriately. You can get a clear picture of what they need by listening to the marketplace using SEO and social. You'll also want to listen directly to your target accounts by using Intent Data and Surging Topics insights.

DO align content with the trajectory of a buyer's journey

Think about the buyer's journey. At the onset when the buyer is new, he or she isn't seeking deep information. Give them short, consumable, sharable data and information. Infographics and videos work well at this stage. Midway through the buyer's journey case studies, whitepapers and webinars become more important to your prospects, as they desire more detailed collateral. Nearing the decision stage, product demos and client testimonials will become key.

DON'T take a one-size-fits-all content view

No matter how good a whitepaper is, it's not right for every account. Take the time to examine each account and determine how content assets are performing.



This screenshot — highlighting a generic example from Madison Logic's Activate ABM™ platform — demonstrates the strategy. With the tool, you can determine how assets are performing at each targeted account. When you have this information you can prioritize and share content that's similar to what's working and eliminate under-performing assets. The more you know about how an account is behaving, the better you can optimize your program for success.

DO create content that reflects your brand's message

While marketers need helpful, relevant content that aligns with prospect needs, it's important to stay true to a brand's messaging. At Madison Logic, we're here to help marketers run account based marketing programs that unify both display advertising and lead generation. This gives us a wide breadth of content topics we can use: lead generation, content marketing, display advertising, account based marketing, and data-driven marketing. Given that our audience is comprised of B2B marketers, there's a temptation to stray into SEO, advocate marketing, or social. But that's not Madison Logic. We want our content to reflect what we do best. You should, too.

DON'T force-feed your brand

Remember this maxim: B2B marketers should avoid talking about their products and instead talk about the ideas behind them. Yes, your brand has products or services that will directly address client needs, but don't pound that drum unless there's an appropriate reason. Even then, it's a careful tightrope to walk. For example, when I included the screenshot of our Activate ABM™ platform to demonstrate a previous tip, it seemed to fit the topic at hand. When including screenshots and talking about solutions, content marketers should do so with caution, minimizing promotional language. After all, content should help, not sell.

“Content should help, not sell.”

THE *DOS* & *DON'TS* OF LEAD NURTURING

Young leads are fresh, just like sprouts in a garden. They need time before they are ready to harvest. If you send them to sales too soon you risk uprooting them, destroying any possibility of conversion. These leads need nurturing before they transform into robust qualified leads.

Here are five things to think about as you begin your lead nurturing journey.

1

DO determine what a lead looks like

Someone who downloads a whitepaper — a top-of-funnel interaction — isn't necessarily a lead. And yet all too often sales reaches out to these people with a phone call or a demo offer. This is a bad idea.

Marketing and sales needs to agree on, and establish, lead criteria that identifies a prospect as a real Sales Qualified Lead (SQL). This criteria can include a combination of demographic data – such as company size, lead title, industry type, and behavioral data – such as events attended or website engagement, for instance.

2

DON'T harass your prospects

A whitepaper download should not lead to a phone call or email asking if someone wants more information, and yet this happens all the time. Sometimes — when the prospect doesn't respond to that first touch — harassment begins in the form of emails, calls, and demo offers that pop up every few days. While follow up can be good, it shouldn't feel desperate. Instead, time follow ups in an appropriate cadence and make sure you're offering more information: videos explainers, one-sheeters, infographics. Once prospects respond to your content they will be more inclined to take your call.

3

DO personalize follow-up emails

Marketing automation (MA) is great, but when a prospect fills out a form and receives a triggered, generic, unpersonalized email, they're likely to hit the delete button. A better strategy: Emails that are customized with the prospect's name and company. Emails should also reference the original content or offer they downloaded or clicked on, respectively. Finally, emails should be signed by a real person and contain real contact information.

4

DON'T pitch your products

This is something we talk about a lot at Madison Logic. A prospect is not interested in products. They're interested in solving a problem. Map your content to their buying cycle and avoid mentioning your products – at least in the beginning.

Take a look at all your content, assign it to a place in the funnel and serve it to the prospect as they proceed. Make sure your content follows a logical order, too. In a sense you're telling the story of your brand. The easier it is to understand your story, the more likely the lead is to convert.

5

DON'T use a one-size-fits-all approach

Every prospect is different. They consume information in different ways, are more sensitive to repeated touches, or have specific preferences about the way they communicate. What's more, a prospect may come to you at different stages of the buying cycle. It's up to you to determine where that prospect may be and put them on the track most appropriate to their stage. Evaluate their lead criteria and determine what kind of person you're talking to. Providing content that doesn't match a potential buyer's needs risks disengagement.

“Leads need nurturing before they transform into robust qualified leads.”

THE *DOS* AND *DON'TS* OF DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Display ads are insistent and ever-present, keeping the companies they promote top-of-mind. But what about the pundits who for the last several years have declared that “display is dead”? Simply put, they’re wrong.

According to Ad Age Datacenter, in 2015 the top 100 B2B advertisers spent $685 million on display ads. At the same time, an Econsultancy report reveals that, when B2B marketers rank how they’re allocating their budgets, display ties lead generation for third place, right below content marketing and paid search.

Why? Display seems to be working.

New IAB Rising Star units are driving three times the interaction rate and producing 29.5% higher brand lift than legacy units, and are perceived as less intrusive by users. What’s more, according to MarketingLand, we’re in a display ad renaissance. Display is “on the cusp of achieving its mature form.” We at Madison Logic couldn’t agree more.

Here’s what you need to know to plan your next display campaign.

DO define the goals of a campaign

It may seem simple, but many B2B marketers ignore this simple rule. For any campaign solely using display, answer these questions: Who is your target audience? What are their pain points? Do you want to raise awareness with your audience, or is it lead generation that you really seek? If it's the former, display will be your best friend. If it's the latter, display is not going to get you there.

DON'T make click through your definitive metric

Measurement is crucial no matter what the platform. Click through rates (CTR) are not a definitive measure of success, though. A better option: Measure the exposure time in a given set of accounts and then see if there's a lift in site visits from that account. If site visits increase, your display campaign is working.

DO design a custom landing page

Marketers will often use display ads to bring people to their websites. A better strategy is creating a landing page that features the same branding as display ads. Imagery and language reassures the user that they've landed on the right page - making it more likely that they'll engage with the content they see. Don't forget a contact form! If you've given the prospect the right content, they will have a good reason to want to give you their information.

DON'T forget the call to action

A call to action is essential. Display ads should require a user to do something. If you want a click, say so clearly. Tell a user what to do, and what they get if they do it. For example, "Click to watch a video" or "Click here to schedule a demo."

DON'T cram too much in a small space

Most display ads are fixed – for instance, 300×250, 728×90, or 300×600. Don't try to use a small ad to say too much. Make messages short and pithy with a clear call to action. Use interstitials or rich media ads to tell a more complex story.

DO use data to target audiences

Advertising that the wrong audience sees becomes intrusive. In fact, misdirected advertising is often responsible for banner blindness. When you use data to target, you can identify prospects that have self-identified as interested in products like yours. And while they may not necessarily click, we've seen that well-targeted ads show a five times higher gaze duration and four times higher ad recall, all of which is a boost for your brand.

DON'T limit your reach

B2B marketers looking to target their ideal audience will turn to trade publications, niche publishers that address a single vertical or subject. But buying inventory at every publication a prospect visits becomes time consuming and expensive. Consider tapping a publisher cooperative (like Madison Logic's) that can bundle multiple publishers into one campaign, increasing reach while saving time and money.

Taking Marketing to the Next Level

At Madison Logic, we run hundreds of display and lead generation programs for our customers with our Activate ABM™ platform.

Experience shows that display and lead gen, combined in a single account based marketing program, are far more effective than campaigns where the two tactics run independently of one another.

In what might be the key to success, Activate ABM™ provides insight into these tactics and more. It can tell you what content is resonating at the account level, how your display ads are contributing to site life, how each content asset is performing (or underperforming). All this allows you to optimize your program in real-time to build programs that are profoundly tailored to each account.

If you're interested in learning more, feel free to reach out to us for a demo. We'd be glad to get one set up.

Email us at sales@madisonlogic.com.

We're always looking for input for the next edition of

The Big Book of Dos and Don'ts of B2B Marketing.

Let us know your comments. We're always willing to learn!

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