THE **DEFINITIVE GUIDE** TO

LEAD NURTURING

2nd Edition

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INTRODUCTION

WHY SHOULD I READ THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO LEAD NURTURING

Today's buyers are more empowered than ever before. They engage with brands and companies through their own research across multiple channels, long before marketing or sales has the opportunity to engage with them directly.

Today's potential buyers don't become customers overnight—they require marketing over time as they self-educate and build trust with a company. With lead nurturing, marketers can communicate consistently with buyers cross-channel and throughout the sales cycle—addressing the gap in time between when a lead first interacts with you and when she is ready to purchase.

Lead nurturing is an integral part of a successful marketing strategy—specifically when building relationships with potential buyers on multiple channels, even if they are not currently looking to purchase a product or service.

At Marketo, we have gathered the best practices from across the Marketing Nation—thought leaders, customers, research, and our own experiences—to bring you our brand new second edition of The Definitive Guide to Lead Nurturing.

This Definitive Guide is designed to be useful, practical and informative. It offers a comprehensive description of lead nurturing best practices, from getting started, to advanced techniques.

It will outline:

1. How to create a lead nurture strategy
2. How to nurture leads across channels
3. How to segment a lead database
4. How to choose appropriate content for each lead nurture track and audience
5. How to get the most value from lead nurturing with testing and optimization
6. How to measure and explain lead nurturing's return on investment

Use this guide as a workbook—take notes, highlight what you find inspirational, share what you learn with your colleagues—and start using lead nurturing to drive revenue growth.

PART I:

WHAT IS LEAD NURTURING?

WHAT IS LEAD NURTURING?

DEFINING LEAD NURTURING

Lead nurturing is the process of building effective relationships with potential customers throughout the buying journey.

According to Marketo's benchmark study, on average, 50% of leads are not yet ready to buy. Lead nurturing creates automated, ongoing communication with your potential buyer throughout the sales cycle and beyond—maximizing results and revenue for your organization.

In fact, at Marketo, since we have such an active and wide top of funnel, 98% of leads that enter our database are not ready for sales. So we have to nurture those buyers over time until they are ready to make a purchase. Lead nurturing automates your communication with those leads so that you are constantly engaging in a relationship throughout their buying journey.

Due to sophisticated technology like marketing automation, modern day lead nurturing is personalized, adaptive, and can listen and react to buyer behavior in real-time.

Modern lead nurturing enables you to listen and respond to buyers on multiple channels—not just email. And now, with breakthroughs like personalization software, the marketer can nurture anonymous leads; touching the entire lifecycle and creating a more personalized and engaging experience than ever before.

The Difference Between Drip Marketing & Lead Nurturing

Before we dive into lead nurturing, let's take a moment to set the record straight about the differences between lead nurturing and drip marketing, a one-size-fits-all predecessor to lead nurturing.

A drip marketing program sends (drips) communications (email, direct mail, etc.) at a specific cadence set by the marketer. But, it does not take into account their activity and behavior because it is static and non-adaptive. While it still has a place in the marketing mix, it has mostly become a subset of a lead nurture strategy.

According to Justin Grey, CEO of Lead MD, "Perhaps a short drip sequence would be effective for sales contracts that have been outstanding for more than two days. Drip sequences work in areas that need more frequent, limited, messaging windows".

Since drip marketing tends to have the same response for everyone, not taking into account specific actions, it doesn't deliver the same value as lead nurturing, which is personalized and adaptive.

WHAT IS LEAD NURTURING?

WHY DOES MY BUSINESS NEED LEAD NURTURING?

Businesses today exist in an increasingly connected market. Buyers expect an extremely personalized, cross channel experience. They do not want to be spoken to; instead, they want to be listened to. Companies want to create relationships with potential buyers, helping to build trust and eventual advocacy.

Lead nurturing facilitates your buyer getting to know your business—it's essentially courtship before marriage. With lead nurturing you spend time establishing a relationship with your buyer and building trust. As a result, when you communicate with your buyer, you are welcomed instead of being regarded as intrusive. Without effective lead nurturing, communicating with your buyers can feel like an awkward first date, full of mistrust and hesitation.

WHAT IS LEAD NURTURING?

WHY DOES MY BUSINESS NEED LEAD NURTURING?

Here are a few stats to support why an organization should implement lead nurturing:

79% of marketing leads never convert to sales. Lack of lead nurturing is the common cause for poor performance.

(MarketingSherpa)

Companies that excel at lead nurturing generate **50%** more sales ready leads at a **33%** lower cost.

(Marketo Research)

Nurtured leads make **47%** larger purchases than non-nurtured leads.

(The Annuitas Group)

WHY DOES MY BUSINESS NEED LEAD NURTURING?

Lead Nurturing Increases the Propensity to Buy

Relationships are critical in today's sales cycles, and lead nurturing enables you to create and maintain that relationship over time. Lead nurturing also helps you be present on the channels your buyer uses to engage with others, increasing the chance they will take the plunge, and purchase your product.

Relationship Building

Lead nurturing enables you to communicate with your buyers on a more sophisticated level. Instead of using outdated drip nurture tactics or only email, modern lead nurturing helps you build relationships through multiple mediums and with relevant, connected campaigns.

Through the listening capabilities of marketing automation, you can now have a continuous conversation through website, social, email, advertising, and beyond. Your communication now becomes consistent, and relevant—and you can begin to build trust and a relationship with your buyer over time.

WHY DOES MY BUSINESS NEED LEAD NURTURING?

Branding and Thought Leadership

When done well, lead nurturing plays a critical role in building your brand. Buyers are people too, and people are subject to emotional influence in their decision-making. Specifically, the more complex a decision, the more likely people are to use heuristics—*experience-based techniques that help in problem solving, learning and discovery*. Heuristics guide which options and information gets considered, and they help us simplify complex decisions to their relevant core. That can be a good thing when the complexity of a purchase is otherwise overwhelming.

Emotions are heavily involved in the creation of heuristics. In marketing, there is an asymmetry between the upside and downside of purchases: the buyer may or may not be rewarded for making a good purchase, but a bad purchase can damage the buyer's reputation and job security.

As a result, fear and risk play large roles in business buying decisions. Organizational risk can be dealt with rationally, but personal risk is usually unstated and hidden from the rational process. Yet personal risk remains a huge factor in buying. For example, if a board member mentions something negative about a potential vendor, the personal risk of choosing that vendor goes way up, and alternately, if he mentions something positive about a vendor, that vendor may be "pre-wired" for success.

That's why most the important brand attributes for a vendor are often credibility and trust—and unless you are a well-known company like Google, the best way to build credibility and trust is by sharing useful information. If you can help frame the discussion, your company will be seen as a trusted advisor and thought leader. If buyers believe that your company understands their problems and knows how to solve them, this helps reduce the feelings of fear and can make a big difference in being selected for consideration and purchase. Lead nurturing helps you build that perception as a brand.

WHAT IS LEAD NURTURING?

WHY DOES MY BUSINESS NEED LEAD NURTURING?

Lead Nurturing Shortens the Sales Cycle

With access to more information than ever before, buyers often take more time to explore their options and educate themselves before making a purchase decision. Modern sales cycles can simply be longer, and nurturing your leads shortens the sales cycle because you can be relevant, trustworthy, and engaging throughout that critical period of time.

What causes longer sales cycles?

- Tighter budgets
- More time spent on decision making
- More people involved in decision making
- Increased options

Today's longer sales cycle is expensive for your company. You need more sales reps to close deals over a longer period of time. And during that time, your competitors have the opportunity to enter the sales process or for customers to become disinterested.

It's vital to shorten the sales cycle as much as possible and nurture can help you do just that through consistent and conversational communication.

FOUR ELEMENTS OF ENGAGING LEAD NURTURING

Effective lead nurturing is engaging. You want buyers to see value in the nurture communications and content that you create. To get to that place, there are four elements of engaging lead nurturing that your communication should posses.

1. Trustworthy
Only with trust will buyers let your communications pass their filters and enter their lives. Set expectations during an opt-in process, and then fulfill those expectations with every communication you share.

Trusted communication has a lower bounce and unsubscribe rate across channels. Alternatively, if trust isn't there, you'll see lower engagement and conversion, and you'll be more likely viewed as spam.

2. Relevant
Relevance means knowing who your audience is and what they want from your communication. Impersonal and poorly timed messages make your subscribers think, "you don't know who I am. You don't know what I want. You just don't get me". And, worst of all, "you don't care about me". If you aren't relevant, your subscribers will opt-out— or perhaps more likely, emotionally opt-out.

Being relevant means sending the right content to the right person at the right time. This includes:

1. Talking to the right people
2. Saying the right things at the right time
3. Constantly improving

In order to build relevance into your nurture program, you'll need to segment and target your buyers. Buyers increasingly expect that when they share information with marketers, their data will be used wisely.

FOUR ELEMENTS OF ENGAGING LEAD NURTURING

3. Multi-Channel

Today's buyers move seamlessly—and quickly—across channels. A typical buyer moves quickly from email, to social media, to your website and then back to social media, in the blink of an eye. Marketers not only need to prepare their lead nurturing strategy for multi-channel engagement, but also consider the device a buyer uses to access these channels for the best optimized and personal experience. Your buyer needs to see an integrated experience across every single channel. Your marketing automation platform and lead nurturing needs to account for all the ways a buyer will look to interact and engage with your brand. We will cover more about structuring your multi-channel lead nurturing strategy later in this guide.

4. Strategic and Impactful

A strategic and impactful lead nurturing program will be measurable, so you will know the value of your marketing tactics and their impact on your organizations' ROI. Defining the right sets of metrics is vital to achieve executive buy-in, adjust your nurture tracks, and report your success. We will go into more depth and define and identify the right sets of metrics later in this guide.

"Omni-channel. Yes, we talk about it. And the reality is coming. The future of lead nurturing is about integrating the channels where your prospects skim and your customers engage.

Lead nurture is still primarily centered on email marketing efforts, but the customer experience needs to span all channels to foster engagement and point-of-sale—from in-store, to mobile, sales, referral, social, and support."

Corrine Sklar,
Global CMO, Bluewolf

THOUGHT LEADER ROUND TABLE

What is the One Mistake that Marketers Make with their Lead Nurture Programs?

Brian Carroll, Executive Director, Revenue Optimization MECLABS

Marketers often treat lead nurturing like just another marketing campaign.

It is NOT lead nurturing to:

1. Send out an e-newsletter on a monthly basis
2. Blast your entire database with a new case study
3. Send all early stage leads the same series of emails
4. Randomly call leads every four weeks to see if they are ready to buy
5. Call early-stage leads every month just to touch base
6. Promote your products and services without considering prospects' interests or stage in the buying cycle.

In contrast, it IS lead nurturing to:

1. Share content that's relevant and valuable, even if prospects never buy from you
2. Send a targeted email that includes content based on:
   - Recipients' industry and/ or role in the company
   - Their stage in buying process or interest
   - Previous conversations or content they've engaged with
3. Answer a question or offer more information
4. Send information that is relevant to a problem

THOUGHT LEADER ROUND TABLE

What is the One Mistake that Marketers Make with their Lead Nurture Programs?

Corinne Sklar, Global CMO, Bluewolf

Marketers often make the mistake of falling in love with every new piece of technology. We all do it. In today's world of digital marketing, it's hard not to get excited about all of the latest tools coming out from vendors. What a great time to be a marketer!

Tools and lead nurturing can only be maximized if you prioritize these areas inside your marketing organization.

- **Focus on Creating Awesome Content.** It doesn't matter how targeted, personalized, or sales-ready your content is. If it doesn't stand out, catch notice, or challenge, it won't create the desired impact. Thinking creatively about topic, copy, design and format is critical to having lead nurture programs work and engaging your audience.
- **Remember Your Lead Nurture Programs Are Only As Good as Your Data.** We all know that data is not sexy. I don't know many marketers that want to spend their days cleaning and managing data. However data is the lifeblood of any good lead or customer nurture program. Whether it's a data czar or marketing operations specialist, keeping a keen eye on data governance is what sets best-in-class marketing programs apart. Remember if you're using a CRM solution where sales people are enter manual data, they also need governance and checks and balances.
- **Mobile-First Mindset.** Mobile is your customer's first screen and interaction with your brand and today's preferred medium for content consumption and communication. Failing to develop lead nurture strategies and a seamless customer experience with a mobile-first mindset is no longer an option.

PART II:

LEAD NURTURING STRATEGY

LEAD NURTURING STRATEGY

GOAL SETTING

Setting up a lead nurture program is not a goal in and of itself. Instead, lead nurturing is a *vehicle for your business to get to your overall goals*. In order for your lead nurture program to be a success, you have to first determine what you hope to achieve.

Set the Stage

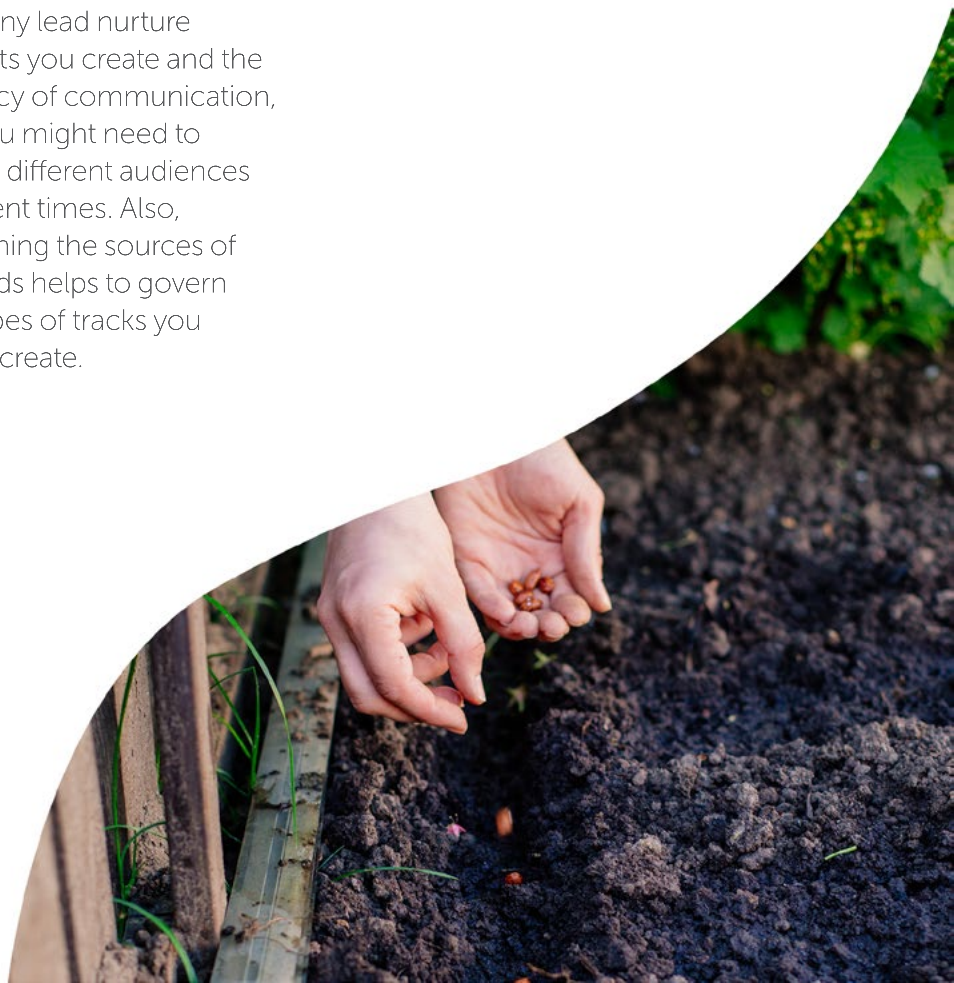
The key to designing an effective lead nurture program is taking stock of your current lead management processes. By asking the right questions, you will not only uncover opportunities for improvement, but the information will also play a critical role in defining issues of workflow.

Invite sales into the room for this initial discovery process. Giving sales a voice in this process ensures that you have a holistic view of your leads.

Here are 5 questions to ask about your current lead management process:

1. **How many leads do you generate each month and what is the source of those leads?**
   Understanding the scale and source of leads helps to determine the scale of your lead nurturing program. You can get this information by running a report in your marketing automation or CRM.

The number of leads you generate has an impact on how many lead nurture segments you create and the frequency of communication, since you might need to speak to different audiences at different times. Also, determining the sources of your leads helps to govern what types of tracks you need to create.



GOAL SETTING

2. **What is the range of products that you offer?** Some companies market very homogenous product lines; others market a multitude of products or services. The diversity of your offerings plays a large role in determining the number of tracks in your program, in addition to the messaging and offer strategy.

3. **What are the key audience groups that comprise your inbound leads?** How different are your leads from one another in terms of functional role, industry, company size, and so on? To what extent do these groups require different messaging? The higher the number of distinct groups, the more likely it is that you need separate lead nurture tracks in order for your campaigns to be relevant and effective.

4. **Describe the life of a lead currently. How are leads responded to, distributed, and managed today? How often does a lead hear from your company over time?** Knowing how you follow-up with, and prioritize leads currently can help steer your lead nurturing program in a direction where it's likely to have the most impact on ROI. When taking stock of ongoing communication, don't just consider formal marketing programs, determine how often sales reaches out to those same leads.

5. **What percentage of your leads are considered sales ready when they enter your database? And what is your average day to opportunity?** Knowing what percentage of your current leads are sales ready when they enter your database is critical to determining how to set up your lead nurture program and how to measure your ROI. Additionally, knowing your average days to opportunity can help you benchmark how lead nurturing *accelerates* your leads.

LEAD NURTURING STRATEGY

GOAL SETTING RECAP

How many leads do you generate each month and what is the source of those leads?

What is the range of products that you offer?

What are the key audience groups that comprise your inbound leads?

Describe the life of a lead currently. How are leads responded to, distributed, and managed today? How often does a lead hear from your company over time?

What percentage of your leads are considered sales ready when they enter your database? And what is your average day to opportunity?

GOAL SETTING

Qualitative Objectives

Your lead nurture efforts will include qualitative goals—what *business outcomes* do you hope to get from setting up lead nurture tracks? Consider the following goals:

- Convert sales inquiries to qualified prospects over time
- Move your buyers through their buying journey at an accelerated pace
- Engage in conversations with your buyers
- Qualify and collect more information from inbound leads
- Educate and build trust amongst existing leads
- Stay in touch with existing leads so they call on your company when the need arises
- Acquire more business from current customers
- Turn dormant leads to active leads
- Increase sales productivity by distributing only sales ready leads

Depending on your unique business case, choose some of these goals or set your own. Setting these overall qualitative goals for your lead nurturing campaigns will help you make better decisions on timing, frequency, segmentation, and offer strategy.

Quantitative Objectives

In addition to creating qualitative objectives, be sure to set goals that are quantitative—*those that you can measure*. Even if you aren't sure what your metrics should be initially, setting estimates up front helps you define your program. Quantitative metrics not only help you define success, but they also help you determine the scope and scale of your overall lead nurturing efforts.

Without quantitative goals in place your lead nurturing program can lack purpose, and you'll have greater difficulty tracking your progress towards your objectives. Here are some quantitative goals you may want to consider:

- Improve the percentage rate at which raw leads convert to qualified prospects by X%
- Improve the percentage rate at which raw leads convert to closed deals by X%
- Increase the number of sales ready leads per month to X
- Reduce the number of leads rejected by sales to X%
- Generate X incremental opportunities per month from the existing database
- Faster sales cycle by X%
- Better win rates by X%
- Increase upsell / cross-sell with current customers by X%

LEAD NURTURING STRATEGY
GOAL SETTING

Start Small, Think Big

There is a lot you can do with today's marketing automation platforms. And it is easy for companies to want to do everything. But, especially for those just starting lead nurture, you should create a plan that includes a *phased approach*. That way, you are incrementally measuring and improving.

By embracing this mentality you will:

- **Launch more quickly:** It's a simple point, but the smaller your program, the quicker you'll go live, and the sooner you will see return on your investment.
- **Know what works and what doesn't:** Even if you ask all of the right questions and goal set appropriately, it is guaranteed that your results might differ from expectations. If you start small, you can see what works and iterate from there vs. setting up a full 18 tracks and all of a sudden learning that you set something up incorrectly.

LEAD NURTURE TEAM

Lead nurturing is a co-existence of two opposing variables: creativity and logic. It's both an art and a science. Your nurture team needs to produce compelling content, but it also needs to perform complex marketing operations.

On some marketing teams, all lead nurturing is managed by one person. In other organizations, it is divided amongst several people. Regardless of whether this function is filled by one or a group, the following pages outline the roles and responsibilities on a lead nurture team.

LEAD NURTURE TEAM

The Creative Side of Lead Nurturing

On the creative side of your lead nurturing team you might have a nurture content manager. Depending on your organization, this role might be broken up into several roles.

Nurture Content Manager

Because nurturing automates communication with several different segments over a long period of time, it requires thoughtful and relevant content. The goal of the nurture content manager is to make each piece of nurturing content as relevant to your audience as possible. The person in this role doesn't always create the content, but they do assign each piece of content to the appropriate segment.

Responsibilities include:

- Setting the standard for content quality. This isn't just from a performance standpoint; it also applies to tone, positioning statements, and key message points.
- Balancing early stage and late stage content. Early stage content pieces engage your newest prospects with broad, educational, entertaining information. Late stage content is more product-focused, such as demos or customer case studies. Your lead nurture content manager should know the perfect combination for conversion.
- Help to create content to engage with leads on multiple channels. Your nurture content manager should be interacting with other key groups like social, inbound marketing, and paid programs, in order to have a cohesive cross-channel strategy.

When you're hiring someone who will manage your nurture content, here's what you should look for:

- **Messaging comprehension.** An understanding of what your different markets want, and which messages resonate best with each.
- **Editing skills.** A keen grasp of language, along with the ability to clearly communicate how a piece of content should be positioned.
- **A head for numbers.** The manager should be familiar with email performance metrics, and be able to assess that performance over time.
- **Writing skills.** The nurture content manager needs a comprehensive understanding on the company's voice, tone, and core competencies.
- **Producing at a high volume.** There are a lot of moving parts with your nurture content, your content manager should be able to project manage and produce.
- **Listening skills.** To write effective content, the content manager needs to hear audience pain points, and address them through the voice of the company.
- **Willingness to experiment.** Your manager should love to experiment, but should also know how to monitor results.

LEAD NURTURE TEAM

The Scientific Side of Lead Nurturing

To balance out your nurture team you need a strong dose of logic. These responsibilities might fall under a nurture operations manager.

Nurture Operations Manager

The nurture operations manager probably has the toughest job on the team, especially at a company that uses advanced lead nurturing. It's up to these operations managers to determine how nurture flows work, and which filters will be used. Nurture operations managers need to define segmentations and design nurture flows that meet complex business needs, but are possible for the entire team to use. Luckily, marketing automation makes this job a lot easier.

Here are the responsibilities of a nurture operations manager:

- **Determine the best data fields to reference.** If that data isn't available, managers need to figure out how to obtain it.
- **System checks.** This role monitors advanced nurture campaigns, and verifies that those campaigns are running correctly. Frequent system checks are important.
- **Balance business needs with sustainable practices.** Effective nurture operations managers constantly look for ways to simplify their operations, and are responsible for implementing procedures to mitigate potential issues.
- **Execute.** The operations manager must be able to execute quickly and be agile with change.

Here's what to look for in a nurture operations manager:

- **A technical background**. You want someone who thinks in terms of stages, products, and procedures.
- **Understanding company infrastructure.** To build a strong nurture workflow that truly meets business needs.
- **Attention to detail**. The devil is in the details when it comes to creating nurture flows.
- **Provide feedback.** The manager should be aware of every success and failure, and communicate those results to the team.
- **Troubleshoot.** The manager comes up with solutions to any roadblocks, and then executes those solutions.
- **Curiosity.** The manager should be unafraid to test programs, and naturally inclined to ask questions or make suggestions.

TECHNOLOGY SELECTION

Marketing automation is the technology that allows companies to streamline, automate, and measure marketing tasks and workflows so they can increase operational efficiency and grow revenue faster. One of the key components of your marketing automation technology is lead nurturing.

Beyond the time-saving and efficiency benefits of automation, marketing automation enables essential business processes for any modern marketing department. This can include lead nurturing, lead scoring, lead lifecycle management, personalization and analytics. So how do you select the right solution for your business?

Purchase Process

Depending on your business objectives and goals, there are different solutions available to suit your needs. Here is a process you can follow to find and buy the marketing automation solution that is right for your company.

- **Step 1: Write down your goals for the project:** To get where you need to go, write it down. Statistically you increase your likelihood for success simply by putting your goals down on paper. Refer to the goals we determined earlier in this part.
- **Step 2: Plan your timeline:** Now identify the steps it will take to get where you want to go. Remember, you aren't ever "done" with marketing automation, so build in time to evolve and adapt and learn your process.
- **Step 3: Identify your requirements:** Picking the right solution involves more than just picking the right technology. Think about your business case—who will use the technology, and how?

TECHNOLOGY SELECTION

- **Step 4: Assemble a team to choose and manage the solution:** Make sure to get signoff from all stakeholders on goals, requirements, and potential scenarios. Look to your lead nurture and marketing automation teams mentioned earlier in this chapter.
- **Step 5: Evaluate potential vendors against your scenarios:** You'll choose the vendor that best suits your needs if you select a handful of vendors to evaluate. Then, scour the technology, look beyond the technology to account management teams, ask tough questions, and avoid a feature bake-off.
- **Step 6: Talk to references:** Now it's time to find out if your vendor can actually make customers like you successful. Talk to a variety of references that are similar to your organization.
- **Step 7: Make a decision:** The time has come. Choose the vendor that can best make you successful in line with the goals you created at the beginning of this process.

CHECKLIST

What to Seek in a Solution for Lead Nurturing

Lead nurturing is a key component to any marketing automation solution, here is a checklist to make sure your vendor has all of the latest and greatest lead nurture capabilities.

- ☐ **Enables you to listen and respond to individual behaviors in real time.** You want to make sure you have a flexible solution that supports 2-way conversations with your leads and customers.
- ☐ **Enables you to communicate with prospects and customers both online and offline.** Many modern lead nurturing solutions allow the capabilities to nurture through online venues such as social media, or offline through direct mail or events.
- ☐ **Empowers you to set a limit.** You want to make sure your leads aren't getting too many emails from you at any given time. Look for a solution that enables you to set limits. This is particularly critical when different areas of the organization send messages.
- ☐ **Determines which content to send and when.** Your solution should enable you to have control over the content you send based on the recipient's actions to date—such as visiting a booth at a show, downloading content, or reaching out to a sales rep.
- ☐ **Helps build relationships over the entire customer lifecycle.** From the awareness stage through customer onboarding, the right lead nurture solution can help engage prospects and customers over time by sending relevant content to buyers through different channels instead of just via email.
- ☐ **Helps measure true engagement.** The ideal solution measures the degree of customer engagement with the entire program, as well as with each component of content over time.

CHECKLIST

What to Seek in a Solution for Lead Nurturing

- ☐ **Is easy to implement.** We all know how frustrating it can be to rely on the IT department to help us get programs off the ground. Look for a solution that allows any marketer to create powerful lead nurture programs that are easy to set up and manage. After all, you want to focus on what matters most—creating compelling content that will deeply engage prospects and customers.

- ☐ **Simplifies content management.** For example:
  - The ideal solution allows you to add new content simply by dragging and dropping it into the work-stream
  - The system should be intelligent enough not to send the content to those that have already received it
  - It should be smart enough to know if someone downloaded that content through another channel
  - For limited-time events and special offers, the system should automatically activate the content at the right time and pull it out of the nurture stream when the event is over
  - The system can intelligently help measure what content asset is performing best

Marketo's Customer Engagement engine

Marketo's unique Customer Engagement engine automatically and intelligently sends prospects and customers the best message and the best piece of content, based on who they are, what they have seen in the past, and their behaviors.

You simply drag content into a stream, Marketo's version of a track—which can be thought of as a conversation—and the system automatically manages the timing and sending of the right content to the right person at the right time. The system even takes outdated content out of rotation in a particular program. And will warn you in advance when there isn't any more content available to continue the conversation.

NURTURE AS PART OF YOUR OVERALL MARKETING STRATEGY

When creating your lead nurturing strategy, do not think about nurture in isolation. Think about how nurture fits into the other marketing communications you send.

You can't think about lead nurturing in a vacuum. You need to take a look at your entire marketing calendar to determine what other communications your leads receive. You might be sending newsletters, product updates, database emails, and other cross-channel communications. How are these interactions working together in harmony? You want to deliver coordinated, relevant, customer experiences across all of the channels your buyers use.

NURTURE AS PART OF YOUR OVERALL MARKETING STRATEGY

Communication Timing

How often you send lead nurturing communications, particularly email, needs to be reconciled with how often you hit your database with other communications. The first step to getting this right is to determine your overall communication cadence. How often are you engaging with the contacts in your database? Meet with stakeholders in your organization to decide what this number should be. Be sure to test and iterate this over time to determine the correct number of touches based on your results.

Consider the length of the buying process and the communication approaches used. The timing of your lead nurturing programs are impacted by both the length of your average buying process and the approaches you use for lead nurturing (email, direct mail, phone, etc.).

In the following example, let's assume a prospect downloads a whitepaper from your web site, and your lead scoring methodology deems this individual is a lead nurturing candidate. If the buying cycle for your product is three months, the nurturing path for this specific prospect might look like this:

- **Day 1**—Website personalization persona based offer
- **Day 10**—Follow-up with introductory email
- **Day 15**—Email offering new content related to first download and subsequent web site activity
- **Day 30**—Personal email from sales rep
- **Day 45**—Email best practices whitepaper
- **Day 60**—Social campaign on email best practices
- **Day 75**—Website personalization and banner ads to promote webinar series
- **Day 85**—Personal email from sales rep offering a product demo
- **Day 90**—Personalized ad on Facebook using targeting

NURTURE AS PART OF YOUR OVERALL MARKETING STRATEGY

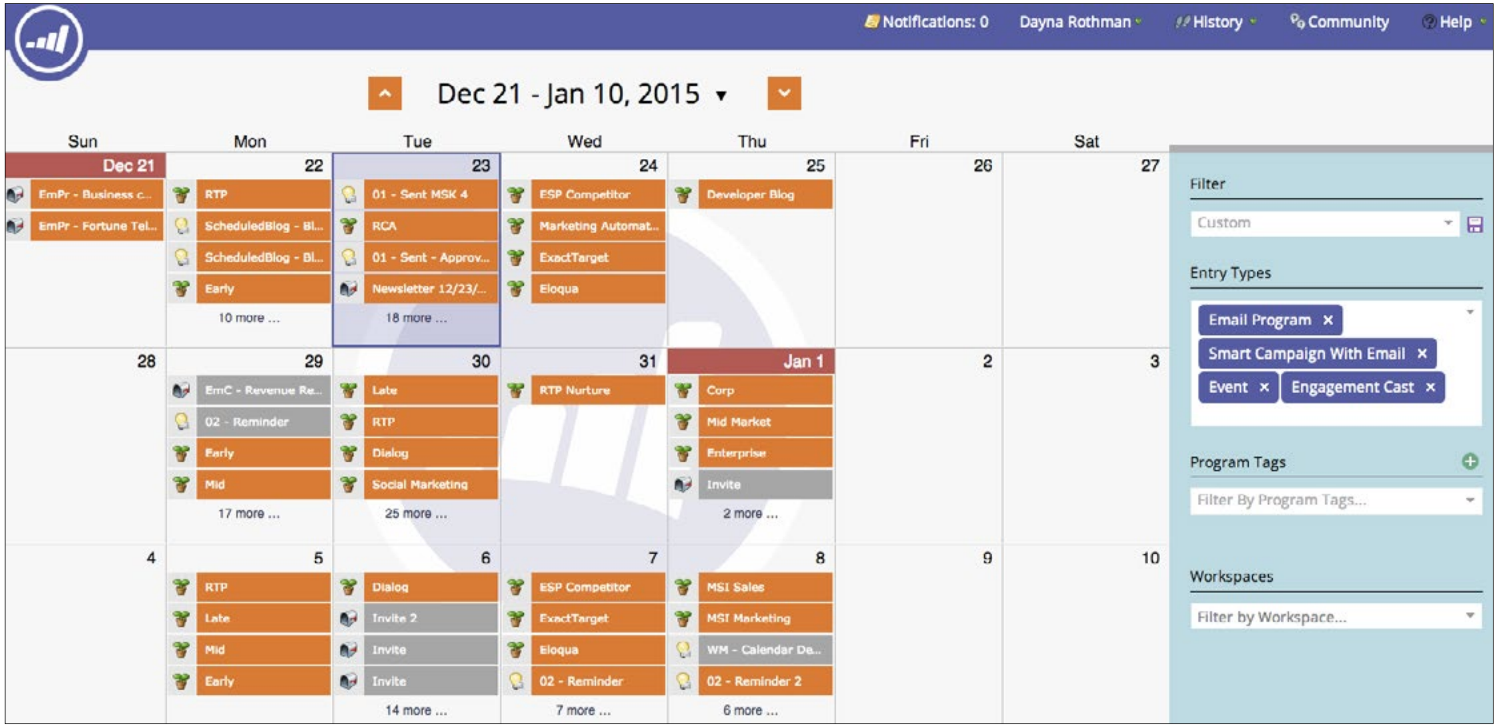
Marketing Calendars

You need a way to see all of your campaigns all in one place—so you know exactly what database email sends and what nurture campaign sends are going out in any given week.

A marketing calendar, like the one in Marketo, is an ideal place to ensure that you are not over-marketing to the same people over and over again with your marketing communications.

At Marketo, we use our platform's marketing calendar to see a holistic view of all communications with our database across the entire marketing department—we can see event invites, nurture emails, demand generation emails, and so on.

With this holistic view, you can see exactly who is being communicated with and when.



Marketo Marketing Calendar

MARKETO CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

Comvita

- 480% increase in new lead conversion in 6 months of using Marketo

255%

- Average sale value up 255% when part of a lead nurturing campaign
- Email marketing is now 2nd highest revenue generator of all online activities
- Nurtured leads have the highest conversion rates of all online activities.

Challenges

Comvita is a global, natural health company with a vision for preventative and holistic health. Prior to Marketo, Comvita used a content management system with a built-in email tool, which allowed them to send emails and determine if those emails had been read. Unfortunately, it did little else.

Comvita had no way to differentiate between a new lead, someone who had purchased from Comvita before, and those who were already loyal customers. Every contact received the same content—a monthly promotional email. In addition, the previous solution was not user-friendly, making communications difficult to send and it offered almost no insights. Comvita couldn't even identify their most loyal customers.

Because the holistic health industry requires a great deal of communication to educate consumers about the science and credibility of products, the previous solution put Comvita at a distinct disadvantage.

Solution

Comvita was able to implement Marketo and send out their first campaign in about six weeks. The first focus was simple: lead generation and sales. With Marketo, Comvita was able to identify that their average conversion time was three months long for a B2C customer. Comvita leverages Marketo to accelerate the sales process with nurturing streams and more targeted, specific content. With Marketo, Comvita knows whether customers are likely to purchase again, how soon and are able to talk to customers about the products they are interested in.

Benefits

In only six months of using Marketo's nurturing, Comvita has seen a 480% increase in new lead conversion and a 255% increase in sale value when leads are exposed to nurture. Email marketing at Comvita is now the second highest revenue generator of all their online activities and Marketo lead nurturing has one of the highest conversion rates for online activities.

PART III:

WHO TO NURTURE

WHO TO NURTURE

DEFINING A LEAD

To build your lead nurturing strategy you need to start with the basics. Every organization has its own definition of a "good lead". According to Marketo, in our own revenue cycle, a lead is "a qualified prospect that is starting to exhibit buying behavior".

Sales and Marketing Lead Alignment

To define the perfect lead for your organization—so you can determine who to nurture and who not to nurture—you need to come up with a joint lead definition agreed upon between sales and marketing.

Here is a simple checklist so sales and marketing can create a universal lead definition:

- ☐ **Schedule time to meet:** Get all of the key stakeholders in a room and pick each other's brains.
- ☐ **Ask the hard questions:** What does your target market look like? Who do you have in your database already? What prospects are sales speaking with? What types of buyers are they closing?
- ☐ **Decide how good is "good enough":** Set a base level. What does marketing consider good enough to get nurtured and then passed to sales? And what does sales think is a good lead worth following up on?
- ☐ **Get the flip side of the story:** What does marketing and sales consider a bad lead?
- ☐ **Agree on a definition and write it down:** Now that you have your definition, write it down and circulate it.
- ☐ **Iterate your definition over time:** Meet regularly to review this definition. You should be iterating and changing your definition as your company grows and priorities shift.

WHO TO NURTURE

LEAD SCORING

Lead scoring is the shared sales and marketing methodology for ranking leads in order to determine sales-readiness. By scoring leads based on the interest they show in your business, their current place in the buying cycle, and their demographic fit, you get a better idea of where each lead is in his or her buying cycle and can segment and nurture accordingly.

Lead scoring is a key element to lead nurturing that helps companies determine whether prospects need to be fast-tracked to sales or nurtured further. Lead scoring is a critical part of segmentation for your lead nurture campaigns. Marketo finds that companies who use lead scoring see a huge lift in ROI, and their sales teams spend less time selling and more time closing deals.

To create a lead scoring strategy, your sales and marketing teams need to get together to determine what scores should be assigned to which actions. This can be based on business priorities and buyer readiness and is intimately connected with your definition of a lead.

By determining a strategy with the stakeholders of your marketing organization, you can define exactly when leads should be nurtured or when they should be sent to sales.

WHO TO NURTURE

LEAD SCORING

There are four dimensions of lead scoring that help to determine who you should nurture and who gets fast-tracked to sales—lead fit, lead interest, lead behavior, and buying stage/timing.

1. Lead Fit

Determining lead fit, or explicit lead scoring, is based on observable or directly shared information—often collected via an online form or registration process. Demographics, firmographics, and BANT (budget, authority, need, and time) tell you how well a prospect fits your ideal buyer profile.

Demographics

When profiling and defining your leads, you need to look at demographics—quantifiable identifiers that characterize your lead population. You can then take these demographics and create lead nurture tracks that map to them. Typical demographics might consist of:

- Title
- Role
- Years of Experience
- Location

Firmographics

Firmographics are organizational characteristics that help you find your ideal customer. Typical firmogaphics might consist of:

- Name of company
- Company size
- Company location
- Revenue
- Number of divisions
- Number of products/ services sold
- Geography served
- Industry
- Products already owned

WHO TO NURTURE
LEAD SCORING

BANT (Budget, Authority, Need, Time)
You can also determine a prospect's place in the buying process by analyzing his BANT (Budget, Authority, Need, Time). BANT is a more advanced lead qualification practice than demographic and firmographic analysis alone.

- **Budget:** Can this lead afford your product or service?
- **Authority:** Does your lead have the authority to purchase your product?
- **Need:** Is there a pain point that your product or service can solve?
- **Time:** What is your lead's purchasing timeline? And does that align with your sales cycle?

Also consider scoring for negative demographic fit—you might choose to negatively score someone with a generic email address, invalid phone number, non-existent company, or the wrong buying role. You want to focus your lead nurturing efforts on leads that could become deals.

2. Lead Interest

Scoring lead interest, often called implicit lead scoring, is done by tracking your prospect's behaviors (e.g. online body language), to measure his level of interest in your product or solution. Interest scores tell you how attractive you are to a potential customer. Implicit lead scoring can also mean inferring additional information about a prospect based on the quality of data you have—like location of his IP address.

Anonymous Leads

How do you nurture and score anonymous leads? Anonymous leads are buyers who interact with your content or website before you have their data. With personalization tools and marketing automation, you can actually identify attributes about anonymous visitors to your site.

Personalization software enabled on a website can detect the following information:

- Servers IP address
- Industry
- Company size
- Revenue
- Page visits
- Geo-locations
- Referral sources
- Search terms
- Browsing details

LEAD SCORING

3. Lead Behavior

Interest and fit are not enough. You need to track additional factors such as behavior, which will indicate timing. This will help you to determine whether someone is an early-stage prospect that is just looking to be educated, or entertained—or an active lead that is considering a purchase.

You can track these by asking the lead directly, or through implicit factors.

For example, at Marketo we have found that there are some behaviors highly correlated with prospects moving into a buying cycle. Take a look at the graphic for a detailed view.

By scoring and identifying "active buying behaviors", you can be more relevant when you nurture and follow up with your leads. If someone has a high score but low buying intent, you know you need to be more educational in your nurturing—but if someone has high buying intent, he can be fast-tracked to sales and not nurtured at all.

Latent Behaviors (Engagement)	Active Behaviors (Buying Intent)

• Early Stage Content: +3
• Attend Webinar: +5
• Visit any Webpage/Blog: +1
• Visit Careers Pages: -10
• Decay Inactivity: -1, -5, -10
	• Pricing Pages: +10
	• Watch Demos:
	  • +5 Overview
	  • +10 Detailed
	• Mid-Stage Content: +8
	• Late-Stage Content: +12
	• Searches for Branded Keyword "Marketo": +8

LEAD SCORING

4. Buying Stage and Timing

The final dimension to determine if your leads should be fast-tracked to sales or nurtured is buying stage and timing. We will go into more detail on buying stage later in the guide, but essentially, buying stage and timing are meant to gauge where a lead is in her sales cycle—has she just begun the research process or is she ready to make a decision?

Through behavior and other factors you can determine if a lead is close to making a purchase decision, or if she needs to be nurtured further.

Data Augmentation for Lead Scoring

Sometimes you won't have all of the data you need to score your leads appropriately—particularly if you are importing a lead list from a webinar or event. Using a data augmentation service, like Leadspace, can help you fill in the gaps so you can score and segment better. Data augmentation can also be more accurate, as people often lie on forms.

Data augmentation services can help enrich the following data:

- Email
- Phone
- Role
- Title
- Company name
- Company size
- Social profile information
- Technology selection

LIST BUILDING

In order to successfully nurture prospects, you need to grow your list of engaged subscribers and collect contact information for your database. According to Moon Marketing, You lose up to 25% of subscribers each year due to email attrition, and not all engaged subscribers will become paying customers over time. To grow your business and set up a robust lead nurture program, you need to feed the top-of-the-funnel with list building tactics.

There are many channels and tactics that marketers use to build their email list. Consider building your email list from the following sources:

- Website registration page
- Social media
- Offline events
- Online events
- Purchase or trial registration
- Blog registration page

There are two ways to collect this information through opt-ins:

1. **Ask:** When you give your visitors great reasons to subscribe—news, updates, discounts, content—they'll often gladly give you their email address. Then you can include these contacts in your nurture programs.

2. **Request:** With gated content, such as premium reports or ebooks, an email address is the key that opens the gate.

LIST BUILDING

Opt-Ins

Before you can fulfill and maintain expectations with your nurture communications, you must set them. Expectations start with the opt-in. A smart opt-in process sets an accurate and positive notion of what's to come and how it will arrive.

There are various tactics for building your list of opt-in email addresses, but in general they fall into one of the following categories:

Single Opt-In

A single opt-in works when a new subscriber enters his email address and possibly other information (demographics, preferences, etc.). He is immediately subscribed and will automatically receive the next email in your nurture campaign based off what you learn from his opt-in form.

Implicit Opt-In

An implicit opt-in occurs when a website visitor fills out a form on your site such as to download a content asset or register for a webinar. Your website's privacy policy must state that performing this action automatically opts the user into email marketing. This option is low effort, but also has the lowest level of engagement.

Here is an example of an implicit opt-in on the Marketo website for downloading one of our Definitive Guides.

Implicit Opt-In on Marketo's Website

WHO TO NURTURE

LIST BUILDING

Explicit Opt-Ins

Explicit opt-ins require the user to voluntarily sign up for email marketing. Often this takes the form of a registration box or page that reads something like "I want to receive news and updates". Explicit opt-ins indicate additional engagement as a subscriber explicitly requests information.

Here is an example of an explicit opt-in on the Marketo blog.

Confirmed or Double Opt-In

A confirmed or double opt-in occurs when a new subscriber enters his email address and, depending on your needs, other information and content preferences. A post-subscribe thank you page may alert him to look for an email conformation. Once he receives that email, he'll need to click on a link or button to confirm.

Explicit Opt-In on Marketo's Website

Marketo

LIST BUILDING

Maintain Your List

It's not enough to *build* a list for lead nurturing, you also need to maintain it. This means letting subscribers manage their preferences and opt-out if they wish.

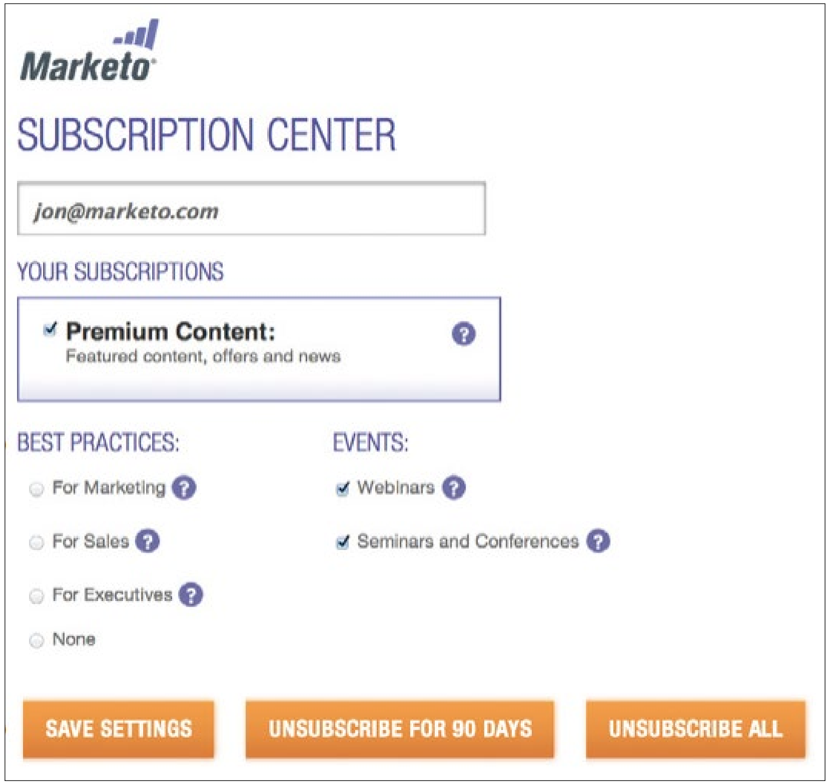
Subscription Centers

One of the best ways to establish trust with your audience is to allow them to take control of communications—they should never feel trapped. You can be smart about your opt-out by creating a subscription center on your website. When subscribers click "unsubscribe", they will be taken to the center and given the option of changing their communication preferences or frequency with which they receive your communications. Because maybe (hopefully) they still like you—they just want to see less of you.

Most subscription centers are fairly bare—asking just for the subscriber email and the reason she has opted out. However, you can also give subscribers other options such as:

- **A list of current subscriptions**—Show subscription details
- **The ability to customize preferences**—Check boxes make it simple to change options
- **A pause option**—Some subscribers simply need a break! Offer them the ability to pause for a certain period of time
- **The ability to opt-down**—Opting down allows subscribers to receive fewer—but not zero—emails

At Marketo, we allow subscribers to choose which channels to subscribe to, unsubscribe, or simply pause for 90 days. And we take these selections into consideration for our nurturing tracks.



Marketo Subscription Center

WHO TO NURTURE

DATABASE HEALTH

Having a clean database is critical to your lead nurturing success. According to Robert Pease, CMO Practice Lead for Heinz Marketing, “the accuracy and effectiveness of the information available to you that is used to engage prospects through the buying journey is extremely important and requires constant attention to keep up to date”.

What do we mean by database health? Picture this. You receive a personalized email in your inbox from one of your favorite companies. But, when you open the email you notice they have addressed it to the wrong person. The first name used is not your first name. This is an example of poor database health. As a marketer, it is crucial to constantly update and build your database with the correct information.

Poor database health can cause high bounce rates, unsubscribes, and SPAM complaints. And you simply cannot create a solid, healthy lead nurturing program with bad data.

WHO TO NURTURE

DATABASE HEALTH

Josh Hill, Marketo Practice Lead at Perkuto, recommends taking the following steps to maintain healthy database:

Give Your Leads a Checkup

In order to maintain good database health, you need to continuously give your leads a checkup. You need to make sure you are close to your leads—know exactly where they are coming from, and how they are getting into your database.

Ask yourself—where are you acquiring your leads? Are the leads in your database opted into your communications? Did you acquire them through your own paid program or a co-marketing opportunity?

These leads are generally the most successful. You start having problems when you purchase lists from a vendor or import full attendee lists from tradeshows.

The information on those lists isn't always accurate and those leads haven't officially opted into communication.

But bad data infiltrates every database, in the form of duplicate contacts, irregularly formatted leads, and junk records. You can't keep all bad data from entering your database, but once it's in there, you need to clean it out.

Here are the top 5 reasons to keep your database clean:

1. Better segmentation of leads—allowing you to focus your message on the right people at the right time—this is key for lead nurturing
2. Avoid duplicate sending of emails
3. Accurate reporting out to your executive team
4. Potentially hurting pending deals if you email the wrong marketing material to key prospects during a sales cycle
5. Too many old, bad, and duplicate leads might push you over your pricing threshold in your marketing automation or CRM platform
6. Personalization that goes wrong—incorrect information within your email

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DATABASE HEALTH

Identify Duplicates

Duplicate leads in your database are an inevitable problem. So you need to proactively scrub your data on a regular basis and make sure to eliminate duplicates as they come in. Luckily, your marketing automation platform should have rules for automatically de-duping lead records.
Just make sure you do not mass-delete leads.

This type of functionality also comes in handy when you are uploading lists—imagine the same person attending an event, filling out a form to subscribe to an ebook, and subscribing to your blog. You certainly don't want to send multiple nurture emails to the same person.

But of course, you need to delete with caution, even when you de-dupe. If there is a question on what to delete, make sure to dive into both lead records to determine which has the best information—email address, phone number, role, and so on. And then you can merge these leads accordingly so they are part of the same lead record.

You can also set up alerts to stay on top of your database. Say you have set your marketing automation platform to de-dupe leads based on email addresses. But what if a contact comes in that has a duplicate first and last name on your form, but a different email address? If you have alerts set up, you can be notified and proactively decide whether the record is duplicate or not.

DATABASE HEALTH

Remove Inactive Contacts

Inactive contacts clutter your database and affect your overall lead nurturing success. Consider implementing a filter in your marketing automation tool to identify records that have been inactive for a set amount of time.

Ask yourself: why aren't those contacts participating in your marketing campaigns? Are they still working for the same company?

Once you have worked to identify inactive leads, you need to consider whether or not those leads are worth keeping in your database based on history. You may decide that some of these leads are worth keeping, but keep them with caution. If those inactive leads are simply not interested, marketing to them may hurt your brand's reputation.

Check for Uniformity

Uniformity is critical to a clean database—but this is challenging. For example, if you let leads type their country of residence instead of choosing from a drop-down menu, you might collect inconsistent results. Residents of the United States might write "US", "U.S", "USA", "United States of America", and so on.

The way to avoid this is to use your marketing automation platform to clean similar data values. You can set up the following data management flows:

- Country corrector
- State corrector
- Count of employees to employee range
- Bad lead source to good lead source
- Email invalid to email is good if email is changed

Eliminate Junk Contacts

It is common to get incorrect information when a lead fills out your form. Some anonymous leads will write in abcd@gmail.com or blah@blah.com to avoid sharing their real contact information. You don't want these leads dirtying your database, so run campaigns in your marketing automation tool to automatically identify records with bogus contact information. Then you can delete, blacklist, or suspend these contacts if needed.

What about competitors? Many competitors will subscribe in order to learn the ways you market to your customers. You may not want to market to these folks. Sit down and have a conversation with your team to decide your strategy for competitor leads.

MARKETO CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

Oktopost

- 80% of conversion from lead to paid via 'zero touch' strategy using Marketo nurturing
- 50% open rate per email campaign—a significant increase using Marketo
- Ability to synchronize sales and marketing
- Intelligent lead scoring capabilities improving sales and marketing efficiency
- Accelerated campaign creation, execution and increased results via lead nurturing
- Increased win rates and velocity over sales

Challenges

Oktopost, a B2B company offering a social media management platform is riding the crest of the social media wave and helping customers bridge the gap between social media, content marketing and lead generation.

As a lean start-up, one of the key challenges is the ability to align sales and marketing. Prior to Marketo, the marketing team was manually processing and running marketing email campaigns and all lead generation activity. They needed to ensure the sales team was aware of which leads were warm and when to move them along in the sales cycle.

Solution

Marketo has been instrumental in their success—significantly increasing revenue and lead flow, and enabling the company to make better, informed decisions.

"Implementing a zero touch strategy has been something we were looking to do and we can now see that 80% of the conversions we have from lead to paid have been in zero touch—solely based on the automated nurturing process from Marketo," said Mark Lerner, Director of Marketing. "In addition to the lead scoring and nurturing, analytics have uncovered where leads come from and enabled us to measure the effectiveness of specific programs."

Oktopost has seen a 15 % increase in lead to conversion rates since using Marketo. Acquisition costs have decreased significantly, while the lifetime value of a lead is increasing. Velocity over sales, both in terms of the amount on a month-by-month basis and from each individual sale, has also significantly increased.

PART IV:

MULTI-CHANNEL LEAD NURTURING

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NURTURING IN A MULTI-CHANNEL WORLD

Today's consumer moves seamlessly—sometimes even quickly—across digital and offline channels. She jumps from email, to social media, to your website, and then back to social media, without losing momentum. And she does this from whatever device is most convenient at the moment.

The modern, digitally-empowered buyer is channel-agnostic. This new buyer has become the undisputed controller of her relationship with your brand. Now, more than ever, the customer is in charge. Before we jump into more details on creating your lead nurture content and plan, we wanted to address how to think about nurture with a cross-channel lens.

As a marketer, you need to think across channels in your lead nurturing. Through advanced lead nurturing technology, like Marketo's Customer Engagement engine, real-time personalization and more, you can easily listen and react from a variety of channels.

Multi-channel marketers need tools to help them:

- **Listen:** Pay close attention to buyer behavior across all channels to create a single, integrated view of the buyer persona.
- **Act:** Manage, personalize, and act on conversations with buyers across channels.

NURTURING IN A MULTI-CHANNEL WORLD

Listen

Imagine you had a great phone conversation yesterday with one of your best customers about a new service offering. Now imagine that after you read this, you go out for a cup of coffee and run into him on the street. "Hi! So glad we bumped into one another," you say. "I want to talk to you about a great service we're offering!" Your customer responds with a puzzled look. He thinks you have a terrible memory or that you're confused.

The same thing happens when a customer receives dueling messages from you on different marketing channels. If you're not listening to him across different channels, you're not delivering an integrated experience. To create relevant interactions with a buyer over any channel, you need to understand his behaviors across all channels—you need a single, cross-channel view of the customer.

Act

Engaging conversations with buyers should be maintained seamlessly as your subscriber moves from one channel to the next. A conversation you start in an email must continue when the buyer navigates to your website, and shouldn't skip a beat when he jumps over to your Facebook page. Instead of competing against each other with disconnected messaging, or repeating information your buyer has already absorbed, your email and different marketing channels should work together to coordinate the customer's experience. Let's take a look at examples on how to integrate a multi-channel approach into your lead nurturing efforts.

NURTURING IN A MULTI-CHANNEL WORLD

Web

Your website is of course a great place to capture new email addresses, but it's a also a fantastic place to continue and start conversations. The web experience can and should be dynamically personalized to reinforce and extend the dialog started in emails.

Using personalization software, like Marketo's Real-Time Personalization enables you to:

- Identify a person's relevant attributes—intent, behavior, and profile
- Customize that person's online experience by presenting the most relevant content

Nurturing Anonymous Leads

As we mentioned in the last section, with personalization tools you can discover information about anonymous leads. But how can you nurture those leads with relevant content that is seamless with your email communications?

Once your personalization software discovers demographic and behavioral details from your leads, it looks for pre-set marketing campaigns that match the visitor's data segment. This campaign is initially created by you, the marketer, and should be consistent with the nurture campaigns you set up for various segments. If a match is found, the appropriate campaign is launched. Automatically, the text, banners, calls-to-action, and images dynamically change, instantly creating a more personalized, seamless experience.

Your personalization software then sends data directly to your marketing automation platform, and can send triggered, targeted email campaigns and scoring updates based on how that lead interacts with your personalized campaigns.

NURTURING IN A MULTI-CHANNEL WORLD

Persona and Account Based Marketing

With personalization, you can target both persona and account based. With Account Marketing, your organization can focus on a group of accounts with similar attributes that are either a) most likely to generate revenue or b) strategically important to your organization. Using personalization tools to refine your Account Based Marketing approach, you can nurture high-value accounts through their decision-making process with a mixture of web content and email.

When someone comes to your website from a strategic account, you can change messaging, images, content, and logos, to make an experience that is completely personalized and relevant.

Imagine how powerful this would be for companies that have large decision-making groups? You can speak to everyone that influences that decision all in one place.

Persona Based Marketing helps you target groups of individual buyers with the right content. Once you understand the motivations and challenges of your buyer persona groups, you can use personalization, along with your marketing automation platform, to determine which messages and content resonate with each persona through the lead nurturing process.

By using your webpage and personalization tool, you can effectively nurture your buyers and create a seamless experience.

NURTURING IN A MULTI-CHANNEL WORLD

Retargeting

Display ads and retargeting can be a large part of your marketing budget. But how can you create a consistent experience for your buyers across those channels? Here are ways to integrate your advertising strategy with your nurturing.

Some companies are including a retargeting pixel in the emails they send to prospects and customers (including emails sent by individual employees). This sets a cookie on the subscriber's machine, which allows the company to target specific display ads to them as they navigate the web. Done well, it can create more coordinated experiences between the messages the subscriber sees over email and on online.

Additionally, by using retargeting, you can focus your display ads on different personas, organizations, verticals, and where your buyer is in his sales cycle. Once someone visits your website you can serve her personalized ads on the subsequent pages she visits—providing a seamless experience once she leaves your website.

Social

Social is a critical part of nurturing cross-channel. Running social campaigns is great, but making every campaign social is better. Think of social as an ingredient in the 'campaign' cake, rather than just the frosting. When you connect your lead nurturing to your social efforts they enhance one another.

It is no secret that your buyers are on social, so make sure you are using it as a key element in your lead nurturing strategy. Make sure you are monitoring your social networks and nurturing leads in a personalized way. If you have target accounts or personas, interact with them by responding to tweets, Liking their comments or updates, and re-tweeting great content they post.

When a lead mentions your company on social media or interacts in a key way, you can use your marketing automation software to listen, and respond with triggered emails and communication.

You can also use sophisticated targeting with paid social media ads. Social channels like Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn offer highly targeted options for your ads. You can segment your ads based on a number of different attributes such as role, company, location, behavior, and more. Additionally, many social channels allow you to upload lists from your CRM or marketing automation tool so you can target specific individuals that are in specific stages in your sales cycle.

NURTURING IN A MULTI-CHANNEL WORLD

Combine Email and Social Media
You can easily combine your email lead nurture campaigns and social media in the following ways:

1. **Social Connecting:** Use email to grow your social followers.
2. **Social Sharing:** Use email to extend the reach of your message through social channels.
3. **Social Promotion:** Use social to grow your email list and promote your email marketing efforts.

Here are some ideas:

- Supplement each email address in your database with the contact's social media data
- Increase opt-in conversion rates with social sign-in capabilities on your forms
- Feature a Facebook and Twitter connect button in email opt-in confirmation messages so that enthusiastic new subscribers don't miss out on other ways to connect
- Add a Facebook and Twitter connect button to your preference center for recipients who'd rather stay in touch over social networks
- Listen for keywords that are used by your audience in social media, and then send segmented emails that use those keywords
- Watch who your followers follow, and use their content interests to help augment your segmentation strategy

NURTURING IN A MULTI-CHANNEL WORLD

Direct Mail

Consider adding direct mail to your lead nurture campaigns as a way to further personalize and add a human touch.

Companies like Cloud2You let you send direct mail as a part of marketing conversations as easily as you send email. MarketSync offers a solution that sends packages and tracks the delivery of those packages; when a lead signs for the delivery, the system receives an alert, which can trigger a follow-up email, phone call, or both. Integrating in this way not only allows conversations to flow across channels, but also beyond digital.

Imagine sending a fun, unique, and personalized package after a lead has interacted with your nurture communications. Adding that human touch can accelerate your leads and help build that trust.

Add a PURL

PURLs are personalized URLs. Leads type a custom URL into their browser from a postcard or package they receive in the mail. This address brings them to a landing page designed specifically for their persona. By offering them targeted web content in this way, you can improve conversion by 30% or more.

NURTURING IN A MULTI-CHANNEL WORLD

Sales Involvement

Don't underestimate the power of personal contact when it comes to lead nurturing. Cross-channel communication is great, but adding that human touch is a powerful way to accelerate the sales cycle. A call from your sales reps should be an integral part of every nurture campaign. Here are a few steps to get you started.

Know Who You Are Calling

This is the most important aspect of including a sales call in your lead nurturing campaigns—you must know who you are calling and what his past experience has been with your company. Make sure you research your buyer and check your CRM and marketing automation database to ensure your conversation is relevant and consistent with the other communication your company has had with him.

Your sales rep should be asking:

- Who is this lead?
- What does she know about my company already?
- What communications has she received from my company to date?
- Does she fit our ideal customer profile?

NURTURING IN A MULTI-CHANNEL WORLD

Throw Away the Script

It won't help your cause to have your sales teams reading monotonously off of a script during a sales call with a nurtured lead. Instead, create call guides that can help pin down the key points for discussion. You can also:

- Leverage strong outlines that create conversations
- Include suggested areas of discussion and questions
- Be flexible and assume multiple outcomes

By allowing room for exploration in your sales calls, they will be more effective for nurturing. Here are some questions to think about when building your call guides:

- What is the goal of this call?
- What is the value proposition?
- What business needs/issues do you solve?
- What are the three reasons your company stands out?
- What are the important questions you want answered?

Always be Relevant

Starting a call with "I wanted to catch up" or "I'm calling to touch base" or "Are you ready to buy yet?" is simply not relevant nor is it productive. Instead determine your goals for the call and answer the following questions:

- What is your buyer's pain point and challenges?
- How does she work?
- What is her functional role?
- What is her anticipated need?
- What are the communications you have had with her in the past?

NURTURING IN A MULTI-CHANNEL WORLD

Mobile

Not only are today's buyers multi-channel, but they are also multi-device. Because mobile is an area where your buyers spend copious amounts of time, you need to think about how you can include a mobile experience in your lead nurturing programs.

Make sure all of your nurture email content is "responsive"—including your emails and landing pages. That ensures your customers can see and interact with your nurture emails on their mobile devices.

You can also integrate mobile nurturing in the form of SMS or MMS text messages that your buyer can opt-into through your emails, website, or at an event. This gives you a powerful way to communicate with your buyer on the go.

If you have an application your buyers are downloading, nurture them through in-app messages and push notifications as they engage with you across channels. Using these techniques can also increase the usage of your application over time.

PART V:
CONTENT

CONTENT
STORY ARCS

Story arcs answer the question, "What is the business story I want to tell"? They lead your buyer down a specific and strategic path made up of the content you choose for your lead nurture tracks.

Story arcs create engagement, build relationships, and keep a lead coming back for more. Your story arc should be relevant, interesting, address specific pain points, and move your leads through your sales funnel and their own buying journey in a strategic and personalized way. Your story arcs should be buyer-centric and not all about you!

Telling a Business Story

Your story arcs will align to your segmentations and address issues that are important to your buyers. The arcs you create will tell your business story. But how do you effectively tell a business story?

According to Harvard Business Review, follow these steps.

Start with a Message

Every story should start with a message, a thesis. Ask yourself who your audience is and what story do you want to tell? Once you determine the takeaway for your lead, you can construct your lead nurture tracks to illustrate that message over time.

Mine Your Own Experiences

Your story must be emotional. Use your own experiences with past customers to create that emotional connection with your lead. You want your buyer to feel like you understand him, and by speaking in a humanistic way that calls on your own experiences with customer pain points, you can create that connection.

Being Human Goes a Long Way in Boosting Engagement and Telling a Story

Here are five ways to be human in your lead nurturing:

- Abandon "Corporate-speak"
- Add humor
- Incorporate real-world references and pop culture
- Include customer stories
- Don't take yourself too seriously.

STORY ARCS

Don't Make Yourself the Hero
This seems counter-intuitive, as you are trying to get a lead to buy your product or service. However, to create a compelling business story, make your buyer the hero. By focusing on helping her and not yourself in every nurture communication, you can increase engagement and escalate the willingness of your lead to buy into your message.

Highlight a Struggle
In every good story there is a struggle—a pain point or a challenge to overcome. Your buyer has a problem—that is why he reached out to you in the first place. Address that problem and prove that your product or service can help be the solution. By highlighting the struggle and solution, you can show that you are a valued partner and ally.

Make Your Story Consistent Across Channels
Because multi-channel lead nurturing is critical for success, make sure you are telling a consistent story across all of your important channels. This includes your emails, website, social channels, advertising, and more.

Imagine how confused a lead would be if he received an email that talked about a critical product announcement and then he went to your website and saw nothing about that new product. That does nothing to maintain a consistent story arc.

Your story arc should be created to ensure your message is compelling and your channel stories are complimentary.

Optimize Your Content for Lead Nurturing By:

- **Being Snappy:** Keep your buyers' time in mind when you create and choose content for lead nurturing. You want to be engaging, but also short and sweet and to the point.
- **Providing Value:** What does your buyer get out of consuming your content? Buyers understand when they read a brand piece that it will likely mention the product, but be sure that your content meets their needs and answers their questions, rather than your own.
- **Getting Personal:** The content you deliver is part of a communication arc. Buyers want to be personally engaged; be sure to include personal, text-only emails from actual people in your mix.

CONTENT

STORY ARCS

The 411 Rule

You'll find that nurturing your buyers means maintaining the careful balance between helpful and promotional. To help you negotiate this balance in your story arc, we look at our content mix through the lens of the '411 rule'.

This rule, popularized by Joe Pulizzi, founder and CEO of the Content Marketing Institute, states that for every four early stage, light and informative content offers you provide, you can have one soft-sell offer like a third party review, and one hard-sell offer like a demo. This rule helps you avoid being thought of as only a 'great resource' but never moving your buyer through their lifecycle. It helps you balance being helpful and asking for business.

Lean Content Creation with the 3 R's:

Organizations often have a small team, or even no team to create the content to fit their lead nurture track. To maximize the value of your team, and save time and money, use the 3 R's of content marketing:

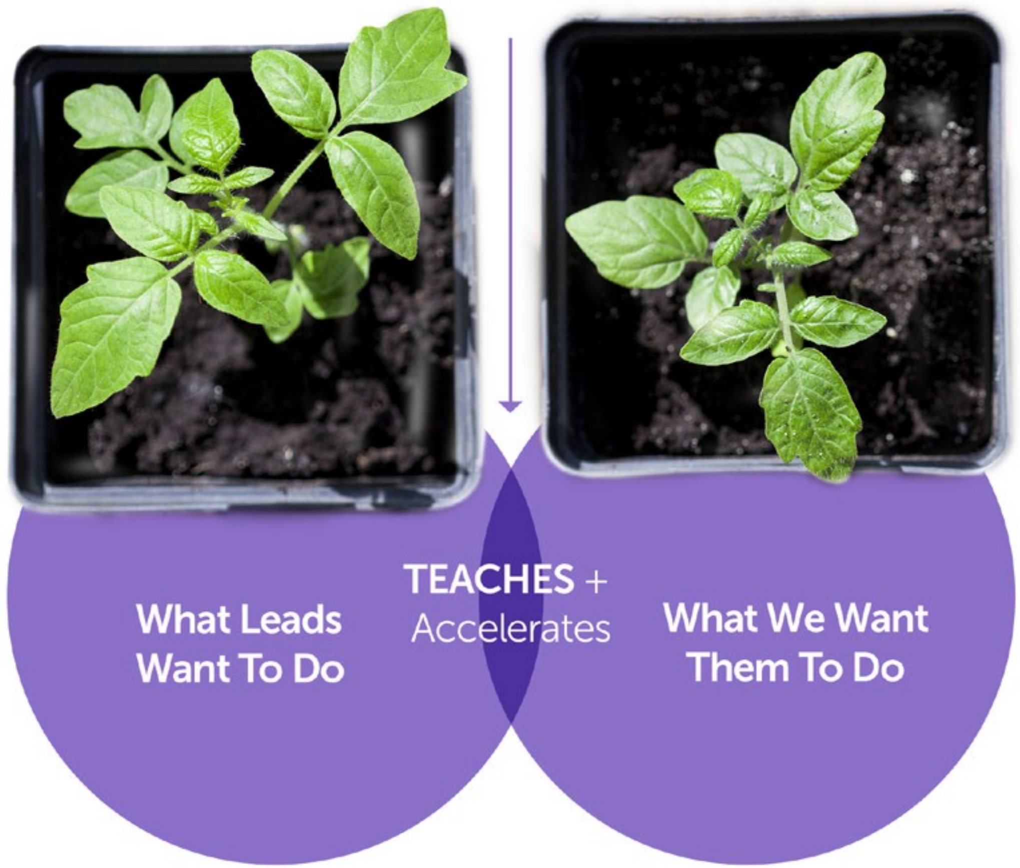
- Reorganize: Maximize your efficiency and use sections of the same piece of to create smaller breakout pieces.
- Rewrite: Extend your investment of time and money when creating content by using the content that you already have in creative ways.
- Retire: Content that no longer has relevant information and can't be revamped is past its expiration date.

THE TYPES OF NURTURE CONTENT

According to Edward Unthank, Founder at Etumos, "The most successful nurture content is a perfect intersection of what your buyer wants to do and what you and your organization want them to do".

Each message must teach and accelerate. Your nurture content must teach your leads something new by providing interesting and relevant content, but through your story arc creation, you also must accelerate your leads through your sales cycle using content that nudges them to the next step.

Now that you have thought about your story arcs, in the following pages we discuss the different types of content you can use to create the right mix for your business.



Each Message Has to Hit the Sweet Spot to Teach and Accelerate

Source: Edward Unthank

THE TYPES OF NURTURE CONTENT

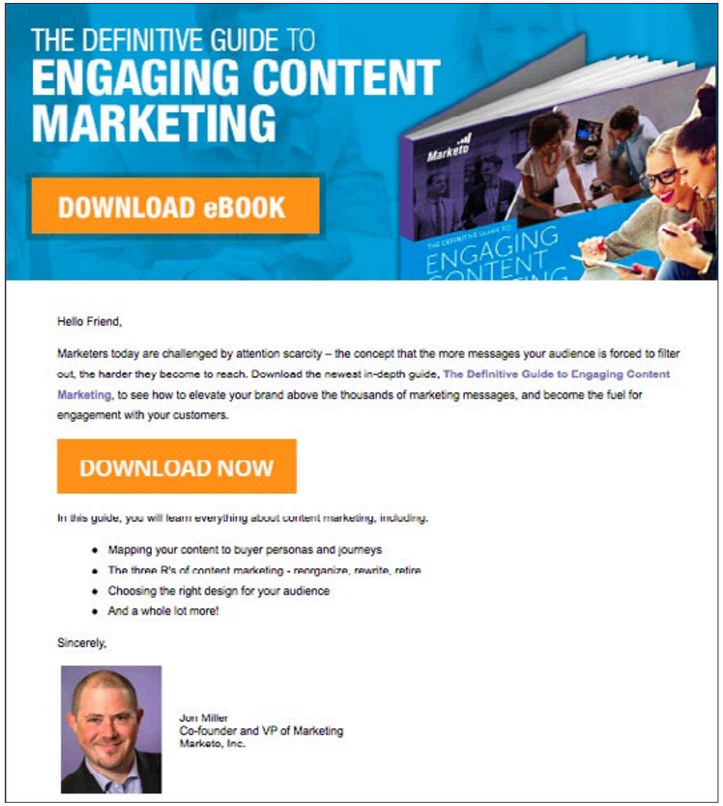
Original Content

Original content is content that you create. It's yours, and only yours. You can write this content in-house, work with outsourced writers, or commission third party thought leaders to create exclusive content. Giving your audience original content is a great incentive for them to opt-in.

For example, at Marketo we create a multitude of original content assets. We publish a daily blog, create ebooks and cheatsheets multiple times per month, and create a new Definitive Guide (like this one) every quarter.

Every new content asset that is created gets added to the appropriate lead nurture program as part of the content promotional plan. Then, the lead nurture manager assesses where it fits the story arc and adds the new content to a track and steam.

Here is an example of an original content lead nurture email from one of our own tracks that highlights our Definitive Guide to Engaging Content Marketing.


THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO ENGAGING CONTENT MARKETING

DOWNLOAD eBOOK

Hello Friend,

Marketers today are challenged by attention scarcity – the concept that the more messages your audience is forced to filter out, the harder they become to reach. Download the newest in-depth guide, The Definitive Guide to Engaging Content Marketing, to see how to elevate your brand above the thousands of marketing messages, and become the fuel for engagement with your customers.

DOWNLOAD NOW

In this guide, you will learn everything about content marketing, including:

- Mapping your content to buyer personas and journeys
- The three R's of content marketing - reorganize, rewrite, retire
- Choosing the right design for your audience
- And a whole lot more!

Sincerely,

Jon Miller
Co-founder and VP of Marketing
Marketo, Inc.

Marketo Original Lead Nurture Content Email

Curation

The primary goal of nurturing is to keep in touch with the potential buyer. As long as you are hyper-relevant, you are accomplishing this goal. A nurture interaction doesn't always need to be about an ebook. In fact, it doesn't even need to be about something you wrote! Consider including content curation in your nurturing.

Content curation, the process of collecting—organizing, and displaying relevant content—can be an important part of your lead nurture strategy. Curation can be an effective tool, but make sure it is relevant.

Content curation is successful in emails as well as social interactions. If you are using content curation in emails make sure your email topic is of interest to the receiver and your curated articles are high quality.

THE TYPES OF NURTURE CONTENT

Content curation is successful in emails as well as social interactions. If you are using content curation in emails make sure your email topic is of interest to the receiver and your curated articles are high quality.

Content curation for social is particularly effective as you can use curated content to practice the 411 rule described in the previous pages.

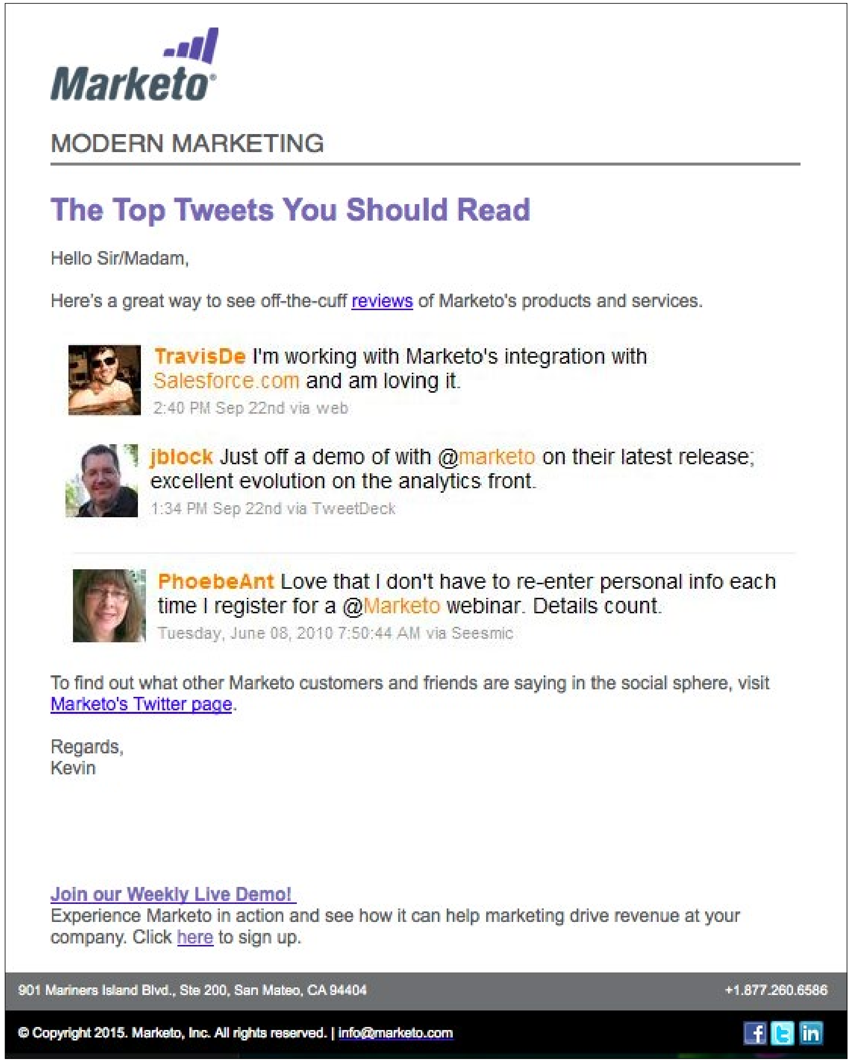
An example on Twitter would be retweeting relevant content that another user posted.

User Generated

Asking your community to help create content can inspire your creative team and engage subscribers. Social media is perfect for this. You can send an email that links to a poll you've created on Twitter or Facebook and then post the results of the poll within another email. Community content can also come from

blog comments, customer testimonials and reviews. It helps lend authenticity and build trust in your user community.

At Marketo, we send out a "Top Tweets" email that features some of the top tweets that we receive about our product and services.



Marketo

MODERN MARKETING

The Top Tweets You Should Read

Hello Sir/Madam,

Here's a great way to see off-the-cuff reviews of Marketo's products and services.

TravisDe I'm working with Marketo's integration with Salesforce.com and am loving it.
2:40 PM Sep 22nd via web

jblock Just off a demo of with @marketo on their latest release; excellent evolution on the analytics front.
1:34 PM Sep 22nd via TweetDeck

PhoebeAnt Love that I don't have to re-enter personal info each time I register for a @Marketo webinar. Details count.
Tuesday, June 08, 2010 7:50:44 AM via Seesmic

To find out what other Marketo customers and friends are saying in the social sphere, visit Marketo's Twitter page.

Regards,
Kevin

Join our Weekly Live Demo!
Experience Marketo in action and see how it can help marketing drive revenue at your company. Click here to sign up.

901 Mariners Island Blvd., Ste 200, San Mateo, CA 94404 +1.877.260.6586

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Marketo Top Tweets Nurture Email

CONTENT

THE ANATOMY OF A LEAD NURTURE EMAIL

Email is a critical part of your nurture programs. Like an ace college application, your lead nurture emails need to incorporate the right elements. Not only do your emails need to offer the right mix of content at the right time, they also need to consistently help your buyers: save money, solve a problem, educate themselves, or be entertained.

Of the emails that you send and receive, you'll notice that you can identify some standard types:

Promotional: An email meant to stimulate an action (purchase, registration, usage, etc). As an example, take a look at a Marketo email promoting a webinar recording. The action that we are looking to stimulate is to download the recording.

Marketo

MODERN MARKETING

Get Your Social Marketing Out of the Social Silo!

Hi Friend,

You've heard that all your marketing needs to be social – but how do you truly make social marketing an integrated part of all your campaigns?

Join Kristy Grayson, Director of Integrated Marketing at Deluxe, and Allison Dyer, Social Marketing Consultant at Marketo, as they discuss:

- Why social marketing works for both B2B as well as B2C
- Why social marketing needs to come out of the social silo
- How a social referral campaign works
- How to build a social referral campaign

Don't wait – view this webinar recording and step up your social marketing today!

DOWNLOAD NOW

Regards,
Kevin

Marketo Promotional Email

THE ANATOMY OF A LEAD NURTURE EMAIL

Alert: Alerts offer convenience; they are emails triggered by a certain event, such as the one you receive when your flight is delayed or when someone asks to connect with you on LinkedIn.

Relationship development: Your standard and most used type of lead nurture email. This is an email that is meant to simply maintain and build a relationship over time.

As an example, take a look at a standard Marketo late stage nurture email to the right. This email is meant to discuss a customer success story and maintain the relationship with a lead in the late stages of lead nurturing.


Marketo
CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Serena Software

Headquarters in Silicon Valley

Serena Software provides solutions that orchestrate application delivery, IT operations and business processes for the Global 2000.

"In terms of our investment in Marketo, it's more than paid for itself: the increased engagement with sales, the better conversion rates, the overall satisfaction of the marketing team in using it are some of the more intangible benefits."

- Carl Landers, VP of Marketing at Serena

With Marketo, Serena can not only educate prospects, but also measure their interest level, and pass this intelligence to the sales team through Sales Insight. Carl says that this has been a huge benefit because their sales representatives now have all the information they need to prioritize and personalize lead follow-up, allowing them to close deals faster.

"Sales Insight, for us, was by far and away the biggest impact of our implementation. It's easy, it's painless, and sales reps are able to do it themselves which is a fantastic productivity improvement for us" says Carl.

To hear more about the success Carl and Serena Software is having with Marketo, click here.

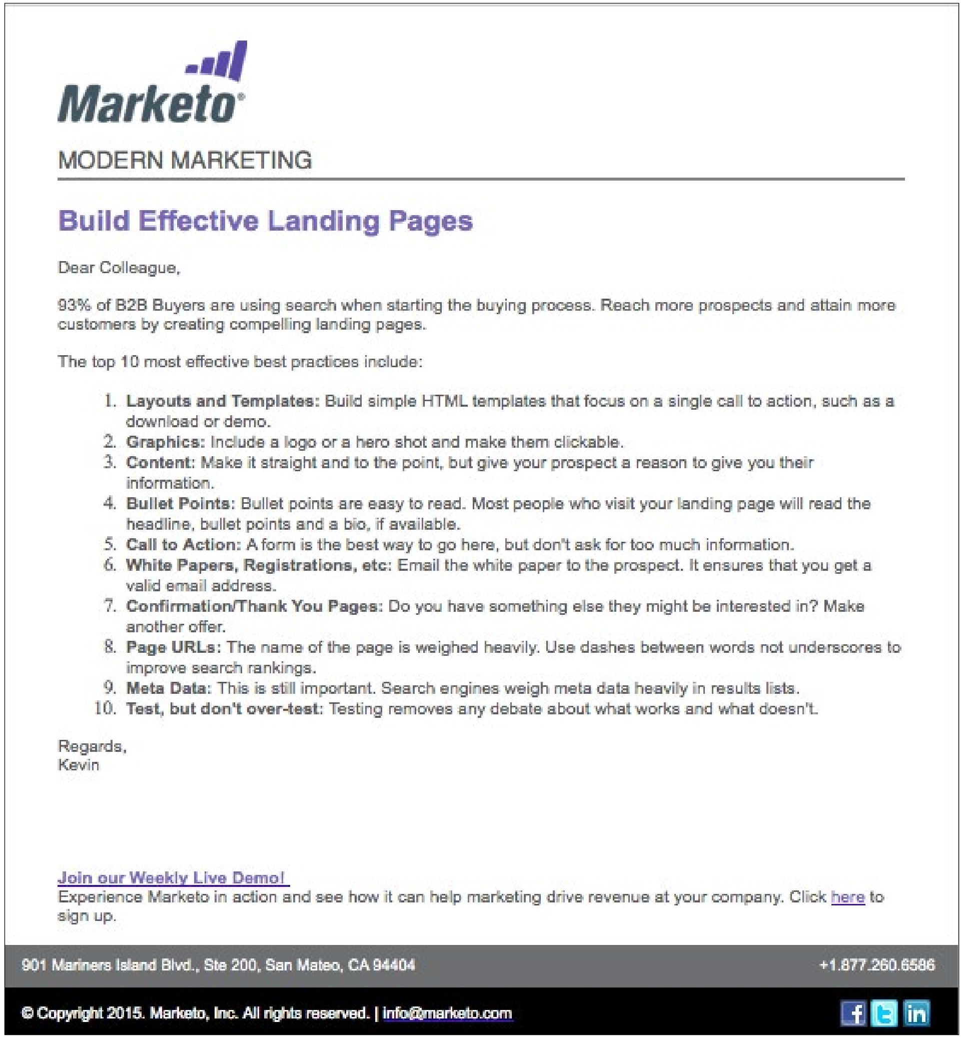
Marketo Late Stage Relationship Building Lead Nurture Email

CONTENT

THE ANATOMY OF A LEAD NURTURE EMAIL

Communication: An email that is meant to update or communicate information (a newsletter).

As an example, look at Marketo's nurture email about building effective landing pages. This email communicates information within the email itself without an additional call-to-action.



MODERN MARKETING

Build Effective Landing Pages

Dear Colleague,

93% of B2B Buyers are using search when starting the buying process. Reach more prospects and attain more customers by creating compelling landing pages.

The top 10 most effective best practices include:

1. **Layouts and Templates:** Build simple HTML templates that focus on a single call to action, such as a download or demo.
2. **Graphics:** Include a logo or a hero shot and make them clickable.
3. **Content:** Make it straight and to the point, but give your prospect a reason to give you their information.
4. **Bullet Points:** Bullet points are easy to read. Most people who visit your landing page will read the headline, bullet points and a bio, if available.
5. **Call to Action:** A form is the best way to go here, but don't ask for too much information.
6. **White Papers, Registrations, etc:** Email the white paper to the prospect. It ensures that you get a valid email address.
7. **Confirmation/Thank You Pages:** Do you have something else they might be interested in? Make another offer.
8. **Page URLs:** The name of the page is weighed heavily. Use dashes between words not underscores to improve search rankings.
9. **Meta Data:** This is still important. Search engines weigh meta data heavily in results lists.
10. **Test, but don't over-test:** Testing removes any debate about what works and what doesn't.

Regards,
Kevin

Join our Weekly Live Demo!
Experience Marketo in action and see how it can help marketing drive revenue at your company. Click here to sign up.

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Marketo Communication Lead Nurture Email

THE ANATOMY OF A LEAD NURTURE EMAIL

Reminder: A 'nudge' email send to a subscriber who has abandoned her online shopping cart. Daily deals like Groupon use this method to remind users of coupons that have not been redeemed. Other companies send reminders for scheduled events.

This Marketo example sends a reminder to a referral program participant that they are close to redeeming their prize.

Marketo Reminder Email

EMAIL CREATION BEST PRACTICES

Email styles vary for each organization and can even vary from campaign to campaign. Your nurture emails will have standard elements, like the subject, the from address, calls-to-action, and so on. But you will need to determine the best practice for your organization.

Subject Line

The subject line of an email is one of the first things a recipient sees in her inbox. And she's likely to make a snap judgment based on that subject line about whether to open, ignore, delete, or mark as spam. Subject lines are critical for successful lead nurturing. Your email doesn't matter if no one opens it!

Not every subject line needs to be a literary achievement, but there is power in a subject line that is magnetic. Let's face it, if you can get a subscriber to open your email eventually, you're doing a good job, but if you can get her to stop what she's doing and open your email immediately, you're winning!

At Marketo, we use 'The Four U's of Subject Lines', a very helpful acronym that we picked up from Copyblogger to help determine if our subject lines are ready:

- **Useful:** Is the promised message valuable to the reader?
- **Ultra-specific:** Does the reader know what's being promised?
- **Unique:** Is the promised message compelling and remarkable?
- **Urgent:** Does the reader feel they need to read it now?

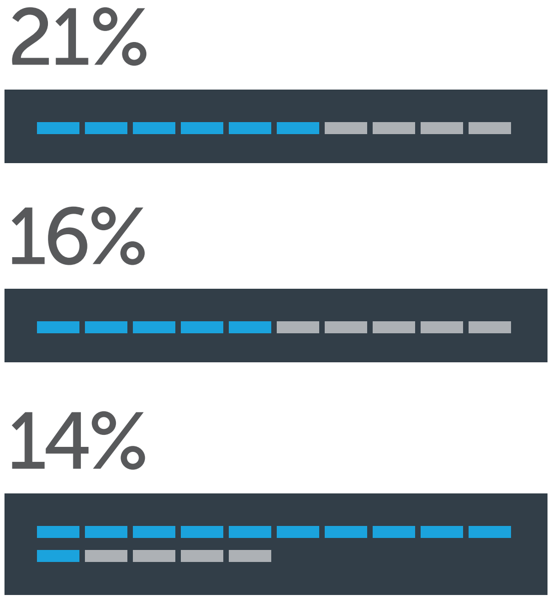
5 Subject Line Techniques That Work:

- **Educate:** "7 Things Marketers Can Learn From Sales"
- **Ask a question:** "Did You Miss This?"
- **Announce a sale, new product or an exclusive:** "First Peek: Our latest Definitive Guide to Engaging Content Marketing"
- **Offer a solution to a problem:** "Pay Down Your Loan"
- **Jump on a popular topic:** "The State of Social Advertising: What's Working Now?"

EMAIL CREATION BEST PRACTICES

How Long Should Subject Lines Be?
Some marketers argue that subject lines should be short (30-50 characters long), while others argue that longer subject lines are better. According to Madhu Gulati, president of Show Me Leads, "a well composed subject line is the one that generates the highest open rate."

Show Me Leads analyzed approximately 260 million emails from 540 campaigns and found that:



- Subject lines with 6-10 words had about a 21% open rate
- Subject lines with 5 or less words had about a 16% open rate
- Subject lines with 11-15 words had around a 14% open rate (*52% of all emails analyzed fell into this range)

Shorter subjects lines make sense if you fear your recipients won't read the entire thing. This is a genuine concern, especially as more and more buyers read messages on their mobile devices where your message can be butchered or shortened.

Consider what could happen if this subject line got cut off after, say, to 26 characters:

Full Subject Line: *Get Up to 70% Off Children's Fashion*

Cut Subject Line: *Get Up to 70% Off Children*

That's right, you'd end up with a possible public relations nightmare, or at the very least, totally confuse your buyers.

EMAIL CREATION BEST PRACTICES

Sender

Like we talked about in Part I of this Definitive Guide, lead nurturing is really all about trust. You want your buyers to trust communications from you, so that they are always willing or even excited to open them.

In addition to the subject line, one-way to create, and reinforce trust is with the sender name—or the "From" name. It's a critical factor in subscribers' decision to open versus delete your email. If a subscriber doesn't recognize you or trust you, he is far less likely to open your email, and may even mark it as spam.

There are a few options that you can experiment with:

- **Company or Brand Name:** Apple, Marketo, Banana Republic
- **Product or Service:** "Mileage Plus" by United Airlines is used as a 'from' name
- **Personal Name:** A specific employee at your company (e.g. the sales account executive that owns the account).
- **Campaign-based:** Marketo sometimes sends nurturing emails from "Marketo Nurturing" or "Marketo Events" so buyers know exactly what to expect before opening.

EMAIL CREATION BEST PRACTICES

The Body

You've got your buyer to open your nurture email—that's an awesome first step! So now what? You want your buyer to land on compelling copy that reads quickly, and has a clear call-to-action and value proposition (this answers 'what's in it for me?').

To check if you deliver this experience, run it by the 30-second summary rule. Can you get through the email in 30 seconds and know what value it provides? This test helps you make sure that your call-to-action and value proposition are clear and that your copy, whether it is in bullets or paragraph form, is not too dense.

Now that you have a buyers' attention on the body of your email, there are a few more things to consider:

- Think about the width of your email. Most common is 600 pixels
- Remember that rich media, like Flash, JavaScript, and video won't work in an HTML email
- Focus on what will and won't appear 'above the fold' for a user on their display, whether that is desktop, laptop, or mobile
- Consider experimenting with style of emails—sometimes heavy text works better than a beautiful visual
- Always provide a plain-text version for buyers who don't like or accept HTML versions

In the Marketo example, for our *Creating a Business Case for Marketing Automation* ebook, our nurture email has a clear call-to-action and is short and to the point. The reader instantly knows what the email is about and what they should do.

Marketo Nurture Email Example

EMAIL CREATION BEST PRACTICES

Design

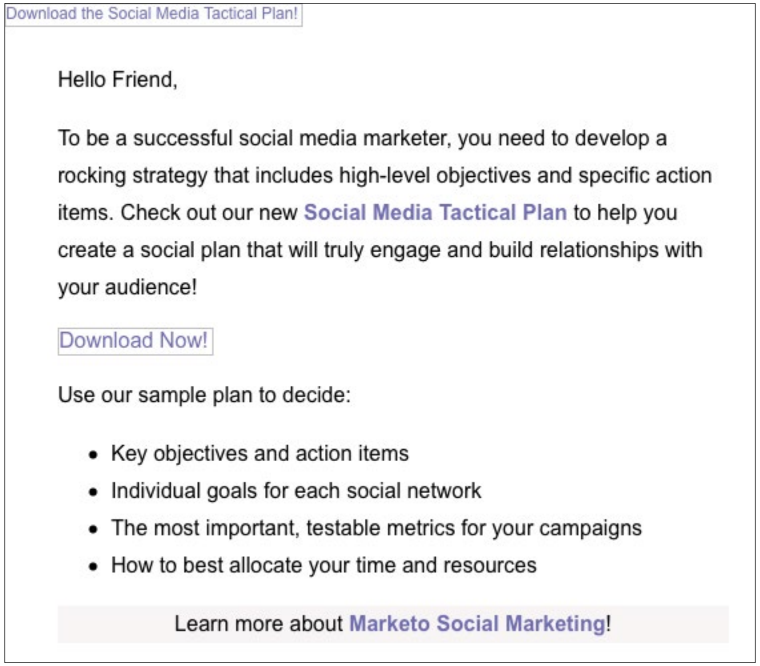
The design of your communication is heavily related to the images that you include in your email. Today, as a security precaution, most email clients block images by default, so users need to choose to unblock images if they want to see them. Ideally your buyer trusts you enough to 'always allow' your images or actively chooses to unblock them each time.

Regardless, there will still be a percentage of recipients that see your emails without images. There are few ways you can prepare for this and make your communication easier to read.

- **Create bulletproof buttons:** These buttons look like images but are actually cleverly formatted HTML. The buttons ensure that subscribers will see the most important points of your email, regardless of whether or not they have blocked images.
- **Use image "alt" tags:** These tags let users who have blocked images know what they are missing.

In this Marketo example, we use alt tags that clearly show the reader what images they are missing out on. We have also formatted the HTML to look like buttons—note the "Download Now" and "Learn more about Marketo Social Marketing".

In addition to ensuring images can be viewed on all devices; your email design should be clean. Too much clutter will cause your reader confusion and you risk being sent to spam. Your emails should always be clean and concise. They should have a header, a hero image, and include a short block of copy.


Download the Social Media Tactical Plan!

Hello Friend,

To be a successful social media marketer, you need to develop a rocking strategy that includes high-level objectives and specific action items. Check out our new **Social Media Tactical Plan** to help you create a social plan that will truly engage and build relationships with your audience!

Download Now!

Use our sample plan to decide:

- Key objectives and action items
- Individual goals for each social network
- The most important, testable metrics for your campaigns
- How to best allocate your time and resources

Learn more about **Marketo Social Marketing**!

Marketo Email Design Example

EMAIL CREATION BEST PRACTICES

Calls-To-Action

Calls-to-action live in the body of an email and draw the buyers' attention to the action that you want them to take. Some experts say that you should only include one call-to-action in your email, to not divert your buyer's attention, while others maintain that having two calls-to-action ensures that there is something for everyone. We believe there is no one right answer—it depends on your organization's audience, the offer, and what you have learned through testing.

Calls-to-action can be a button, hyperlinked text, an image, etc.—essentially it is an element of your email that you can edit and test, similar to subject line and sender. Your call-to-action should always be bold and obvious. In communication that includes a call-to-action, you want to ensure that the buyer takes your recommended action.

Take a look at the following Marketo email example to download our Definitive Guide to Engaging Content. There is a very clear call-to-action in both the header and within the body.

Tip: *Not every email needs a call-to-action. Lead nurture should educate, entertain and keep-in-touch with buyers. Consider that a portion of your content mix should just add value and not include a call-to-action.*

Marketo Call-to-Action Example

EMAIL CREATION BEST PRACTICES

Mobile Optimization

Mobile is no longer a trend, it's here to stay and it is how more and more buyers access their email and interact with brands. Campaign Monitor's benchmark study on email interaction across mobile and desktop illustrates that mobile has gone from the least used environment in 2011, with 15% of email opened in a mobile environment, to the most popular in 2014—with 41% of email opened in a mobile environment.

According to The Radicati Group's Mobile Statistics Report, "by the end of 2018, worldwide mobile email users are expected to total over 2.2 billion...by this time, we expect 80% of email users will access email via a mobile device."

Unfortunately, despite the landslide of evidence that supports the necessity for marketers to adapt and be mobile friendly, many haven't. As you develop a successful lead nurturing program, be sure that you build this capability into your program as it will only become more and more important over time.

There are a few different ways to develop a mobile-friendly email, and we'll cover them briefly here:

- **Scalable Design:** Good for beginners and teams with limited resources—it's a design that works across desktop and mobile and doesn't require code to adjust image and text sizes.
- **Fluid Design:** This design works best with text-heavy layouts that flow. It requires some CSS knowledge because of width limitations, but it still works for teams with limited resources.
- **Responsive Design:** This design includes everything from the two styles above and then adds control will more CSS media queries, allowing you to design for specific screen sizes. It offers the most control, but also requires more resources.

Ultimately, you need to consider your audience and your resources when you decide which level of mobile optimized design is best for your organization.

THOUGHT LEADER ROUND TABLE

Whare are Your Suggestions for Finding and Creating Content?

Corinne Sklar, Global CMO, Bluewolf

Content is everywhere and oftentimes overwhelming for customers. Time is what customers value most; they want actionable answers not novels. Take a traditional whitepaper— is long form copy always the best format? Instead, how can you ensure the format your thought leadership takes is engaging to prospects and customers? Consider turning it into a visual or interactive tool that's applicable to their business or addresses their challenges. Or reframing the content into a series of blog posts, infographics, or videos that are strategically timed to communicate a company's unique value proposition and brand values.

THOUGHT LEADER ROUND TABLE

Whare are Your Suggestions for Finding and Creating Content?

Brian Hansford, Client Services Director, Heinz Marketing

Marketers often believe they have to produce all of the content for lead nurturing, which is a recipe for failure because it simply does not scale. It's critical that marketers set the strategy, themes and focus for content and recruit a diverse set of contributors.

I still want to see more people within companies produce content—executives, developers, customer success managers—they all have valuable ideas their customers will find interesting.

One of the best sources of content is sales reps. Sales reps are inherently scrappy and the best ones are fantastic communicators. They often develop their own versions of presentations, emails, customer summaries and ad hoc guides.

Curating and repurposing this content works really well for deep funnel nurturing, which is often an area that marketers struggle with. Curating content from sales reps can also help build teamwork across departments. Customers are another great source of content. They can share their ideas, thought leadership and success stories that are valuable for other prospects or customers.

THOUGHT LEADER ROUND TABLE

Whare are Your Suggestions for Finding and Creating Content?

Brian Carroll, Executive Director, Revenue Optimization MECLABS

Interview your customer-facing employees. This includes tech support, customer service, and sales professionals. Ask them questions such as:

- What are the most common complaints they hear?
- What are the most common issues?
- What are their responses to these issues?
- What positive feedback do they receive?
- Are they noticing any trends in types of concerns, issues, or opportunities?
- What do they think customers need to know?
- Is there anything else they'd like to add? (Always end interviews with this question because it gives an opportunity to share fresh thoughts and ideas).

Use professional writers to help. Leverage professional writers and editors. Why? Good writing drives engagement and most people are not good writers. How do you identify good writing? Not by flowery or clever prose. Instead, good writing is concise, clear and easy to understand.

Repurpose every piece of content. A blog can be expanded into a webinar. The author can be interviewed in a video. Or it can be summarized in a graph or chart. You'll reach more people with your message. Someone who doesn't like to read blogs may catch your webinar or watch a video.

PART VI:
BASIC LEAD NURTURE SEGMENTATION

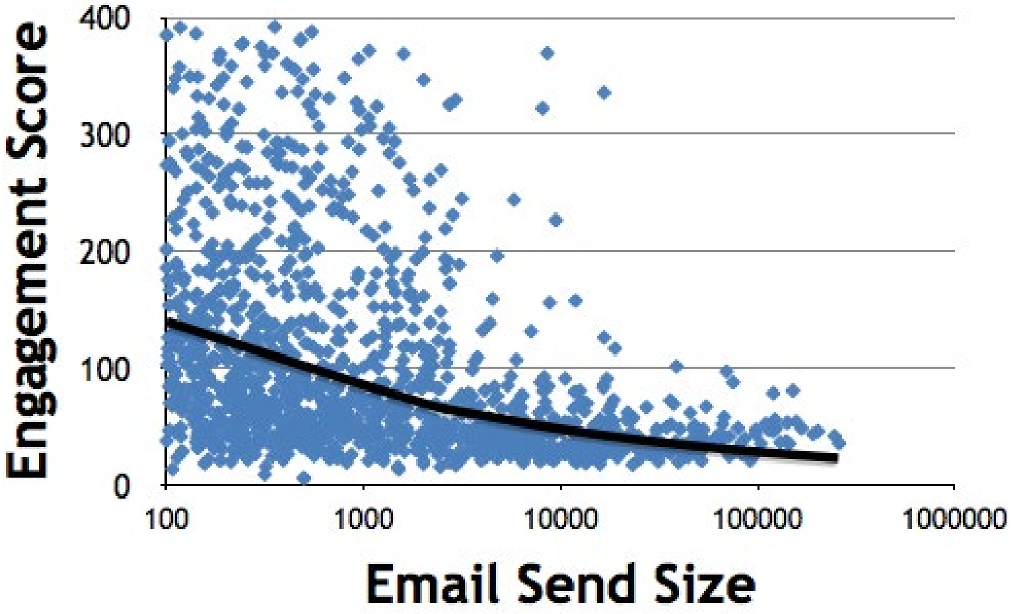
WHY DO YOU NEED SEGMENTATION?

Segmenting your audience, the act of dividing your leads into definable and actionable parts, is essential to your marketing success—particularly with lead nurturing. The more you segment, the more relevant your lead nurture programs will be. If you are not relevant, your audience simply won't pay attention.

Being relevant means sending the right content, to the right person, at the right time. Your buyers are becoming more and more comfortable with targeted advertising and personalized content. They expect marketers to know about them and to use that information to create customized experiences. You want your lead nurturing to be relevant to your potential buyers throughout their entire journey—regardless of where they are in your sales funnel.

Segmentation means higher engagement. An executive requires a different piece of content than someone in an intern role. What resonates with one audience won't resonate with another.

Additionally as it pertains to email, studies have consistently shown that segmented email sends yield higher results. In a Marketo Benchmark Email Marketing Study, we found segmentation to be the highest ROI tactic used by email marketers. In fact, according to our proprietary Engagement Score (which tracks how engaging an email is in Marketo), 23% of how engaging an email is can be explained by segmentation. Smaller, more segmented sends in your lead nurturing yield better results.



THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF SEGMENTATION

We recommend that your basic lead nurturing programs use two dimensions of segmentation—buying stage crossed with another measurement variable that is important to your business. The reason for two is because it creates a happy balance: one is not enough, and each dimension beyond two creates an exponentially more complex framework. Think of it as segments and sub-segments.

In general, you want to nurture based on buying stage, since it is critical to think about where the lead is in her buying journey. But you also want to ask yourself, what else is relevant for your lead? And, how would you like to split up and personalize your lead nurture tracks? For instance, you might want a specific track for CMOs (the variable dimension) who are close to making a purchase decision (the buying stage dimension).

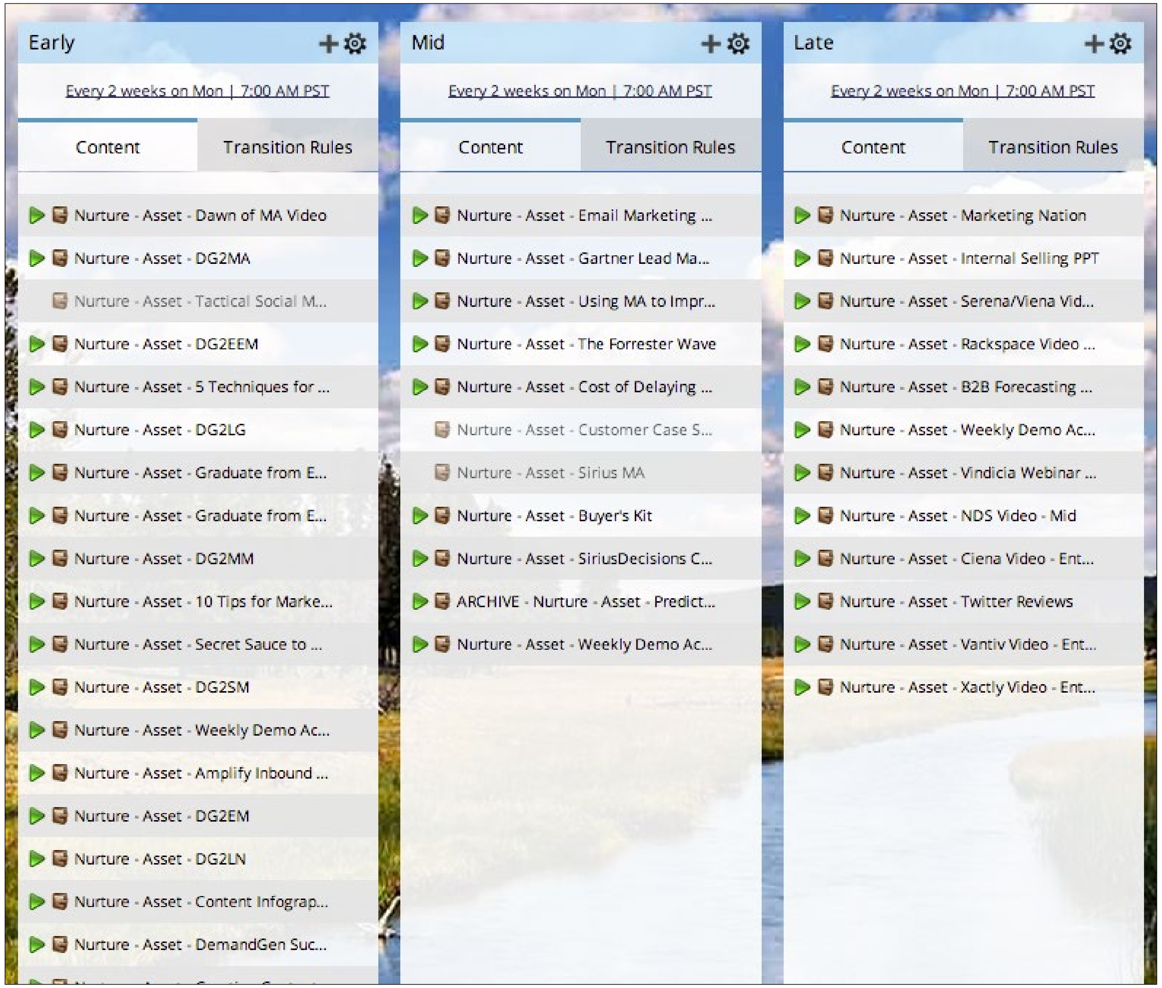
At Marketo, we focus mostly on buying stage and buying profile, as our two main dimensions. Here is an example of how we think about a basic nurturing segmentation:

1.BUYING STAGES	2. BUYING PROFILES
• Early: Be a Better Marketer • Mid: Why Marketing Automation • Late: Why Marketo • Customer: Success	• Marketing • Sales • Executive

THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF SEGMENTATION

Let's see how this plays out in practice. Here is a screenshot of Marketo's Customer Engagement engine for our own lead nurture efforts.

The image shows our small business lead nurture track. As you can see, the track is divided by our early, mid, and late stage streams.



Marketo's Customer Engagement engine Lead Nurturing

THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF SEGMENTATION

Let's dig into this concept more thoroughly.

Dimension One: Buying Stage

Typically, you want to nurture leads based on where they are in their buyer's journey. Content that is relevant to a lead that has just learned about your company is probably not relevant to a lead who is in the final stages of his decision making process. And remember, relevance is key!

According to Maribeth Ross, Chief Content Officer at Aberdeen Group, "The middle of the funnel is the point at which you receive permission from your engaged prospect to change the story line from thought leadership around their problems to actual solutions. Someone who has stuck with you this long across multiple touches will be ready for you to change your tune to sing the benefits of your solution. They'll go along for the ride. The middle-of-the-funnel is not for prospects in the top-of-your-funnel. These leads can be turned off by content that is not geared for them and quickly hit that 'unsubscribe' link—the equivalent of giving you a cold shoulder".

In order for this process to work you need to understand your lead's buying journey. Revenue funnels may vary between companies, but we'll use Marketo's funnel to show how buyer intent and lead nurturing campaigns can be mapped to different stages.

At Marketo, we break our funnel into three parts—Top-of-Funnel, Middle-of-Funnel, and Bottom-of-Funnel. We know where someone is in the process through lead scoring.

Sample Multi-Channel Lead Nurture Program: Buying Stages

- **Touch 1:** *Early Stage Email. Ebook: Definitive Guide to Marketing Automation*
- **Touch 2:** *Early Stage Website Offer. Persona based personalization for Workbook: Sales and Marketing Alignment*
- **Touch 3:** *Mid Stage Retargeting Ad. Ebook: Chosing Your Marketing Automation Solution*
- **Touch 4:** *Mid Stage Email. Report: Marketing Automation Vendor Comparison*
- **Touch 5:** *Late Stage Sales Call*
- **Touch 6:**

THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF SEGMENTATION

Early Stage:
Top-of-the-Funnel (TOFU)
A person in this buying phase is at the beginning of your sales and marketing cycle. She is aware of your product or service, but is not ready to buy. Individuals in the TOFU stage should be primarily offered educational materials.

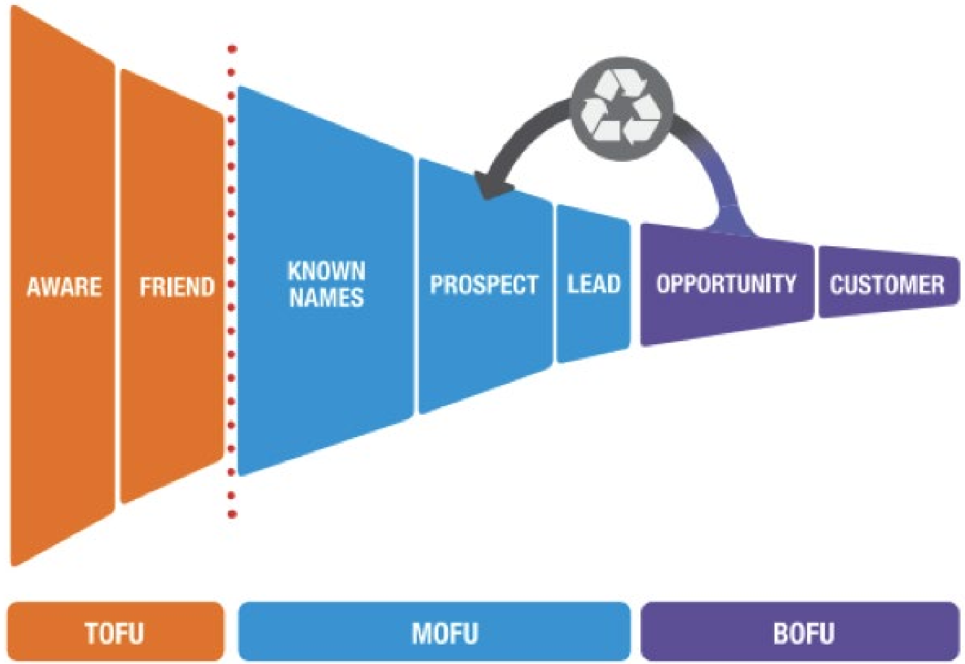
Example content offers: *ebook, blog posts, research data, funny videos, curated lists, infographics.*

Mid Stage:
Middle-of-the-Funnel (MOFU)
This buying phase occurs in the middle of your sales and marketing cycle. A person arrives here after he has displayed buying behavior, engaged with your content, and is potentially a sales lead. Your offers for MOFU leads are still educational, but they will be more geared towards your product or service.

Example content offers: *buying guides, RFP templates, ROI calculators, analyst reports.*

Late Stage:
Bottom-of-the-Funnel (BOFU)
This buying phase occurs at the bottom of your sales funnel, and indicates that your lead is close to becoming a customer. Your offers for BOFU leads are very specific to your product or service area in order to support the buyer during the purchase process.

Example content offers: *pricing, demos, 3rd party reviews, customer case studies*



THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF SEGMENTATION

Dimension Two

In addition to buying stage as your first dimension, you can also choose a second dimension for your lead nurturing. Choosing a second dimension enables you to be even more relevant to the leads in your database.

If you are a smaller company or are just starting out with lead nurturing, you may have only 1-2 tracks that include a couple of the dimensions discussed in the coming page. If you are a larger, more complex organization, you might have many tracks that speak to each of the different dimensions.

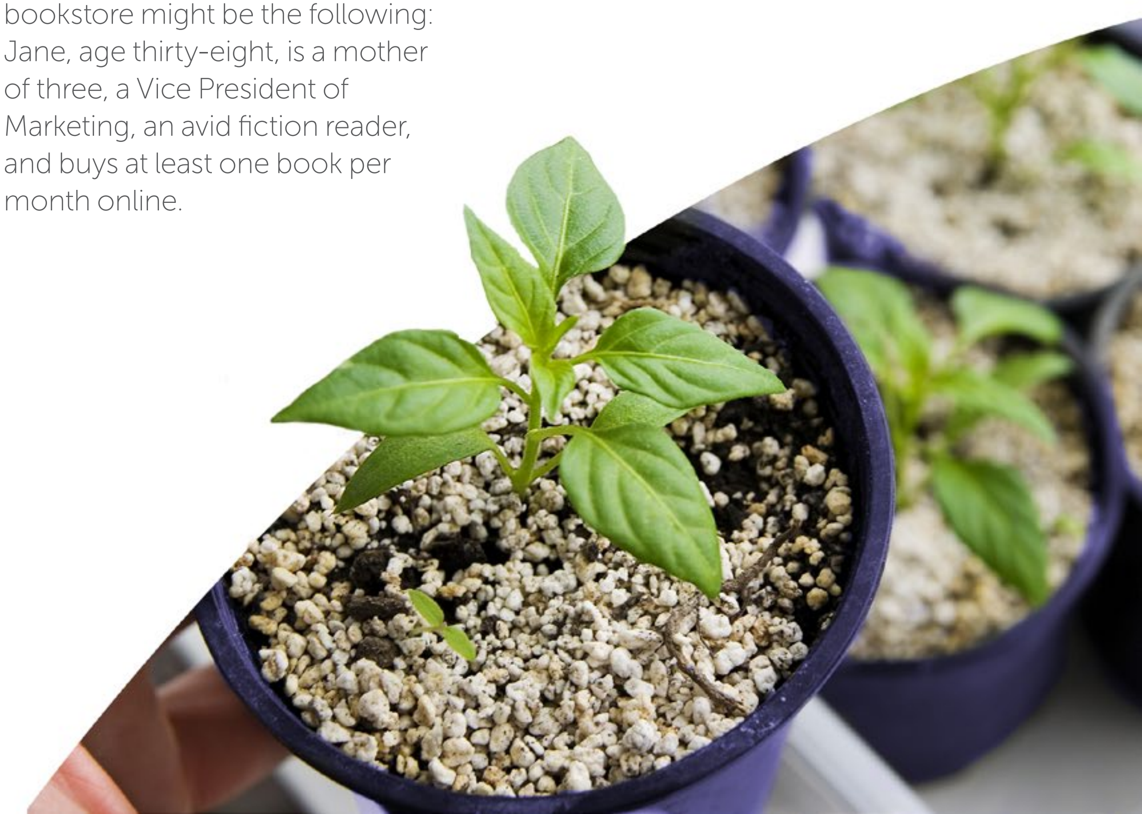
Buying Profiles and Personas

A good place to start when you think about buying profiles is the "Buying Committee"—the group of individuals that are involved in the purchasing decision.

According to MarketingSherpa, even at small companies (100-500 employees), the average number of people involved in a decision is 6 to 8—and that number goes as high as 21 on a buying committee at larger companies. Although you don't always need to nurture each person in the buying committee, you should choose a few key profiles to nurture.

Your personas will also vary based on the different audiences you serve, perhaps broken down by product line, company size, industry, or geography. The key is to understand your different audiences and ensure you have content for them.

A buyer persona for an online bookstore might be the following: Jane, age thirty-eight, is a mother of three, a Vice President of Marketing, an avid fiction reader, and buys at least one book per month online.



THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF SEGMENTATION

Buyer profiles are particularly relevant to lead nurturing—they help your campaigns target your most qualified segments and also add a human element to the relationship building process.

As you're developing your personas, keep in mind that they must work for the specific purpose of lead nurturing. Think about the characteristics of your audience that would help provide you with greater insight into how to best build a relationship with them. For instance, how do they prefer to receive communications from you (email, mobile phone, Twitter, etc.)?

Finally, identify which profile or role should apply to each new lead. You can use online forms or data augmentation to find out this information, especially if you use techniques such as progressive profiling (e.g. the practice of modifying the fields on your forms to augment the information you already have). You can also observe where your prospects spend the majority of their time on your web site. Together, these techniques will help you match the right role-based content with each prospect.

Sample Multi-Channel Lead Nurture Program: Buyer Persona CMO

- **Touch 1:** *Early Stage Website Offer. Persona based personalization for Whitepaper: The Changing Buyer and the CMO*
- **Touch 2:** *Early Stage Email. Report: Marketing Maturity Curve*
- **Touch 3:** *Mid Stage Social Interaction. Sent Tweet for Report: Marketing Automation Buying Trends*
- **Touch 4:** *Mid Stage Sales Call*
- **Touch 5:** *Late Stage Email. Case Study: Sales and Marketing Alignment with marketing Automation*
- **Touch 6:** *Late Stage Sales Call Demo Request*

THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF SEGMENTATION

Geography and Language
Depending on the markets your organization serves, you may want to segment your database based on geographical markets. This can be both locally, throughout the United States, or internationally. Segmenting based on geography enables you to be relevant to an individual's local events, activities, and customs.

You can use local lead nurturing tracks for events, to send localized content, and to reference localized pricing and deals. For instance, if you are an organization with an office in the UK, you can create specialized tracks with content specifically created for that geographical area.

Another critical reason to segment by geography and language is that there are country-specific email laws to abide by. Your nurture emails must reflect any rules and regulations.

The same concept is true for language. If you are an international company you need to create lead nurturing tracks that includes content in the various languages of the markets you serve.

Sample Multi-Channel Lead Nurture Program: Geography UK

- **Touch 1:** *Early Stage Email. Ebook: The B2B Buyer in EMEA*
- **Touch 2:** *Early Stage Social Interaction. Infographic: The History of Anti-Spam Legislation in the EU*
- **Touch 3:** *Mid Stage Email. Report: Local Marketing Automation Trends*
- **Touch 4:** *Mid Stage Retargeting Ad. Ebook: The Cost of Delaying Marketing Automation*
- **Touch 5:** *Late Stage Website Offer. Account based personalization for Case Study: Localized Customer*
- **Touch 6:** *Late Stage Sales Call*

THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF SEGMENTATION

Company Size
Many companies, including Marketo, segment based on company size. This works particularly well if you are selling to different market segments such as small business (corporate), mid-market, and enterprise.

At Marketo, our selling methodology is aligned to each of the company sizes that we service. For instance, we have small and mid-market marketing and sales teams, and we also have enterprise marketing and sales teams. As such, we create different content and tailor our messaging to each of these segments. We have found that each of these segments has unique needs and pain points, therefore we create several nurturing tracks for increased relevancy.

Sample Multi-Channel Lead Nurturing Program: Small Sized Companies

- **Touch 1:** *Early Stage Website Offer. Account based personalization for Ebook: Amplify your Inbound with Marketing Automation*
- **Touch 2:** *Early Stage Email. Ebook: Graduate from Email to Marketing Automation*
- **Touch 3:** *Mid Stage Email. Ebook: The Essential 8 Reports for Marketing ROI*
- **Touch 4:** *Mid Stage Sales Call*
- **Touch 5:** *Late Stage Social Interaction. Sent Tweet for Template: Selling Marketing Automation Internally*
- **Touch 6:** *Late Stage Website Offer. Account based personalization for Customer Case Study: The ROI of Marketing Automation*

THE TWO DIMENSIONS OF SEGMENTATION

Competitors
You can also segment your leads based on competitors. You can create lead nurturing tracks that are specific to whether or not a lead uses one of your competitor's products or services. This type of segmentation can be used for new leads or churned customers who went to a competitor. Lead Lizard calls this type of competitor lead nurturing a "Win-Back Track".

But how do you get this type of information? If a lead that currently uses a competitor has engaged with you, ask for the information in a form on your website. If you are trying to win back a prior customer from a competitor, you can often get information on who that customer went to through a survey or an open dialogue.

Sample Multi-Channel Lead Nurture Program: Competitor Win-Back

- **Touch 1:** *Early Stage Check-in Sales Call*
- **Touch 2:** *Early Stage Social Interaction. Sent Tweet for Ebook: New Trends in Marketing Automation*
- **Touch 3:** *Mid Stage Email. Report: Marketing Automation Vendor Landscape*
- **Touch 4:** *Mid Stage Email. Stage Report: The Dangers of a Low End Marketing Automation Solution*
- **Touch 5:** *Late Stage Website Personalization. Account based personalization for Case Study: Competitor Swap*
- **Touch 6:** *Late Stage Sales Call*

THOUGHT LEADER POINT-OF-VIEW

The 8 Lead Nurturing Tracks You've Never Heard of:

Sam Boush, Founder and President of Lead Lizard

It's tempting to build lead nurturing streams around your major campaigns—and stop there. But lead nurturing isn't "one size fits all". The best tracks help you send targeted messages based on a prospect's stage in the buying process. Here are eight (admittedly offbeat) tracks that will help move prospects through your marketing and sales funnel.

1. **Red Carpet Track (welcome)**
   Give new contacts the celebrity treatment by showing them how you can cater to their needs. These prospects might not know anything about your brand or solutions. Bring them up to speed with what you do, how you help companies like theirs, and who you are. In return, you'll learn more about them.

2. **Boomerang Track (recycling)**
   When a marketing-qualified lead (MQL) is chucked by sales, it doesn't have to be forever. If handled properly, some of these leads can fly right back to sales. First, make sure that rejected leads are segmented based on the reason for disqualification. If leads were rejected for reasons that can be fixed, like low interest or un-readiness to buy, place them in your boomerang track. Once you build interest through a targeted nurture program, you'll throw them to sales. And this time, they won't come back.

3. **Sales-Nado Track (sales nurturing)**The sales-nado track is a roaring twister that picks up stagnant prospects and hurls them through the opportunity pipeline.

   Most of lead nurturing is focused on the marketing side of the funnel. Sales-nado focuses on sales-qualified leads (SQLs) and leads in the pipeline. Because sales reps don't always have time to individually reach out to prospects, an opt-in nurture track helps to keep leads engaged.

   But beware: The sales-nado should be approached with the delicacy of a tornado-chaser following a cyclone. The last thing any sales rep wants is to have an actively-worked prospect get an impersonal email right before closing the deal. You should attempt sales-nado only when marketing and sales are tightly aligned.

4. **Gopher Track (stay in touch)**
   Pop up in front of contacts from time to time and stay relevant, even if they aren't ready to buy. With the gopher track, you can assure contacts that you have the best solutions. Send messages at a slow, but steady, pace. By staying relevant, you'll increase the chance your prospect will buy from you in the future.

THOUGHT LEADER POINT-OF-VIEW

The 8 Lead Nurturing Tracks You've Never Heard of:

5. **Gorilla Glue Track (retention)**
   Make your customers stick! Nothing adheres like Gorilla Glue...so glue customers to your solutions for the long run.

   This is your chance to show customers that you value their business. How? Send them tips, industry news, service updates, personalized messages, or feedback surveys. When renewal is on the horizon, send offers they can't refuse.

6. **Detective Track (insufficient data)**
   Discover missing information about visitors to your website, webinar attendees, and content downloaders. Build systems that easily follow their trail: why they landed on your page, the content they viewed, and more. Send offers to get them "cookied" on your website. Ask them to submit forms that fill in the missing information you need to qualify them for sales. When you know more about them, you can segment them for additional nurture marketing.

7. **Baby, Come Back Track (win back)**
   Creating an emotional connection is a vital part of lead nurturing—if you lose touch, you've got to reignite the flame. Before placing a Sales Qualified Lead (SQL) on this track, you need to know two things: where they were in your pipeline, and why they broke it off in the first place. Determine this from surveys, emails, phone calls, database segmentation, and CRM reports. After you know the reason, prove you'll treat them better this time around, with well-targeted messaging and personalized offers.

8. **Sleeping Beauty Track (wake up)**
   Revive sleeping contacts. Your first step is to make sure you're correctly categorizing leads. Have you been sending a CTO content meant for a VP of Product? Double-check your data, since nothing makes leads hit the snooze button like irrelevant content. Next, make them an offer. Targeted content can warm up prospects, bring them back to life, and re-capture their interest. Once they're active again, you can move them into a new track that fits their needs.

PART VII:

ADVANCED LEAD NURTURE SEGMENTATION

ADVANCED LEAD NURTURE SEGMENTATION

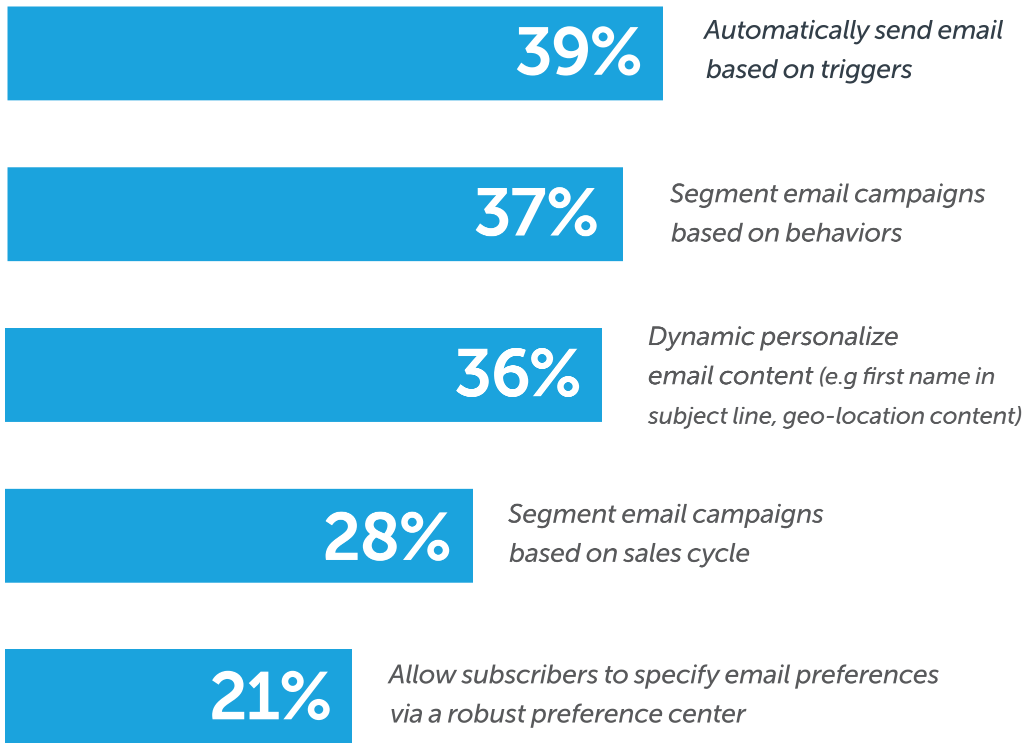
BEHAVIORAL SEGMENTATION

Adding behavioral segmentation and targeting to your lead nurture campaigns increases relevance and engagement cross-channel. If you want to speak to your leads in a truly relevant way, you can segment your lead nurturing programs in a way that combines transactional data, like the data discussed in the previous part, with online body language like web traffic, search behavior, email response, and so on.

Behavioral segmentation can be used in addition to segmenting based on the more traditional dimensions. Behavioral segmentation and targeting listens to behavioral cues and creates triggered interactions that feel more like a conversation.

When behavioral cues are not used,nurturing can be experienced as dissonant interruption. What the sender considers a coordinated "drip campaign" may feel more like water torture to the receiver.

Take a look at this graph from the MarketingSherpa Email Marketing Benchmark Survey on the top tactics to increase email engagement. The top answers to the survey touch on triggered, behavioral targeting. The same concept is true for your cross-channel communications.



BEHAVIORAL SEGMENTATION

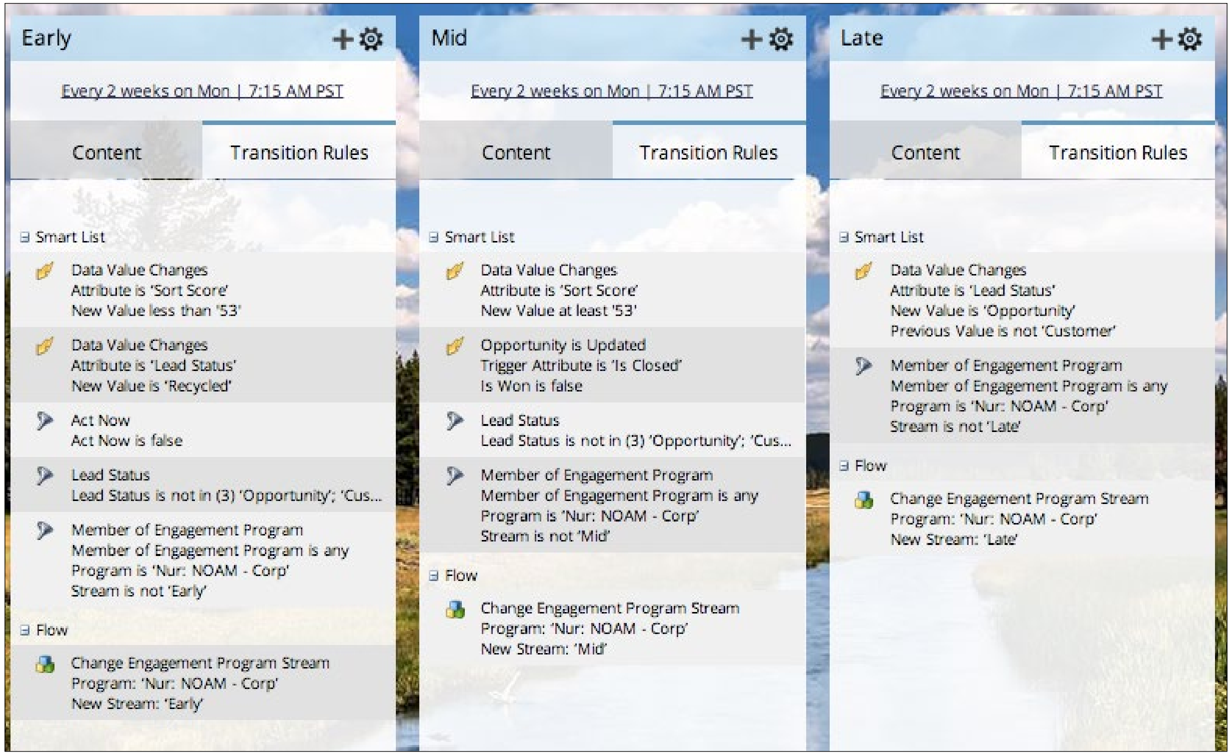
Behavioral Segmentation with Marketo Customer Engagement engine

Let's take a look at this in action. Rather than anticipate every move that a prospect or customer might take, marketers need to design transition rules. Transition rules tell your marketing automation system what to "listen" for in order to send the most relevant content.

The Marketo Customer Engagement engine can pull a lead backwards or forwards, according to what it hears.

You can determine transition rules based on behavioral triggers—such as a change in a lead score. These rules can be as sophisticated or as simple as you want. For instance, if someone visits your pricing page 3 times within a week, she should be transitioned to an accelerated, more aggressive lead nurture track, where she will move through the funnel more quickly.

You can see the transition rules for this track in the screenshot below. We determine when to accelerate a lead based on lead score change, lead status, and other behavioral triggers.



Transition Rules in Marketo Customer Engagement engine

BEHAVIORAL SEGMENTATION

Topic of Interest Lead Nurturing

Create even more relevance by instituting a Topic of Interest nurturing track. At a certain point in your lead nurturing and content creation, you reach a level where you have an abundance of content that spans a wide range of topics. But, people's interest varies. You might have one lead that is interested in one topic, and another lead that is interested in another topic altogether. By lumping your topics together in one track, you risk a lead becoming disengaged.

At Marketo we are always testing to see how different nurture tracks work. This helps us optimize processes and get creative! We want to know how we could be more relevant to each lead and created interest-based nurture tracks based on a person's last activity and interests to see whether or not even more targeted content worked better.

ADVANCED LEAD NURTURE SEGMENTATION

BEHAVIORAL SEGMENTATION

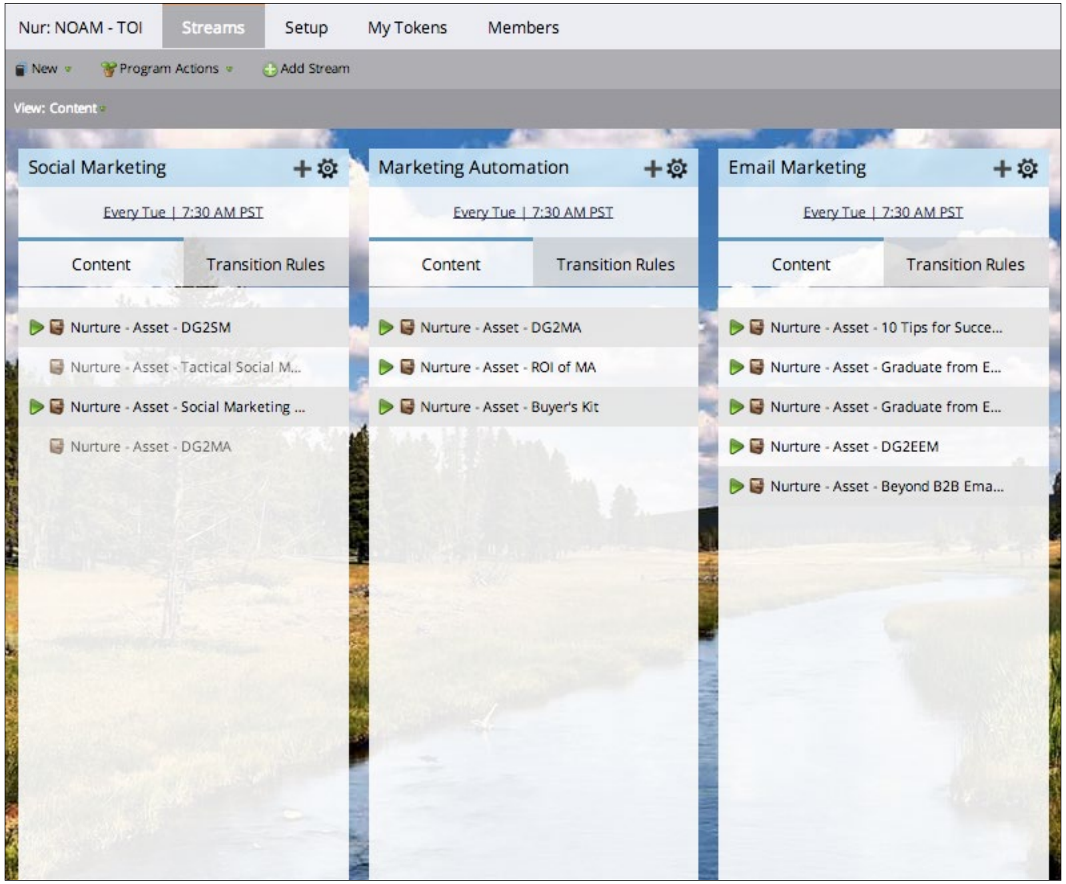
Choosing Your Tracks

So how does this work? Create nurture tracks based on what topics your customers are interested in. At Marketo, we created a track for leads interested in email marketing, social marketing, marketing automation, and Microsoft Dynamics CRM. For example, if a person attends a webinar on social marketing, we assign him to the social marketing nurture track. Once he is in that interest-based track, he receives a set of social marketing focused nurture touches. We can do this effectively since we listen to our potential buyer's behaviors through Marketo's Customer Engagement engine.

This works in the following way:

- Attends event
- Downloads content
- Clicks email
- Fills out form
- Score is changed
- Added to Topic of Interest track

Here is an example of what Marketo's own Topic of Interest tracks look like in Marketo.



Topic of Interest Tracks in Marketo's Customer Engagement engine

BEHAVIORAL SEGMENTATION

Testing and Proving Your Topics of Interest

You have to test and optimize your Topic of Interest tracks to ensure that they are in fact, the topics that interest your leads the most. Let's take a look at what we found when we tested and measured the success of our Topic of Interest lead nurturing programs.

We found that our Topic of Interest tracks performed better than our standard nurture tracks, resulting in a huge lift. Our open rates had a 57% lift, our click-to-open rates had a 59% lift and our click rates had a 147% lift! This is the power of behavioral segmentation

Standard Nature		Triggered Interests		Lift
Open %	21.7%	Open %	34.0%	57%
Click to Open %	23.4%	Click to Open %	37.1%	59%
Click %	5.1 %	Click %	12.6%	147%

Sample Multi-Channel Nurturing Program: Topic of Interest Social Media

- **Touch 1:** *Early Stage Social Interaction. Sent Tweet for Ebook: Definitive Guide to Social Media*
- **Touch 2:** *Early Stage Email. Ebook: Tactical Social Media Plan*
- **Touch 3:** *Mid Stage Website Offer. Persona based personalization for Ebook: Social Marketing and Marketing Automation*
- **Touch 4:** *Mid Stage Email. Transition Asset: Definitive Guide to Marketing Automation*

BEHAVIORAL SEGMENTATION

Product Interest

An additional type of behavioral segmentation you can implement is product interest. This works particularly well if you work at a multi-product or multi-service company where upsell and cross sell is important.

Create product interest segmentation through lead scoring rules to track what products people are interested in. This works by adjusting product interest score as leads engage with information about particular products. By understanding what product a person engages with, you can create highly targeted lead nurture tracks.

SPECIALIZED CAMPAIGNS

In addition to adding behavioral segmentation to your lead nurturing campaigns, you can also create specialized campaigns to serve different purposes. Whether it is creating a lead nurture campaign around an event or a season, don't be afraid to get creative with your lead nurturing efforts.

Specialized tracks can be created in addition to your two dimensions. These types of campaigns are great because they are highly relevant and targeted to a specific moment-in-time or help move a lead through your sales funnel at an accelerated pace.

Event Nurture Campaigns

At an event you have a captive audience. People are excited to be there. They are excited to speak to your team and read your content, but once an event is over, your company is often no longer top-of-mind. Plus, after an event you often get a list of attendees that may or may not have engaged with your company. So, how do you nurture these leads and customers?

Creating an event nurture track is a great way to stay relevant with the leads you obtained during the event. This can be a short track, consisting of a few touches, before that lead gets moved into one of your larger tracks. Your event nurture tracks should contain information and content created at the event. For example, if you have a speaking session, provide the recording and slides in an email and a blog recap in another email.

By doing this, you can re-introduce your company to those leads and bring back some of the excitement and engagement that occurred during the event itself.

Sample Multi-Channel Lead Nurturing Program: Events

- **Touch 1:** *SMS Message. Thank You for attending*
- **Touch 2:** *Email. Session Recording and Slides*
- **Touch 3:** *Social Interaction. Sent Tweet for Session Recording and Slides*
- **Touch 4:** *Email. Event Recap Blog Post*
- **Touch 5:** *Sales Call*

SPECIALIZED CAMPAIGNS

Seasonal Campaigns

Creating mini-seasonal campaigns around the holidays, back-to-school, or end-of-year is a great way to engage your audience with content that is timely and relevant. These campaigns can include time-sensitive blog posts or other content you have created for a seasonal topic.

For example, for the holidays and New Year Marketo often creates content that is relevant to what our audience is talking about. We create blog posts that point out the top holiday social campaigns, we give advice on how to plan for the upcoming year, or we create content that features our internal thought leaders giving predictions for the coming year. That content can easily lend itself well to seasonal nurture campaigns for additional lift.

Sample Multi-Channel Nurturing Program: Seasonal

- **Touch 1:** *Social Interaction. Sent Tweet with Blog on Top 5 Holiday Social Media Campaigns*
- **Touch 2:** *Email. Blog Post: 20XX Marketing Campaign Year in Review*
- **Touch 3:** *Social Interaction. Sent Tweet for Ebook: 10 Predictions from 20XX Content Marketing Thought Leaders*
- **Touch 4:** *Email. Holiday Themed Demo*

SPECIALIZED CAMPAIGNS

Accelerator Campaigns

Accelerator campaigns attempt to move leads along the buying cycle faster by providing relevant “nudges” at the right time, usually triggered by specific buyer behaviors or sales updates. By observing the type of content prospects request, where they go and how often they visit your web site, marketers can adapt their nurturing approaches accordingly.

Place prospects with stronger interest on a more accelerated path toward a sales conversation and scale back communications with less interested individuals.

Accelerator campaigns react to a variety of triggers—changes or updates in prospect profiles and behaviors—which then sets off a specific type of action or set of actions.

Trigger-based accelerator campaigns are one of the most exciting aspects of lead nurturing, and they are a great sandbox for learning what works and what doesn’t when it comes to building relationships with your prospects.

Here is an example of an accelerator email that we send out to leads after they have visited specific pages on our website.

Kevin McCoy
Sent: Sunday, November 9, 2014 at 9:22 AM
To: Phillip Chen

Hi there,

I noticed you've visited Marketo's website recently and I wanted to reach out to see if you found what you were looking for.

To help you, here are the top 10 most frequently visited web pages on Marketo.

1. Pricing Page
2. Sample Social Media Tactical Plan
3. Marketing Software Overview
4. About Page
5. Contact Us
6. Event Marketing
7. Demo Page
8. Resources
9. Customers
10. Definitive Guides

Still can't find what you are looking for? Feel free to reach out!

--Kevin

Marketo Accelerator Email

LATE STAGE LEAD NURTURE CAMPAIGNS

Late stage lead nurture campaigns maximize marketing's investment in lead nurturing by ensuring that leads will never grow stagnant or lost. As a general lead nurturing rule, there should be no place in the buying process where leads just sit.

Late stage lead nurture campaigns ensure movement and interaction with prospects throughout the customer lifecycle, even if they are not ready to buy or sales does not engage.

Here are three important categories of lead lifecycle campaigns:

1. Lead Handoff
2. Lead Recycling
3. Customer

Lead Handoff

When a lead becomes sales ready, an automated campaign to pass the lead to sales can make the difference between timely follow-up and no response. There are many ways to let sales know when a lead is ready for them to engage: by loading it into the CRM system; changing the lead's status field; changing the owner or creating a task in the CRM system; or by sending an alert over email or SMS.

Depending on your company's organization and the "hotness" of the lead, you may choose a combination of these functions.

You should also identify the date a lead is handed to sales. This lets you easily calculate how long a lead was nurtured and how quickly sales engages with the lead. It's a good idea to establish a "service level agreement" in which sales commits to handling the lead in a timely fashion; any leads that are not moved forward in the process, or sent backward, within that timeframe should be automatically reassigned or recycled back to marketing. This ensures that leads continue to flow and nothing gets "stuck" or lost in the sales lead stage.

LATE STAGE LEAD NURTURE CAMPAIGNS

Lead Recycle

As you'll recall, lead scoring is used to determine if a lead is sales ready according to agreed upon criteria from your marketing and sales teams. But what happens if sales ready leads are not contacted or a rep decides that some of these leads are still not ready to engage?

The importance of lead recycling becomes even more apparent when we consider that of all leads that enter the sales pipeline, many of them are lost or ignored by sales.

In general, there are two types of lead recycling scenarios—one in which leads are automatically recycled according to a set of business rules, and the other in which leads are manually recycled by sales. The goal of the recycling campaign is to reassign—and track—leads that cannot be pursued by sales in a timely manner. Perhaps you received a flood of hot sales ready leads from a specific campaign, making it impossible for reps to follow up with all qualified leads in a timely fashion.

In this situation, marketing and sales must jointly set up ground rules regarding which leads will be automatically reassigned if they are not pursued within a certain time frame. After marketing and sales agree on an approach, marketing can set up automated campaigns to manage the lead recycling whenever the specific business rules or conditions are met.

LEAD LIFECYCLE CAMPAIGNS

There will also be situations when leads should be manually recycled by sales. If, after contacting a group of leads, a rep determines that they are still not sales ready, these prospects should be sent back to marketing. What makes this situation unique, however, is the fact that sales has already had a conversation with these leads and knows more about their buying intent than for leads without any sales interaction. Because of this added insight, sales should be able to manually recycle these leads back to marketing, provide added details about their interaction, and indicate how and when the leads should be moved back into sales.

When leads are recycled, you can either put them back into one of of your basic segmentation campaigns, or even better, you can create a specialized version your track that is optimized for the specific information the rep collected during their interactions (e.g. interests and timing). Remember that relevance is key. You don't want to send a lead recycled by a sales rep an email that introduces your company. You want to make sure you continue the conversation.

Sample Multi-Channel Lead Nurture Program: Lead Who Has No Budget

- **Touch 1:** *Email. Ebook: The ROI of Marketing Automation*
- **Touch 2:** *Website Offer. Persona based personalization for Ebook: The Cost of Delaying Marketing Automation*
- **Touch 3:** *Retargeting Ad. PPT Template: The Cost of Delaying Marketing Automation*
- **Touch 4:** *Email. Case Study: ROI of Marketing Automation*
- **Touch 5:** *Sales Call for Re-Engagement*

LEAD LIFECYCLE CAMPAIGNS

Customer Campaigns

When an opportunity is closed and won, it is a chance to put all the associated contacts into a new lead nurture track that's optimized for customers. This can include marking them as customers in your database; sending a welcome note and launching a series of customer-centric emails.

These campaigns are designed to first introduce customers to your products and services, and then over time to help cross-sell/up-sell additional products and retain them for life.

Customer campaigns should not only include introduction and advocacy emails, but you should be interacting with customers through social media and your website.

Customer campaigns should be used for onboarding and lifetime engagement. You can help guarantee success early on by educating your customers after their first purchase. You can enable them to get the most of your product or service and extend their customer lifetime value.

Customer nurturing is often an area that is overlooked in lead nurturing. However, it is a fantastic way to keep your customer interested and engaged over time, plus you can use your lead nurturing as an opportunity to tell your customers about the latest and greatest new features, products, or services.

Sample Multi-Channel Lead Nurture Program: Customer

- **Touch 1:** *Email. Welcome to [Insert Company Name]*
- **Touch 2:** *Email. Tips for your First 90 Days*
- **Touch 3:** *Social Interaction. Sent Tweet about Customer Community*
- **Touch 4:** *Website Personalization. Customer based personalization for upcoming events*
- **Touch 5:** *Customer Service Call Check-In*
- **Touch 6:** *Email. First X Day Tips and Tricks*
- **Touch 7:** *Email. Attend a Local Event*

WORKSHEET

Create Your Lead Nurture Matrix

The goal of this matrix is to provide you with a resource for structuring your nurture streams and tracks. The segmentation ultimately depends on your organization, but we provide a few different options.

We have broken up your early, mid, and late stages to be more detailed—so that you can think about every step in your buyer's journey.

Role:

Stages	*Loosening the status quo*	*Committing to change*	*Exploring possible solutions*	*Committing to a solution*	*Making the selection*
CEO					
CMO					
Director					
Practitioner					

WORKSHEET

Create Your Lead Nurture Matrix

Company Size

Stages	*Loosening the status quo*	*Committing to change*	*Exploring possible solutions*	*Committing to a solution*	*Making the selection*
Small					
Mid Sized					
Enterprise					

Geography

Stages	*Loosening the status quo*	*Committing to change*	*Exploring possible solutions*	*Committing to a solution*	*Making the selection*
EMEA					
Japan					
South America					
United States					

WORKSHEET

Create Your Lead Nurture Matrix

Topic of Interest

	Email 1	*Email 2*	*Email 3*	*Email 4*	*Email 5*
Topic 1					
Topic 2					
Topic 3					
Topic 4					

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THOUGHT LEADER SNAPSHOT

How Marketo Does It: Effectively Segmenting For Lead Nurturing

Phillip Chen, Marketing Manager, Marketo

At Marketo we take segmentation seriously. A person in an executive role, for example, requires a different piece of content than someone in an intern role. What resonates with one audience doesn't necessarily resonate with another.

For example, an email that would resonate with an executive would look like this:

Whereas the email that would resonate with an intern might look more like this:

This is why segmentation is so important to your lead nurturing campaigns. At Marketo, we use 9 different types of variables to segment our database in order to resonate with our audience.

- Geography
- Language Preference
- Business Unit
- Stage
- Interest
- Verticals
- Competitor

These 9 types are just the beginning. Each segment has several sub-segments underneath it.

Let's say you have been segmented by our Business Unit variable. We would classify you as either a Small Business (0-300 people), Mid-Market (301- 1,500), or Enterprise (1,500+).

THOUGHT LEADER SNAPSHOT

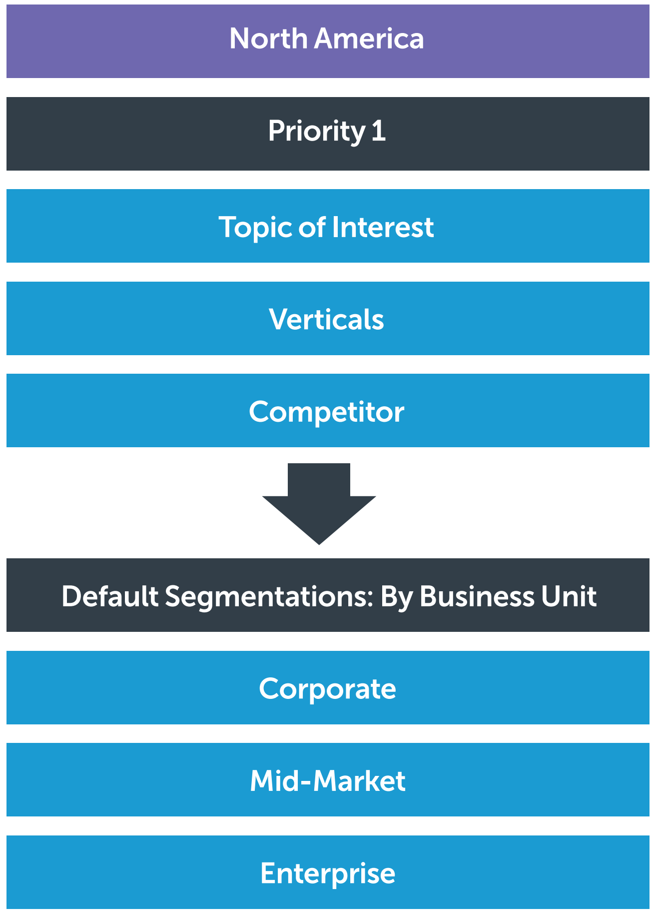
How Marketo Does It: Effectively Segmenting For Lead Nurturing

We tailor our message, depending on which segment best describes you:

- Small Business (corporate) messaging=*how can we help you with marketing strategy?*
- Mid-Market messaging=*how can we help you scale from a mid-sized company to an enterprise company?*
- Enterprise messaging=*how can we help you meet the needs of an enterprise company with multiple product or service lines?*

Segments, however are not mutually exclusive. Maybe you're the social media manager of a mid-market company, or maybe you run the entire marketing team for a social media organization. In either of these cases, you would qualify for a Business Unit segment, and for one of our Topic of Interest segments—specifically, our Social Marketing track. So how do we decide which segment a person falls under?

To be effective at segmentation, we classify our segmentation variables as either "Priority 1" or "default." In North America, here are our classifications:



THOUGHT LEADER SNAPSHOT

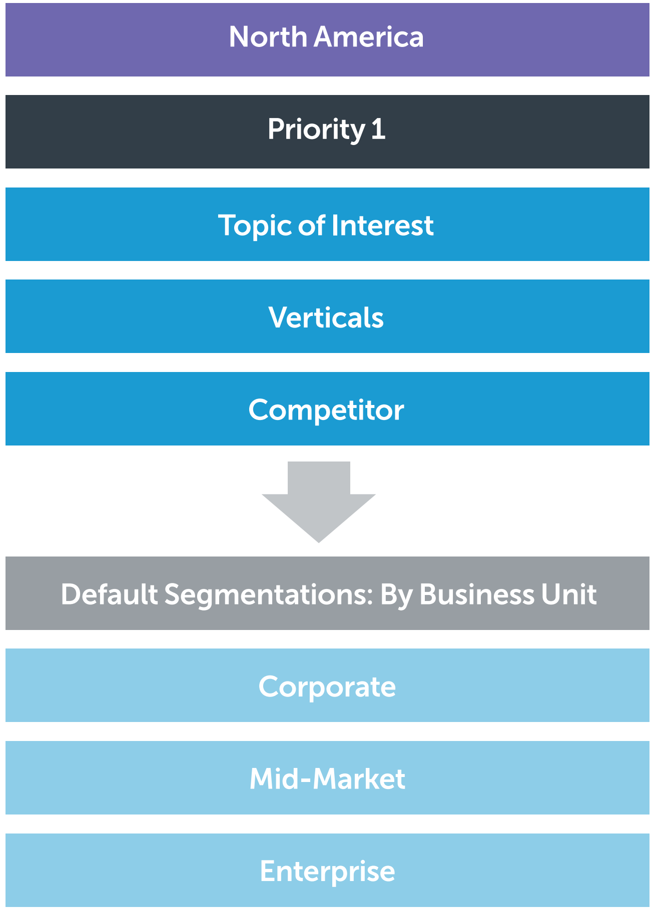
How Marketo Does It: Effectively Segmenting For Lead Nurturing

Priority 1 Segmentations

In North America, our Priority 1 segmentations are Topic of Interest (like Social Marketing, Email Marketing and Marketing Automation), Verticals (like Healthcare or Education), and Competitor (people who use one of our competitors' marketing automation products or email service providers). If a person doesn't qualify for one of our Priority 1 segmentations, either because we don't have enough information, or because none are applicable, we use our default segmentation, which is by Business Unit.

If a person can be placed in one of the Priority 1 segments, that person will be put into a specific engagement program, which will send them relevant pieces of nurture content. For example, if a person attends a social marketing webinar, they fit into our Topic of Interest segment, under the Social Marketing track. We might send them materials like our Definitive Guide to Social Marketing or our ebook on Facebook editorial calendars.

If someone is currently using an email service provider, they qualify to be placed in our competitor engagement program. If someone qualifies for more than one Priority 1 segmentation, they're placed in the program that we have defined as the higher priority.



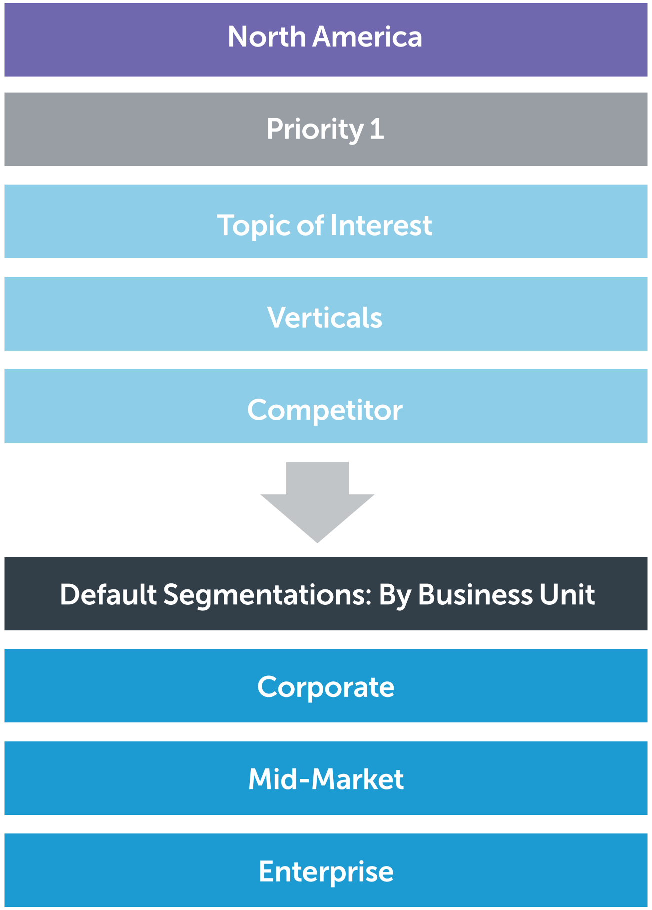
THOUGHT LEADER SNAPSHOT

How Marketo Does It: Effectively Segmenting For Lead Nurturing

Default Segmentations

If, however, a person doesn't meet any of the requirements of our Priority 1 segmentations, they will be placed in one of our default segmentations. In North America, our default segmentations are by business unit, so this person would be placed in one of our three Business Unit engagement programs.

But why do we need Priority 1 and default segmentations? The more focused you are in your segmentation, the more relevant your content will be, and the more engaged your audience will be.



EMEA Segmentations

Our Priority 1 segmentations are highly specific segments that we nurture with very unique messages, and those messages wouldn't work with other audiences. You wouldn't send someone who is interested in social marketing a content piece about healthcare. Our default segmentations, on the other hand, are more general. There are many types of small businesses, and many types of enterprises. Still, a default segmentation allows you to have a catchall nurturing program so that no matter what, everyone receives some sort of nurturing content.

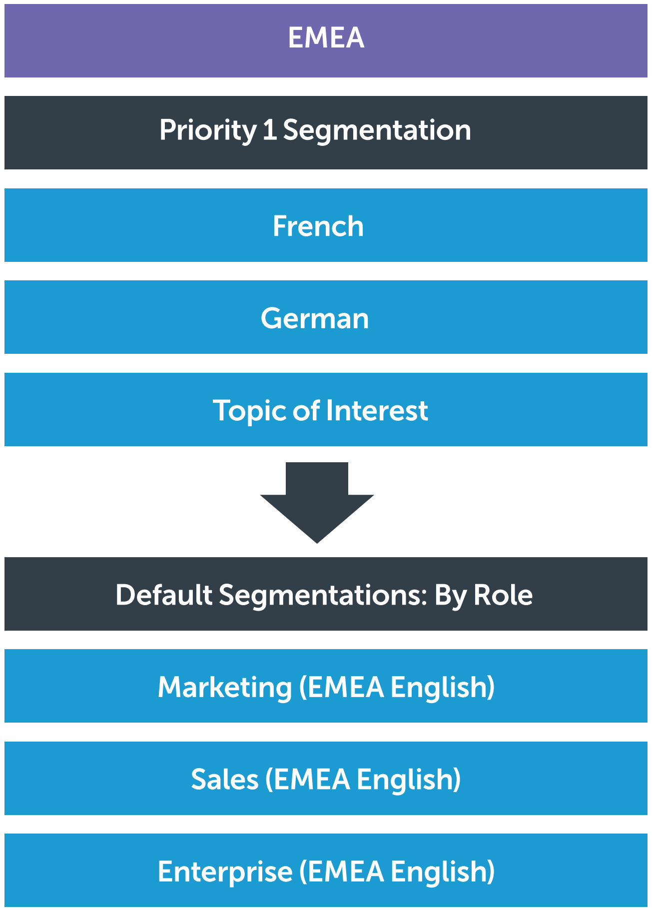
THOUGHT LEADER SNAPSHOT

How Marketo Does It: Effectively Segmenting For Lead Nurturing

We apply the same concept to our European counterparts (EMEA), but they have a different set of Priority 1 and default segmentations because their market operates differently from ours.

In Europe, our Priority 1 segmentations are based on language preference because our European counterparts launch in different markets that speak different languages. Their default segmentation is by role, because our EMEA marketers determined that roles were more relevant than business units in their market.

As you can see, your Priority 1 and default segmentations can and should respond to the audiences you are speaking to. Some messages will be more relevant than others, so it's important to prioritize based on which variables you think will be most relevant. You'll need messaging guidelines that contain positioning statements customized to each market. These guidelines should also include a few key bullet points addressing the pain points of that specific segment.



PART VIII:

TESTING AND OPTIMIZATION

WHY YOU MUST TEST

Almost every marketer knows that their lead nurture is a 'living' program, and just as people need a yearly physical, nurture tracks and streams need to be tested in order to maintain their health and effectiveness. Testing gives the marketer insight into the aspects of a nurture track that could be optimized—how many touches within a specific period of time, the types of messages, the time of day, and so on.

There are no golden rules for how to run your campaigns, and that can be frustrating; but rules don't exist because what works for one audience won't necessarily work for another. Testing is your ally and a critical part of your long-term lead-nurturing success. Your lead nurturing strategy needs to continually evolve. Testing will give you the insight you need to ensure that you are providing an experience that fits your audiences' preferences.

But don't test just to test. Make sure you are setting goals, know what you are looking to measure, and focus on decisions that improve the desired outcomes.

WHY YOU MUST TEST

Optimization

Using the results of your testing to optimize your lead nurturing ensures its successful evolution and continued relevance for your buyers.

Here are three common ways you can optimize your lead nurturing:

1. **Lead Nurturing Frequency Optimization—**Each buyer is likely to research your product and industry in a different way. Because of this, the frequency at which they receive your messages must be tailored to their needs. To accommodate your buyer, we recommend that you allow her to choose which path she will participate in by using online behavior to determine she should be moved to the accelerated nurturing path.

2. **Lead Nurturing Path Optimization—**Path optimization helps adjust the order a buyer sees your nurture messages. To do this, do a simple A/B test, altering the order of the messages in the nurturing campaign and implementing those changes based on your results. Continue to do this, altering messages on a regular basis, until you have found the best path for your buyers. It's especially important to test the order of new content that you add to a nurture track.

3. **Lead Nurturing Content and Creative Optimization—**The content included in each nurture communication needs to be updated and improved on a regular basis. This includes using A/B testing to find out which email content, social messaging, website offers, and more should be used. This also includes trying different types of content like videos or audio as part of the message.

Testing your content mix can drastically change your results. Maybe you're including a hard sell too soon, or you could put one sooner—you can see how changing the order of your content can drastically affect your results.

There are a few ways that you can test your content mix, like changing the priority within the series (for example, swapping nurture touch number three and nurture touch number ten) which will help you identify if the order of your nurture communication is effective or can be improved.

You could test doing all soft-push content with very little educational or all educational and no soft pushes or hard pushes. You can even test what happens if you change your story arc. Add an email with a content piece that is unrelated to the story your stream is receiving and then measure the reaction. Testing has infinite possibilities and helps you learn your audiences' preferences so you can use them across all your tracks.

TESTING AND OPTIMIZATION

WHY YOU MUST TEST

Improving Your Content Mix
To identify which messages and related content assets are ripe for testing look at performance reports and engagement scores of the different assets. When you're running nurture, look at how the touches are performing and then see if there are discrepancies. A quick way evaluate your program is to rank your communications based on their performance and engagement scores. Look at the bottom quarter, and ask yourself if you want to remove them, or improve them.

This is also a great way to identify future tests. Each organization needs to define its benchmark for success and removal. If a piece falls below the benchmark it's up to the lead nurture track owner to remove and replace, or retool.

Remember that a lead nurturing campaign is more of an evolving conversation than a rigid, mapped-out process. When you're creating campaigns, don't get discouraged if prospects don't respond as you expected—instead, use this data to create new segments or discover new ways to correlate buying stages with certain online behaviors. Your marketing automation solution should give you the flexibility to react quickly to new opportunities and revise your campaigns accordingly.

TESTING AND OPTIMIZATION
WHY YOU MUST TEST

Testing Your Tracks and Streams

The fundamental nature of a lead nurturing program is that of a repeatable process: the same communications launching day after day, week after week, to a relatively consistent audience profile. The lessons learned from testing the key elements in your lead nurturing program can have a significant, long-term impact compared to a standard outbound campaign. For example, if you learn that one email subject line increases responses by 10%, you can impact all emails from that day forward.

Additionally, you should test the effects of frequency and timing. Test the day of the week that your nurture campaign launches, the cadence of your contact (example: two times per month versus one time per week) and the time of day.

Quick Tip: Before starting new tests to find the best time of day, consider what you already know about your audience. For example, you may already know when your audience most likes to receive communication. Maybe you have pinpointed a range that is successful, for example between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. Since you already have that information, run your test within that timeframe (for example, test 6:30 a.m. against 9 a.m.) instead of starting over and testing large time ranges throughout the day, like morning versus afternoon.

When developing your campaigns, use the waiting period, the period between triggers and actions, as a test element to see if and how conversion rates are impacted by time period changes.

The Golden Test

To prove ROI of your lead nurturing efforts, run a test that looks at lead nurtured buyers versus buyers that are not nurtured. Doing this creates a benchmark, and a control group, that you can use to show the effectiveness of your lead nurturing program over time.

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TESTING AND OPTIMIZATION
WHY YOU MUST TEST

Email Testing Basics

As email is a critical part of your lead nurture strategy, testing your emails is important for success. There are no golden rules for how to structure your emails, because what works for one audience may not work for another, which is why testing is so critical. Most elements of your email are testable, from the most popular—subject line to smaller elements, like the wording of your opt-out.

Here are 5 elements to consider testing for your lead nurturing emails:

1. **Subject line**
   A well-written subject line will increase open rates, in turn driving click-throughs and responses. When testing subject lines, always keep the basic structure consistent and vary only individual words or phrases.

   For example:

   Webinar: *Increase ROI from Virtualization*

   Webinar: *Eliminate hassle from Virtualization*

   If you isolate one variable—a word, a phrase—you'll be able to pinpoint the reason one subject line performs better than another, a lesson that is likely to spill over into other campaigns.

2. **Offer**
   Your offer plays a critical role in lead nurturing because buyers will be at different stages of the buying cycle and thus are likely to be looking for varying levels of information. If a particular email isn't working well, there's a good chance the culprit is the offer. Swap in different content (an ebook vs. a webinar, a case study vs. an analyst's report) and gauge the difference.

Marketo

WHY YOU MUST TEST

3. **Frequency**
A mix of diverse content (ebooks, webinars, industry news, blog updates) enables you to be more aggressive with frequency since you are differentiating your offer. If what you're delivering is information of value, and relevant to the audience segment in question, you may be able to ratchet up the pace at which prospects hear from you. Just keep a watchful eye on unsubscribe rates, and if possible, split the audience into separate groups and put them on different timetables

4. **Design**
There are many best practices when it comes to effective design of emails and landing pages. However, the standard for what makes up a good design is a moving target. As email clients and browsers evolve, and more buyers start to receive email on smartphones, a design that was effective only six months ago can suddenly be rendered illegible by technological changes. It's therefore prudent to test design consistently—preferably utilizing individual design elements in the same way we recommend testing words or phases in subject lines.

The trend in email design is towards simpler and more mobile-friendly layout, so as a first step, try eliminating graphic elements like headers and gratuitous stock photography—items that may look "pretty" but aren't contributing to response.

WHY YOU MUST TEST

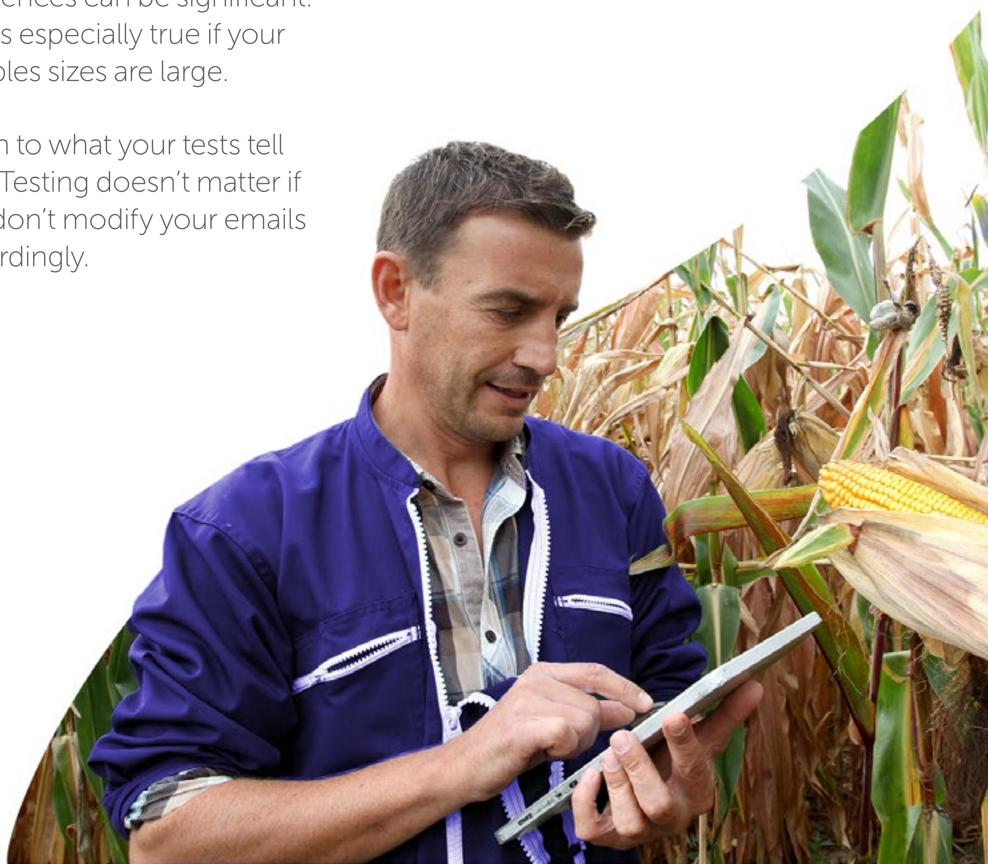
5. Copy length
Contrary to prevailing wisdom, short email copy is not a sure-fire recipe for success. What's critical is to make sure the reader isn't forced to scroll any further than absolutely necessary in order to determine:

    - The key message and selling benefit
    - The offer (and why he wants it)
    - The call-to-action

When marketers go out of their way to write short copy, often the call-to-action gets pushed to the end of the email, defeating the intended purpose. When testing copy length, keep the key message, offer, and call to action prominent and early, then take a critical eye to supporting copy in deciding what might be cut.

7 Tips for Testing:

1. Start simple. Test subject lines and headers first. It doesn't take a lot of time or creative work to come up with a few simple variants and the return can be significant.
2. Control. Have a control group and be sure to limit the number of variants to one.
3. Keep a log of all your tests. Be sure that you record your findings so you can refer back and share your learning with others.
4. Make sure testing is a part of your day-to-day process. Testing doesn't have to be daunting, and it shouldn't be something you put off because of a lack of resources—it should be a part of your daily routine.
5. Run tests on groups that are small, but large enough to make sure your results are statistically significant. The winning variables should then be incorporated into your other nurture track emails.
6. Don't forget that small differences can be significant. This is especially true if your samples sizes are large.
7. Listen to what your tests tell you! Testing doesn't matter if you don't modify your emails accordingly.



MARKETO CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

Fireclay Tile

FIRECLAY TILE
Handmade in California

- Create nurturing campaigns to tell Fireclay Tile's unique story—American-made with sustainable materials
- Track individual leads from first touch point through to close

Challenges

Fireclay Tile manufactures high-quality tile in the U.S. Before Marketo, Fireclay Tile used basic marketing tools like web forms and typical batch and blast emails. Every lead went directly to sales whether or not the consumer was ready to buy. The only insight on the lead was whether it was generated from a sample form, a commercial, an inquiry form, or simply from an email list.

With no lead nurturing capability, sales reps set up tasks in Salesforce to follow up after several months if a lead wasn't ready to purchase. Marketing automation is new for the tile industry, but Fireclay Tile recognized the need for a true nurturing program and the ability to give customers personalized content without waiting months.

In addition, because Fireclay Tile's sale department is divided by customer type, the company wanted a solution where they could create different content for each of their customer types. Fireclay Tile turned to Marketo.

Solution

With Marketo, Fireclay Tile can easily send targeted emails, offering customers specialized content. The result is that Fireclay Tile is able to engage customers better and share the company's story—educating customers about their sustainable products, how they manufacture, and that they are manufactured in the USA, all important differentiators to the Fireclay Tile brand.

Fireclay Tile is leveraging the Marketo solution to create a two month nurture program for new leads, offering them high touch points about the company and its products. Meanwhile, the analytics show Fireclay Tile exactly how many times leads have come to the website, how they engaged and interacted with the lead nurturing emails, and Marketo lead scoring provides a methodology to indicate sales-readiness.

Benefits

With Marketo, Fireclay Tile has launched a campaign to 16,000 leads and can now see how each lead is engaging, allowing for real-time adjustments and the ability to add or move content as necessary. Within the campaign, Marketo's Smart Lists enable Fireclay Tile's marketing team to segment the responses by customer type for additional insight.

PART IX:

CALCULATING THE ROI OF LEAD NURTURING

BASIC LEAD NURTURING MEASUREMENTS

Measuring your lead nurturing efforts is critical to your success. Since email is such an integral part of your lead nurture strategy, we wanted to start by reviewing some common metrics most email marketers track.

Here are the seven most common email metrics:

1. Sent
2. Delivered
3. Bounced
4. Opens/Open Rate
5. Clicks/Click Through Rate
6. Unsubscribed
7. Marked as Spam

Sent

Your sent metric is the number of emails that actually moved through your marketing automation platform. This may or may not be the same as addresses on your sending list; it depends upon how your marketing automation platform tracks what's been sent (whether or not it includes "bad" email addresses in the final count). Remember, while some of your emails are sent to bad addresses, they certainly don't get received.

Marketo defines Sent as *the number of valid contacts who were sent an email.*

Delivered

Delivered refers to the number of emails that were sent and not rejected by a receiving server. It's important to understand that Delivered does not mean it landed in the recipient's inbox.

Marketo defines Delivered as *the number of contacts who were successfully delivered at least one message.*

BASIC LEAD NURTURING MEASUREMENTS

Bounced

Bounced email is the opposite of Delivered email. There are two types of bounces:

1. **Hard bounces are messages that are permanently rejected** (emails denied due to an invalid email address or because the recipient's server has blocked the sender's server).

2. **Soft bounces are messages that are temporarily rejected** because the recipient's mailbox is full, the server is down, or the message exceeds the size limit set by the recipient. Too many soft bounces to one address can eventually result in a permanent hard bounce.

In both cases, Marketo defines Bounced as *the number of people who were sent a message that bounced.*

Open/Open Rate

How many recipients opened (viewed) the email.

Marketo defines Opens as *the number of contacts who opened the email at least once,* and the Open Rate as *the number of opens/number of leads delivered.*

Opens are tracked by adding a small, personalized image ("pixel") to the email. As soon as the image renders, your marketing platform will register that the email has been opened. Note that this means Opens is a difficult metric to track, and there is also no guarantee that an email opened was an email read.

Some challenges:

- If a subscriber loads an email with "images on" in the preview pane, the email platform will record the email as Open even if she doesn't actually look at it.
- Your marketing automation platform will record an Open if the reader selects it (opens it briefly) in order to delete it.
- If email preferences are set to "images off," it's entirely possible for the subscriber to authentically open and read your email without it being registered as an Open. As we mentioned earlier, most email clients do block images by default.

The bottom line is, the Open Rate is not 100% accurate, but it does serve as a good proxy for whether emails are being read, and as a relative measure to compare emails against each other.

The Marketo Benchmark on Email Performance found that top performers had significantly higher open rates, showing the value of trust and quality targeting:

- Average companies: 10-15%
- Top performers: 16-20%

BASIC LEAD NURTURING MEASUREMENTS

Click/Click Rate/Click-to-Open

When a subscriber clicks on a link, button, or image within your message, a Click is recorded.

Marketo defines total Clicks as *the number of people who click at least one link in the email*. In other words, like the Open Rate, no matter how many times a recipient clicks on the link(s), only one Click is recorded. Counting in this way provides a better measure of how many subscribers are truly engaged. This also ensures the Click Rate cannot be greater than 100%.

Click Rate equals the total number of Clicks divided by the total number of emails delivered (or, depending on the measure used, sent). The Click-to-Open (CTO) Rate is the total number of Clicks (per subscriber) divided by the total number of Opens. This means that Click Rate = Open Rate x Click-to-Open Rate.

Marketers often pay more attention to the CTO than the Click Rate, since the CTO helps to separate the reasons for opening from the reasons for clicking. In the Marketo Benchmark on Email Performance, that top performers had better click rates and click-to-open rates:

Click Rate:

- Average companies: 2.1 – 5.0%
- Top performers: 5.1 – 10%

Click to Open Rate:

- Average companies: 11 – 15%
- Top performers: 16 – 20%

BASIC LEAD NURTURING MEASUREMENTS

Unsubscribe Rate

Marketo defines this as *the number of contacts who click the "unsubscribe" link in an email and then follow through to successfully opt out.*

The Marketo Benchmark on Email Performance found that top performers had lower overall unsubscribe rates:

- Average companies: 0.11 – 0.20%
- Top performers: < 0.10%

Marked As Spam

Marketo defines this as *the number of subscribers who reported your email as spam, divided by the number sent or delivered.*

You want to do whatever you can to bring the Marked As Spam rate to the lowest number possible—ideally, zero. The more engaging you are, the fewer spam complaints you'll receive. Remember your goal: send timely, targeted, valuable, human content to people who have requested it.

ADVANCED MEASUREMENTS

Once you get the basic measurements down, take a closer look at your lead nurturing programs with more advanced metrics such as engagement, lead acceleration, and revenue impact.

By moving away from traditional vanity metrics with your lead nurturing, you can tie your efforts closely to moving leads down your sales funnel to eventually become customers. Basic metrics are a great start, but they don't really tell you what is driving engagement and revenue cross-channel.

Engagement

Engagement is more than an idea or a buzzword; it's a tangible way of interacting with consumers one-to-one across channels by listening, acting, and analyzing. With the right tools, engagement can be measured, managed, and increased.

Operational metrics, such as Opens and Clicks, are not ideal for measuring multi-channel engagement. Consider the following testing scenario:

- Email A has a high Open Rate.
- Email B has a high Click Rate.
- Email C has a high Conversion Rate.

Which of these emails had the best engagement? With traditional email solutions, no real insight is given into whether a campaign has actually engaged customers or deepened relationships. A marketer must pore over multiple reports and then apply guesswork to determine how an email performed in terms of engagement.

In order to accurately measure engagement, you need a way to combine multiple important metrics.

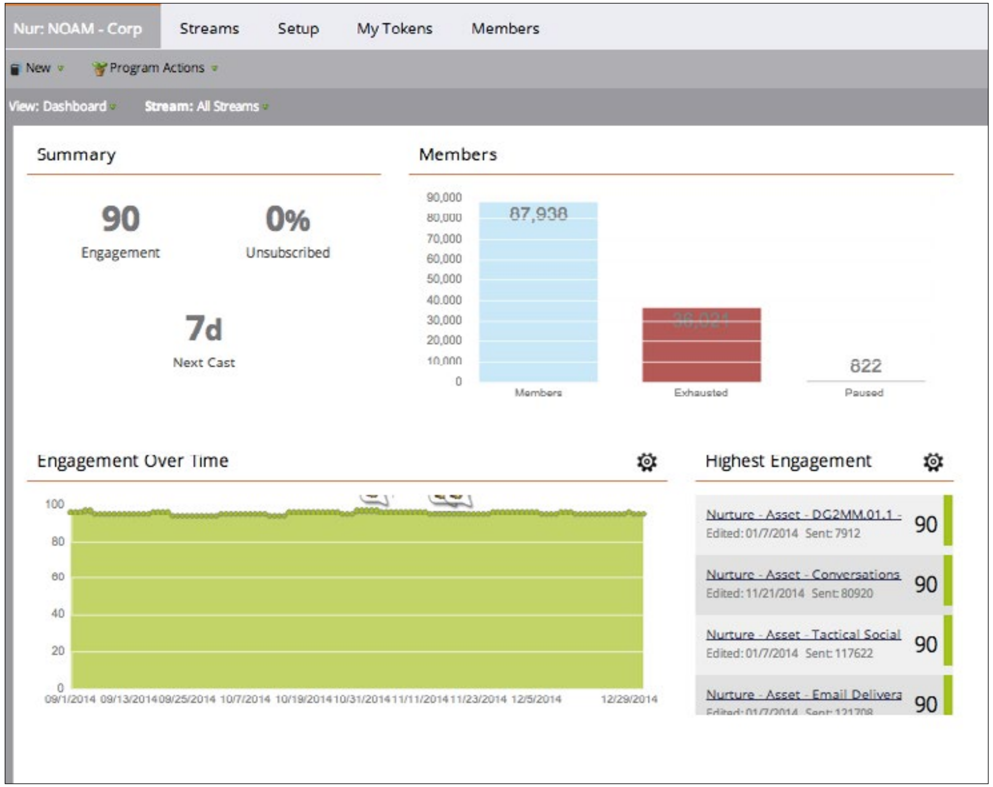
ADVANCED MEASUREMENTS

Marketo Engagement Metric
The Marketo Engagement Score is a proprietary algorithm that our Data Science Team created to determine exactly how engaging each message is. It combines multiple data points—Clicks, Opens, Conversions, Unsubscribes, Program Successes, etc.—and then applies a statistical algorithm to create a single measure of engagement.

Our Engagement Score provides a standard way to measure the engagement of your messages over time, not just as isolated standalone incidents. With this new level of measurement, you can better accomplish the following:

- Fine-tune to improve the engagement of campaigns, continuously.
- See how the changes you make improve engagement over time.
- Test different messages and content streams against each other to find which are the most engaging.

This metric takes the guesswork out of your marketing metrics and applies a tangible number that you can use when making future marketing decisions—not just decisions regarding lead nurturing, but also those relating your entire multi-channel strategy.



Marketo Engagement Score

ADVANCED MEASUREMENTS

Lead Acceleration

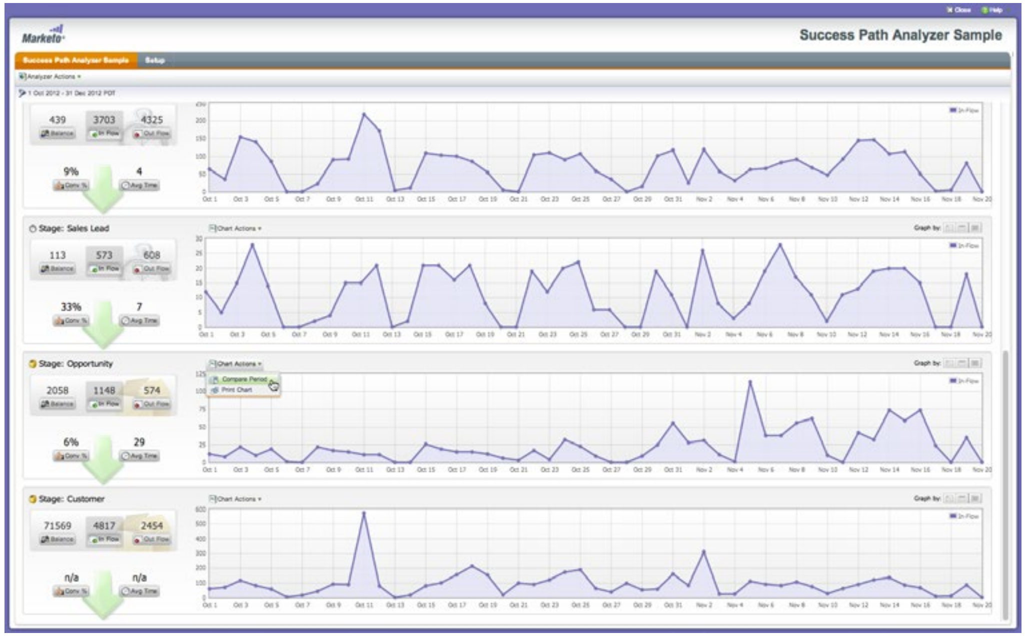
Measure how long it takes to move your leads between nurturing stages and tracks. And how long does it take to move nurtured leads to sales? You should also look at nurtured vs. non-nurtured leads. Is there an acceleration pattern?

At Marketo we did some comparison between lead acceleration with nurtured leads vs. non-nurtured leads to see which yielded more Marketing Qualified Leads to be sent to sales. We found that, especially with "slow leads" that take over a month to be qualified, nurturing accelerated these leads 20% faster than without nurturing. We also had more MQLs and at a 33% lower cost-per-lead.

You can also use Marketo's Success Path Analyzer to measure performance metrics for each stage of the revenue cycle. You can see how fast your leads are moving to each stage and where there are bottlenecks.

	Fast Leads (MQL<1 mo)	Slow Leads (MQL<1 mo)	Total Leads (MQL)	Cost/Lead (MQL)
Without Nurturing	20%	6.67%	26.67%	$206.00
With Nurturing	20%	20.0%	40.0%	$137.50

Results: 50% more marketing qualified leads from lead nurturing.



Marketo's Success Path Analyzer

ADVANCED MEASUREMENTS

Revenue Impact

To become more strategic about measuring financial metrics in lead nurturing, start by recognizing that your buyer rarely makes a purchase as a result of a single campaign. Conventional marketing wisdom proposes that at least seven successful cross-channel touches (forms of engagement) are needed in order to convert a cold prospect into a buyer.

Sometimes companies attempt to tie revenue to either a customer's first touch or his last. But a better strategy is to allocate the value of every engagement across all of the marketing efforts that a customer touched.

Here's how:

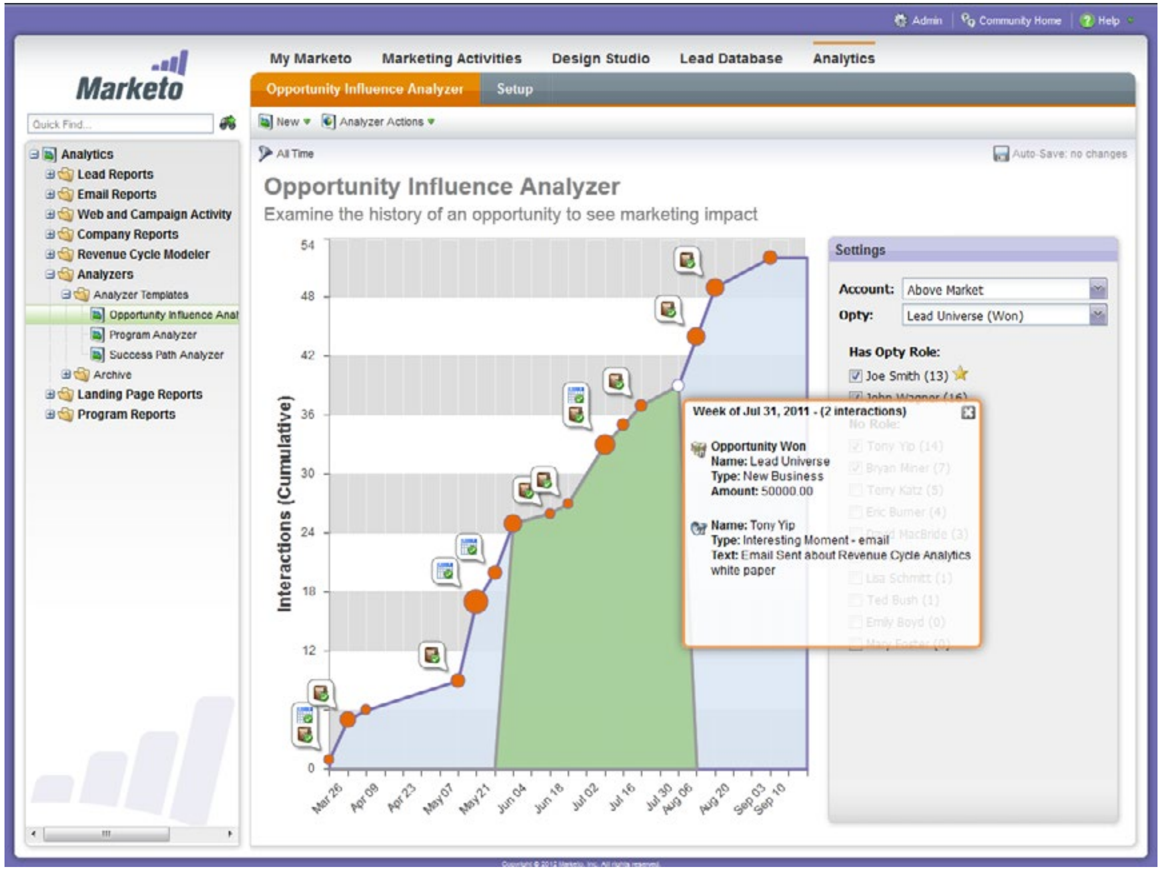
1. **Count All the Successful Touches**
   In a multi-channel scenario, successful touches can happen across numerous channels. Perhaps the customer's last touch point was your website, but prior to purchasing, he spent time in an email, on your Facebook page, and on your Twitter feed. When collecting all your touches, be sure to only count those that occurred before the action was taken—those that led to the action.

2. **Assign Value to the Final Action**
   You might use a transactional system, or CRM as the system of record for how much the action is worth. A marketing automation tool can make this easy for you.

ADVANCED MEASUREMENTS

3. **Distribute That Value across Your Successful Touches**
   In a multi-touch attribution scenario (multiple marketing activities with a lead over time), you assign a value to each successful touch. Often, this is best done with simple distribution: if a lead touched five marketing programs, each touch point gets 1/5th of the credit for the ultimate value. As simple as that seems, it's often easier said than done, because most email platforms don't support such sophisticated analysis. But modern marketing automation solutions can do this right out of the box.

With Marketo's Opportunity Influence Analyzer, you can track how all of your programs affected a closed deal throughout the entire lead lifecycle.



Marketo's Opportunity Influence Analyzer

THOUGHT LEADER ROUND TABLE

What Does the Future of Lead Nurturing Look Like?

Brian Hansford, Client Services Director, Heinz Marketing

Successful lead nurturing will be more personalized. Many marketers are still locked in batch and blast efforts that groups all people in the same buckets with bland messages that lack empathy. Personalization requires detailed and well-maintained data and detailed content. The better targeted a campaign—both inbound and outbound—the better the performance.

Predictive intelligence is a hot topic and I anticipate more companies will use the predictive services in their nurturing programs. I don't think predictive intelligence services are accessible for the majority of marketers quite yet, but they do hold promise as marketers build expertise. Using predictive services in nurture programs makes personalized content even more critical for success.

Brian Carroll, Executive Director, Revenue Optimization MECLABS

I believe technology will allow us to provide more relevant, personal messages simultaneously to more people. Marketing automation will make it easier to read online behavior, accurately pinpoint where prospects are in the buying process, and send the precise information to speed them along. It will make it easier to segment the marketplace and distribute the appropriate information at the appropriate times.

THOUGHT LEADER ROUND TABLE

What Does the Future of Lead Nurturing Look Like?

Corinne Sklar, Global CMO, Bluewolf

Omni-channel. Yes, we talk about it. And the reality is coming. The future of lead nurturing is about integrating the channels where your prospects skim and your customers engage.

Lead nurture is still primarily centered on email marketing efforts, but the customer experience needs to span all channels to foster engagement and point-of-sale — from in-store, to mobile, sales, referral, social, and support.

At the heart of lead nurturing is data. Companies need to focus on turning this data into insights, even predictive ones, which trigger specific communication at specific moments in time. Each touch point a customer has with an organization has to be highly customized, personal, and relevant with curated content tailored to that customer's unique interests and expectations. It needs to feel personal—like a company really knows and understands you.

CONCLUSION

Lead nurturing is defined as the process of building relationships with buyers regardless of their timing to buy. The old batch and blast model of email marketing is in the distant past—forward thinking marketers are looking for ways to engage their buyers with personal, relevant communication throughout the buyer lifecycle and across multiple channels.

With the help of a marketing automation platform, marketers can create these flexible, adaptive communications at scale by implementing a lead nurturing strategy and program.

The Definitive Guide to Lead Nurturing outlined the importance of multi-channel lead nurturing as a part of a modern marketing mix. It provided thoughtful exercises, worksheets, and tips to lead you in developing your own lead nurturing strategy. It helped define the team you will need to deploy lead nurturing and how to calculate its return on investment (ROI).

Not only does lead nurturing help you develop and maintain a long-term relationship with your buyers, but lead nurturing helps companies generate over 50% more sales-ready leads at a 33% lower cost per lead.

This Definitive Guide was created to help the novice all the way to the seasoned practitioner develop and refine their skills and thinking. Now that you have read this guide you have a good understanding of how to build a trusted relationship with your buyer by holding a consistent conversation, full of personal and relevant information, across all of your buyers' channels.

When you invest in lead nurturing, you make the most out of every dollar your organization spends on demand generation, and you can rekindle once-stagnant opportunities from your existing database. By using lead nurturing campaigns to interact with your buyers and understand their interest and behavior, you gain deeper insight into their buying intent, increase the relevancy of future lead nurturing campaigns, and ultimately benefit from more and higher quality sales leads—increasing conversion rates and driving explosive revenue growth.

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About Marketo:

Marketo (NASDAQ: MKTO) provides the leading marketing software and solutions designed to help marketers master the art and science of digital marketing. Through a unique combination of innovation and expertise, Marketo is focused solely on helping marketers keep pace in an ever-changing digital world. Spanning today's digital, social, mobile and offline channels, Marketo's Engagement Marketing Platform powers a set of breakthrough applications to help marketers tackle all aspects of digital marketing from the planning and orchestration of marketing activities to the delivery of personalized interactions that can be optimized in real-time. Marketo's applications are known for their ease-of-use, and are complemented by the Marketing Nation®, a thriving network of 400 third-party solutions through our LaunchPoint® ecosystem and over 50,000 marketers who share and learn from each other to grow their collective marketing expertise. The result for modern marketers is unprecedented agility and superior results. Headquartered in San Mateo, CA with offices in Europe, Australia and Japan, Marketo serves as a strategic marketing partner to more than 3,400 large enterprises and fast-growing small companies across a wide variety of industries.

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