

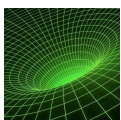
TECHNOLOGY MARKETING

MANIFESTO

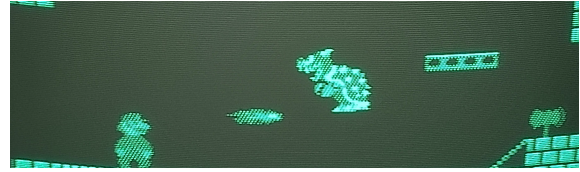
How to sell unique, high value, complex technology products to businesses with content that aligns value to their goals



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How Sales & Marketing Teams Can Market Complex Technology to Business



Leveraging the best strategic explainer and thought leadership b2b content to create your optimal tech sales pipeline

The basics of marketing a complex technology product

Marketing any new technology product is no easy task. It requires a lot of time and effort from all divisions of the company, but additionally a particular kind of synergy from the marketing and sales teams.

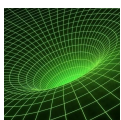
Not only do they need to perform their own individual roles well, but also co-ordinate as a multi-faceted single entity. To be across each other's domains, and form one coherent sales pipeline, handing off prospects to each other at designated milestones in the customer journey, while making sure no leads fall through the cracks.

The marketing team need to be aware of the latest trends in market, what competitors are doing right, and of course where they're getting it wrong. This awareness should inform basic messaging and ownership of certain terms or phrases, and align with the topics your sales team talk about at events and directly when attempting to convert.

B2B marketing in particular requires spending a lot of time getting to know and understand your target audience. Because B2B sales pipelines extend over such long timeframes, a lot of effort is expended upfront to educate, and explain.

To familiarise audiences with your technology brand, then illustrate the problem it aims to solve, B2B marketers must go deep with audiences to clarify the product's business benefits.

Technology buyers are sensitive to scam products, fly-by-night grey market importers, and dodgy operators who don't meet SLAs. Red flags in your digital marketing content can potentially filter you into one of these buckets with the people you're trying to reach.



Just like having a finely-tuned CV, or getting a response on LinkedIn, optimising your messaging is fundamental to finding your next customers and retaining them.

Complex technology products present an additional challenge here because they have an innate barrier to entry. They require first understanding, *then* product marketing.

B2B marketing is the proverbial marathon, with many nuanced differences from the B2C sprint. Time and effort invested upfront in B2B will pay dividends on the long tail.

Always be marketing

Due to the long lead times in B2B, it's important to always have marketing in front of your prospects creating brand awareness and generating leads.

Many companies deprioritise marketing when they become busy, or need to invest funds elsewhere. It's a problem that might not become apparent via leads and revenue until months after the decision is made.



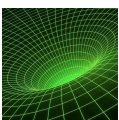
If you're eager to begin getting content into market, and you understand your own product, then you're already halfway to generating better leads via a digital marketing campaign.

But what does that next part look like? Where do you *start* with B2B digital marketing?

Getting started with B2B digital marketing

To hit the ground running, **identify and get to know your prospects**. When you sell technology products to other companies you first want to know what motivates your potential future long-term buyers.

To do this, you need to discover the most likely digital channels to reach them, and start thinking about what to say once you have their attention.



There are some proven and low-hanging initial research steps that you can take before spending a cent on your first digital marketing campaign. These include:

- **Conducting research on your product and competitors**
- **Creating your marketing plan**
- **Creating your key value messaging**
- **Developing blog content for your campaign**
- **Identifying who you want to sell to and create personas**
- **Identifying social media channels they use**
- **Interviewing the types of people your product is for**

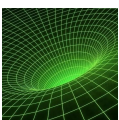
The process of preparing your campaign alone will help to establish a solid foundation around what you need to tell your audience about it. Once you've gone through the steps to perform these preparatory tasks, the introspection will enable a clearer view of its benefits and marketing angles.

By now you're beginning to think more acutely about how to position your product, and its value proposition to potential customers. This will help to shape all of your messaging going forward, and differentiate yourself from competitors.

Clearly identifying what's different about your brand and product

Differentiating factors are the features that make a company or product different from its competitors. If you don't have a better product than your competitors, these may come in the form of ESG concerns, partner offers and add-ons, bulk savings, or other points leverage that let your buyer feel that they're getting the best deal from a more holistic view.

Your differentiators set you apart and make you stand out from larger incumbents and smaller disruptors who will inevitably be in your space. They may shift over time, but will always be relevant to how you position your brand and product.



The points of differentiation you can carve out of the way you do business will not only help your company to stand out from its competitors, but in the eyes of your audience can be the deciding factor that gives your product a more attractive value proposition.

Key features that differentiate your company or product from the competition might include price, quality, warranty, delivery time, ESG scoring, or other broader factors that affect customer and community sentiment. Explore these with customer research and by researching what makes your more successful competitors stand out.

An hour of research should be all you need to identify the top ten biggest differentiators for your brand or product. If you're spending longer than this, double-check you haven't ended up on Twitter or Reddit.

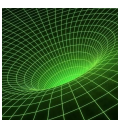
Introducing the new and complex with analogies to walk people through the concept's evolution

In order to successfully market a complex tech product in B2C and B2B, it's important to first ladder up to the concept with an analogy or a similar idea that the audience can relate to.

Analogies are a great way of breaking down the complex. For instance, if you were trying to explain what an app is, you could compare it to something that most people would understand, "like a website but on your phone". This would make it easier for people who have never used an app before. If the fictional person you're speaking to hasn't used a website before either, you need to run away as fast as you can and go home via a different route than normal.

If you want to market your new e-commerce platform you might mention other companies like Amazon or eBay who have been successful in the industry and have similar products and services as yours. If you're marketing a complex cloud integration via Azure, stitched together with Salesforce and Akamai, perhaps you could just show people a bowl of spaghetti. You get the idea.

You don't need to pretend your product exists in a vacuum. It doesn't reflect poorly on your brand to point to competitor success and create a roadmap that aims to achieve similar milestones. Avoiding competitor mistakes is also an important way to bridge the gap to leaders, but try to understand lessons deeply, before applying them to your business and how you approach product messaging.



Developing Key Value Messaging for your brand

The best marketing message is the one that will resonate with your target audience the most. How you get there is often a circuitous route, detouring through a/b testing, data analysis, and user interviews.

Your messaging should be able to make the people you're targeting feel a certain way, and drive them to take action.

Marketing messages are not just about what you want to tell people, but also what your audience needs to hear to break down internal barriers to resistance. These might include:

- Difficulty engaging and purchasing
- Price point of the product
- Commitment to a single vendor or contract
- Uncertainty it will meet business needs
- Lack of understanding around what the product does

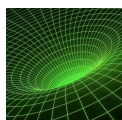
The key value messages for your brand are those that help define who you are and what you stand for as a company or organisation. These can come from the product, your corporate philosophy, or a single word your team rallies around with deeper meaning.

Messaging should be concise, memorable, and consistent across all channels of communication. Developing these messages is an important first step in the process of defining your larger brand identity and knowing what to talk about when you start reaching prospects.

Explaining the business needs your product addresses to establish its value and benefits

Understanding needs to be created not only of the solution you sell, but the problem it addresses. Sometimes companies are so used to doing things a certain way, they can't see that the problem you solve even exists.

This can either lead to complete rejection of your premise, in which case you've got some explaining to do, or a long-term sticky customer who needs what you sell.



In cases where entirely new product categories are introduced alongside unfamiliar technology paradigms, it's important to demonstrate the tangible effects of a complex product in plain language before trying to explain the tech behind it.

Don't tell your prospects what your technology can do. Show them what they can do with it. Help them understand the problems it will solve, and paint that future clearly for them.

Creating sales enablement content to support presentations, demonstrations, and conferences

An engaging and innovative presentation is key to selling your product. But sales and marketing teams often fall into the trap of providing their most recent presentation without having a lot of other material to back it up.

When all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail.

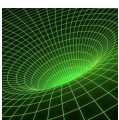
It's true that presentations are a great way to create customer engagement and develop customer relationships.

Now add videos, podcasts, and events where SMEs speak about your brand that your team can point to as thought leadership credentials in the space.

Also add a range of talking points with onramps to other sales and marketing content that can be accessed on the fly to align with sales conversations and lead prospects into your ecosystem organically.

It's important to understand what your audience needs in order to deliver a compelling presentation, elevator pitch, or single curiosity-piquing hook that will have the desired effect. It will vary, dependent on many factors, requiring flexibility and modularity in the content that scaffolds all ongoing marketing and sales efforts.

You might not always have access to a projector and attentive audience when trying to market a technology product. Make sure your content is agile enough to adapt to any potential sales situation.



Aligning sales and marketing teams on your marketing strategy before you deploy it

In today's complex tech market, it's essential to align your sales and marketing teams on a clear marketing strategy from the beginning.

This doesn't just mean memorising the talking points, but ensuring everyone understands the product they're selling and is on the same page with messaging, requirements, capabilities, and restrictions.

This process will usually involve more than just the two teams. Ensure that sufficient time is booked with engineers and other SMEs to walk sales and marketing teams through demonstrations, answer questions, and create open channels of communication that help to avoid internal confusion. Position your sales and marketing teams like embedded journalists, there to learn everything they can about the technology and bring a sanitised version back to their audience.

It's imperative that sales and marketing teams always work together with SMEs to effectively communicate the value of your product or service to the customer. Companies that are able to align their internal departments in this way are more successful at developing and deploying a cohesive and *authentic* marketing campaign.

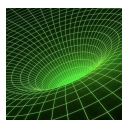
Maximising the opportunities you can't see with marketing automation tools

Marketing teams are always on the lookout for new ways to generate leads for their company.

Marketing automation tools can help you drill down to a finer level of detail about people who are interested in your technology, to laser-focus efforts on the prospects that are most likely to convert.

With the right suite of complementary marketing automation tools, marketers can develop a sales pipeline that nurtures leads with engaging and informative content, deployed strategically and responsively to lead them gradually into your sales funnel, until they become paying customers.

The dark funnel is a marketing term that refers to the lead generation process that occurs before and outside the core sales conversion funnel. Account Based Marketing (ABM) targets leads that wouldn't have otherwise engaged with any of your regular marketing surfaces, but *are* interested in your product.



ABM platforms add value to the martech stack by building a forensic trail of activity across different parts of the internet, identifying the people most closely matching your ideal prospect. ABM lets you take a more active role in finding the customers who have been too passive to engage with your brand directly, or targeting specific high value prospects.

Marketing automation tools are essential to your technology brand's success because they help you generate more leads in an automated, turnkey way that requires little effort to maintain while paying big dividends for those who get it right.

Strategically approaching marketing technology products with content that informs

The marketing strategy for a complex technology product is different from that of any other consumer or business product.

As a business selling SaaS/ERP, cloud, or blockchain services to other companies you need to create content that will let your target audience readily understand what your product does and how it can help them.

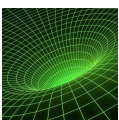
You need to provide data and case studies to back up broader, higher-level messaging about what it does, how it helps, and what it will mean to returns on time, effort and money invested.

When you're selling technology products to businesses, you need to make it clear how your products will help them improve operations, and increase revenue.

All of the content that talks to the benefits of your technology should address the question of "how does this affect the bottom line?"

Identify subject matter experts and engage them on social media

Social media engagement is a powerful way to get your message out there and connect with a new audience. It allows you to have a two-way conversation with your customers and the influential people in your space.



In order to be successful in social media marketing, it's important to identify the most influential people (not necessarily the paid "influencers") in your industry, engage them on social media, and use them as a resource for content ideas.

Paying a well-known figure to promote your product will certainly give it a boost. Organically discussing its pros and cons will more than likely go deeper and reach more hearts and minds.

Evaluate how messaging performs across multiple channels to engage customers where they are

The digital marketing landscape is evolving rapidly with emerging media formats and shifting social trends. With the proliferation of new channels, there are more opportunities to reach new customers, and engage them with informative content.

Using a mix of common channels such as email, social media, and direct marketing, alongside new formats like video and podcast marketing to engage your leads can be a niche way for companies to find the leads that may not otherwise engage.

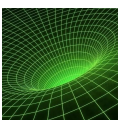
Email marketing is still one of the most popular forms of digital marketing because it's easy and inexpensive. The key is to keep your emails relevant and timely so that recipients want to read them.

Social media has become one of the most popular forms of communication for consumers and brands alike because it's a great way to connect with consumers on a personal level, and continue the conversation across longer timeframes.

Experimenting with different types of content such as infographics, guides or videos is a proven way for companies to generate interest across social channels. Adding value for the reader with on-point, topical and dense content is another proven way to put your brand out there more organically as a thought leader in the space.

Many companies put their videos on Youtube and Vimeo, but without additional advertising, PR or thought leadership content to drive people there from more popular or targeted social platforms such as LinkedIn, they may largely go unnoticed by the audience you're trying to attract.

A new and exciting realm for reaching prospects via rich media has been podcasting, podcast advertising, and podcast sponsorship. Podcasts have incredible retention and play through rates, and tend to be more of a personal experience where audiences are more receptive to complex, long-form messaging.



Reach people who need your product and don't even know it yet

People out there need what you produce. Otherwise why would you be doing it? The problem is, **they don't understand that they need it yet.**

They might not even understand that they have the problem you're going to solve for them.

Your job is to help them learn the lay of the land, end to end. Explain where they sit in the process that many like them have had to go through, and do it clearly.

When it comes to technology products, don't try to sell it right out of the gate.

Simply tell people what they can do with your product. Help them imagine it, and paint the picture of what their business-as-usual looks like with a solution in place.

Here comes the sales pitch

Marketing a technology brand or product to other companies isn't easy. If you need help getting started, or just a sanity check on how your content supports lead generation, reach out to [Technology Marketing Agency](https://www.technology-marketing.com.au) for a no-obligation, low sales pressure chat.

