

B2B MARKETING MYTHS EXPOSED



At Magnetude, we're die-hard B2B marketers, and in working with many tech SMB executives who are oftentimes a bit greener when it comes to marketing, we find ourselves dispelling misconceptions of what constitutes effective B2B marketing at a conceptual and programmatic level. Below are a few of the myths we come across most often.

SOCIAL MEDIA IS ONLY FOR B2C

Social media has become necessary in today's B2B industry. It is a low investment, high impact marketing opportunity that enables your company to engage with your partners, employees, customers and prospects. Not to mention, social media is a great way to increase awareness of your brand.

Still not convinced? Check out these facts:



81% OF ADULTS

online use social media.

(Source: Forrester)



B2B technology buyers use
social media nearly

**TWICE AS OFTEN
AS A TYPICAL
U.S. ADULT.**

(Source: Forrester)



69% OF B2B

technology decision makers
participate in social networks.

(Source: KnowledgeStorm)

While not all social channels are created equal for B2B audiences, and most smaller firms shouldn't spread themselves too thin by investing across all channels, we've successfully used a wide variety of social media channels—Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, SlideShare, Launch.it, Reddit, Scoop.it, and more—for clients across a range of sectors including IT security, marketing & sales technology, analytics platforms, and IT services firms. The key is to understand the target audience's online behaviors and align social media efforts accordingly.

BRANDING IS JUST A "NICE-TO-HAVE" IN B2B

B2B companies tend to underestimate the power of branding. Unfortunately, many still think of it as consumer-facing communication. Branding is about creating an image for your company that drives how your audiences perceive your company and products/services in the market.

Good branding presents your company as professional, legitimate and trustworthy. In a *McKinsey & Company Branding Study*, strong brands outperformed weak brands by 20%. They found that customers were willing to pay a premium for products if the company had a well-established brand image, as they were seen as a less risky investment. For SMBs, a strong brand can help level the playing field (or even move it to your advantage), above the big guys. We've helped 3-person startups revamp their brand to look and sound as impressive and credible as their large competitors in the eyes of prospective clients.



Branding is about creating an image for your company that drives how your audiences perceive your company and products/services in the market.

B2B EMAIL MARKETING = MASS ENEWSLETTERS

Email marketing is inexpensive, can be highly personalized, and extremely relevant to your target audience. Done correctly, it is a powerful way to connect and engage with your prospects and customers.

However, many small B2B companies think that email marketing consists of simply blasting out a mass eNewsletter to their entire database of contacts on a regular frequency. While some campaigns can be very effective when mailed out to an entire list, it's always important to ensure you're segmenting and personalizing your communications when appropriate, and sending the appropriate type of content relevant to that user.

Segmentation can happen on a number of levels—clients versus prospects, executive versus technical audiences, industry affinities, etc. Most small B2B firms can't afford the complexity of segmenting across all of these variables, so it is important to assess the goals of your email marketing efforts, review your existing and planned content, and prioritize the ways in which you segment and personalize your email marketing outreach.

We generally see good results sending educational, thought leadership content across multiple segments, and then being more selective in sending company announcements and sales-oriented messages.



It is important to assess the goals of your email marketing efforts, review your existing and planned content, and prioritize the ways in which you segment and personalize your email marketing outreach.

CONTENT MARKETING = SEO

With the popular phrase, “content is king,” it’s no surprise that 82% of B2B companies use content marketing as a strategy in their marketing programs ([HiveFire](#)). A significant amount of marketing effort is being invested in inbound marketing, so it’s important to understand the terminology.

While SEO and content marketing should be integrated efforts, they are not one and the same. The goal of content marketing is to build a relationship with your prospects by providing information they want and need. Done correctly over time, content marketing can positively impact your search rankings and drive increased website traffic and leads as part of an inbound marketing effort. That part of content marketing must be closely aligned with search engine optimization (SEO), whereby you identify the keywords that relevant audiences use to search for information that can align with your company’s offering and then address the technical and programmatic components to connect the dots for both users and search engines.

But content marketing can (and should) also fuel outbound marketing efforts such as ongoing email nurture campaigns that impart educational or thought leadership content upon your existing customer and prospect list.



While SEO and content marketing should be integrated efforts, they are not one and the same.

MARKETING CAMPAIGNS ARE A ONE-AND-DONE EFFORT

Because of the effort involved in each program, it's often attractive to think, "I'll just invest in this one campaign and then I'm done" – and then wonder why leads aren't continuously pouring into the sales funnel. The best programs are continuous and hit on multiple cylinders, in multiple ways. Marketing is not a one hit wonder effort, it is a concerted, well-thought out orchestration, built on strategic understanding, constant improvement and yes – it can take time to yield results.

But it's often those programs that take time to build that result in scalable efforts that result in longstanding impact to the lead funnel and bottom line. Inbound marketing campaigns, for example, generally require an upfront investment in optimizing your online presence and an ongoing commitment to content development and distribution. But they're also the types of campaigns that have been known to exponentially increase targeted website traffic, dramatically decrease advertising costs, and significantly boost organic lead generation.

We recently worked with a client who sells services to marketing audiences to initiate a small scale inbound marketing effort. In under six months, we were able to drive as many monthly inbound leads as we had previously been driving from outbound efforts, thereby doubling our overall lead volume, and generating leads that, on average, were more sales-ready than we typically see.



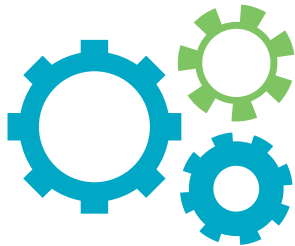
Marketing is not a one hit wonder effort, it is a concerted, well-thought out orchestration, built on strategic understanding, constant improvement and yes – it can take time to yield results.

MARKETING IS JUST AN OVERHEAD EXPENSE

For smaller B2B companies, yes—marketing does require an investment, but there are many ways to build and run programs cost effectively. The better you become at efficiently targeting, engaging and understanding your audience – the better the results. B2B marketing should not be thought of as a function that orders pens for trade shows and prints collateral to hand out at sales meetings (though these activities might surface).

Marketing can (and should) play a significant role in reaching a company's strategic goals, whether they be entering new markets, driving awareness and demand, or generating leads that help build pipeline and close deals.

Additionally, there are ways to leverage talent in multiple ways without investing heavily in resources like in-house staff or costly external partners that may not work in concert with one another. And done correctly and with the right partners, marketing more than pays for itself over time.



B2B marketing should not be thought of as a function that orders pens for trade shows and prints collateral to hand out at sales meetings.

TECH MARKETING SHOULD FOCUS PURELY ON THE TECHNOLOGY

While this sentiment isn't completely inaccurate, a common mistake B2B tech companies make is focusing too heavily on the nuts and bolts of the products or services they sell. More often than not, companies don't buy for cool features; they buy for the business benefit delivered. If you're selling technology consulting services, your clients are buying their peace of mind and job assurance in knowing they're making the right decisions; If you're selling automation software, clients are buying the efficiencies and cost savings delivered by the technology.

While there is certainly a place for introducing product features and the inner-workings of your technology solution, it's only as useful as your ability to connect the dots to the prospect's business reason driving them forward.

When done correctly, educating your market on the need for your solution and informing your prospects of the unique value you'll help them realize will take you leaps and bounds further than simply putting a list of features and functions in front of them, hoping they connect the dots.



HAVE YOU COME ACROSS OTHER B2B MARKETING MYTHS?
WE'D LOVE TO HEAR THEM!

MARKETING FOR THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM

Magnetude is a marketing agency that works with tech-oriented startups and small businesses to provide a one-stop-shop for the marketing functions our clients need to be successful with services ranging from market research to go to market-planning, messaging and content development, to lead generation.

Magnetude Consulting understands that to be successful, you must toggle between 'get it perfect' and 'good enough'. We bring quality and rigor to everything we do, but also recognize that we're working with finite (and oftentimes limited) time and resources. Magnetude's creative, business-oriented innovators understand the start-up and tech industry ecosystems and couple it with deep and ever-evolving marketing acumen.



61 Chapel Street, Newton MA 02458
866.620.6629 • info@magnetudeconsulting.com
[Twitter](https://twitter.com/_Magnetude) @_Magnetude [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/magnetude-consulting) magnetude-consulting
WWW.MAGNETUDECONSULTING.COM