

An Excerpt From:

B2B Marketing Benchmark Report

Chapter 4: Marketing Tactics and Best Practices

Compliments of:



This is an authorized excerpt from the full B2B Marketing Benchmark Report published by MarketingSherpa. HubSpot Webinar registrants can buy a PDF + Print copy of the Report for \$347, a \$100 savings.

<http://B2BHandbookHub.MarketingSherpa.com>

Lead Author

Sergio Balegno, Senior Analyst

Editors

Tad Clarke

Stefan Tornquist

Print Production

Hilary Pecheone



MarketingSherpa's 2009 -10 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report

US \$447 / ISBN: 978-1-932353-94-5

Copyright © 2009 by MarketingSherpa LLC

All rights reserved. No part of this report may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, faxing, emailing, posting online or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the Publisher.

To purchase additional copies of this report, please visit
<http://www.SherpaStore.com>

Yes, bulk discounts are available for multiple copies. Contact:
Customer Service
MarketingSherpa LLC
+1 (877) 895-1717 (outside US, call +401-247-7655)
Service@SherpaStore.com
499 Main Street
Warren, RI 02885 USA

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	ii
Director’s Note.....	2
B2B Marketing Research Highlights	3
1. <i>Signs of Economic Optimism</i>	3
What Is Your Business Outlook in Relation to an Economic Recovery This Year?	3
2. <i>Search Generates Bulk of B2B Leads — But Are Those Leads Any Good?.....</i>	4
The Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by Search Sources	4
3. <i>B2B Ahead of B2C in Adopting Social Media Strategies</i>	5
Percent of Organizations Using Some Form of Social Media Marketing and PR	5
4. <i>Use of Information Resources in the Complex Purchase Process.....</i>	6
Changing Use of Information Resources by Technology Buyers in the Past Six Months	6
5. <i>Controlling the Pipeline from Lead Generation to Sales Conversion</i>	7
How Organizations Manage Their Marketing-to-Sales Process	7
6. <i>Is the Hub of Your Marketing Strategy Managed Well?</i>	8
Agencies and Consultants Rate How Their Clients Manage Website Capabilities	8
Chapter 1: The Increasingly Difficult Challenges Facing B2B Marketers	9
1.01 Most Significant Challenges for B2B Marketers to Overcome Today	9
1.02 Challenges, by Organization Size.....	10
1.03 Challenges, by Industry Sector.....	11
<i>Marketer Insights: Overcoming Challenges in the Business Technology Sector</i>	12
<i>Marketer Insights: Overcoming Challenges in the Industrial and Manufacturing Sector</i>	15
<i>Marketer Insights: Overcoming Challenges in Other Sectors.....</i>	16
Chapter 2: Marketing Budgets and Financial Metrics	18
2.01 Share of 2009 Revenue Spent on Marketing (Projected), by Organization Size	18
2.02 Share of Revenue Spent on Marketing (Projected), by Industry Sector.....	19
2.03 Share of Marketing Budget Spent on People vs. Online Programs, by Organization Size ..	20
2.04 Share of Marketing Budget Spent on People vs. Online Programs, by Industry Sector.....	21
2.05 Average Profit Margins for 2008	22
2.06 Average Tactical Allocation of Online Marketing Budget Excluding Staff	23
2.07 Tactical Allocation of Online Marketing Budget Excluding Staff, by Organization Size	24
2.08 Tactical Allocation of Online Marketing Budget Excluding Staff, by Industry Sector	25
2.09 Percent of Leads Generated vs. Budget for Each Source	26
<i>Notes from the Field: A Strategy for Defending Your Marketing Budget</i>	27
2.10 Outsourcing Plans for Key Marketing Functions.....	30
2.11 Outsourcing Key Marketing Functions, by Organization Size	31
2.12 Outsourcing Key Marketing Functions, by Industry Sector	32
2.13 Marketers Tracking or Planning to Track Customer Metrics	33
2.14 Marketers Tracking Customer Metrics, by Organization Size	34
2.15 Marketers Tracking Customer Metrics, by Industry Sector	35
2.16 B2B Marketers Tracking Customer Metrics, by Size of Target Customer Organization.....	36
Chapter 3: Marketing Strategies for an Economic Recovery	37
3.01 Marketers Are Increasingly Optimistic about the Economy.....	37

3.02 How Optimists Think Marketing Tactics Will Change by the End of 2009.....	38
3.03 How Optimists Think Budgets for These Tactics Will Change by the End of 2009	39
3.04 What Optimists and Pessimists Spend on Marketing	40
3.05 Online Marketing Budget Allocation, Excluding Staff	41
3.06 Marketers Not Currently Outsourcing but Planning to, by Economic Outlook	42
3.07 Optimists Worry More about Lead Quality than Quantity	43
3.08 How Optimists and Pessimists Manage Leads Differently	44
3.09 What Marketers Know about Leads before Handing Off to Sales, by Economic Outlook	45
<i>Marketer Insights: Strategies and Tactics for a Rebounding Economy.....</i>	<i>46</i>
Chapter 4: Marketing Tactics and Best Practices.....	51
<i>Email Marketing</i>	<i>51</i>
4.01 Effectiveness of Email Marketing Tactics Rated	51
4.02 Email Marketing Tactics Rated Effective, by Organization Size.....	52
4.03 Email Marketing Tactics Rated Effective, by Industry Sector.....	53
4.04 Which Email Tactics Are Being Put to the Test?.....	54
<i>Notes from the Field: Testing Results in 1000% Increase in Opt-Ins</i>	<i>55</i>
4.05 Performance Metrics for Email Campaigns to House Lists	57
4.06 Performance Metrics for Ads in Third-Party Emails and Enewsletters	58
<i>Social Media Marketing.....</i>	<i>59</i>
4.07 B2B Marketers Using Social Media Tactics	59
4.08 Effectiveness of Social Media Tactics and Web 2.0 Technologies Rated.....	60
4.09 Social Media Tactics and Web 2.0 Technologies Rated Effective, by Organization Size	61
4.10 Social Media Tactics and Web 2.0 Technologies Rated Effective, by Industry Sector	62
<i>Notes from the Field: Generating Leads with Social Media Strategy</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>Website.....</i>	<i>67</i>
4.11 Management of Website Capabilities Rated.....	67
4.12 Managing Website Capabilities at a High Level, by Organization Size	68
4.13 Managing Website Capabilities at a High Level, by Industry Sector	69
4.14 Web Metrics Tracked by B2B Marketers	70
4.15 Web Metrics Tracked Regularly, by Organization Size	71
4.16 Web Metrics Tracked Regularly, by Industry Sector	72
4.17 Buyers Are Open to Providing a Website with Professional Contact Information	73
4.18 Once Buyers Have Registered on a Website, They Expect to... ..	74
<i>Search Marketing.....</i>	<i>75</i>
4.19 Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by Search Sources.....	75
4.20 High-Quantity vs. High-Quality Leads Generated by Search Sources.....	76
4.21 How Business Technology Buyers Use Search.....	77
4.22 Performance Metrics for Paid Search on Google AdWords, Yahoo!, Etc.	78
<i>Notes from the Field: Rethink Your Search Marketing to Boost ROI.....</i>	<i>79</i>
<i>Offline Marketing.....</i>	<i>82</i>
4.23 Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by Offline Marketing Tactics.....	82
4.24 High-Quantity vs. High-Quality Leads Generated by Offline Marketing Tactics	83
<i>Public Relations</i>	<i>84</i>
4.25 Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by Public Relations Tactics	84
4.26 High-Quantity vs. High-Quality Leads Generated by Public Relations Tactics	85
4.27 Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by News Release Tactics.....	86
4.28 High-Quantity vs. High-Quality Leads Generated by News Release Tactics.....	87

<i>Notes from the Field: Five Steps to Implementing PR 2.0</i>	88
<i>Tradeshows</i>	90
4.29 Organizations Spending Less on 2009-2010 Tradeshows	90
4.30 Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by Tradeshow Tactics	91
4.31 High-Quantity vs. High-Quality Leads Generated by Tradeshow Tactics	92
<i>Notes from the Field: On-Site Conference Doubles Attendance Virtually</i>	93
<i>Notes from the Field: Stealth Product Launch at Tradeshow Generates 374% More Leads</i>	96
<i>Pricing Information</i>	99
4.32 Marketer Attitudes about Access to Pricing Information	99
4.33 How the Internet Has Changed Access to Pricing Information, by Industry Sector.....	100
<i>Notes from the Field: Integrated Marketing 2.0 Tactics Boost Lead Generation and Reduce Cost per Lead</i>	101
Chapter 5: Lead Management and the B2B Marketing-to-Sales Process	104
5.01 A Long Road from Lead Generation to Sales Conversion	104
5.02 Average Marketing-to-Sales Process Conversion Rates	105
5.03 Comparing Average Closure Rates of Sales Force and Channel Partners	106
5.04 How Organizations Manage Their Marketing-to-Sales Process.....	107
5.05 Marketing-to-Sales Process Best Practices, by Business Technology Marketers	108
5.06 Marketing-to-Sales Process Best Practices, by Industrial / Manufacturing Marketers	109
5.07 Marketing-to-Sales Process Best Practices, by Marketers in Other Sectors	110
<i>Notes from the Field: Seven Tips for Effective Lead Nurturing</i>	111
5.08 Information Obtained Before Handoff to Sales, by Large Organizations	115
5.09 Information Obtained Before Handoff to Sales, by Medium Organizations	116
5.10 Information Obtained Before Handoff to Sales, by Small Organizations.....	117
<i>Notes from the Field: Six Strategies for Partnering with the Sales Team on Lead Scoring</i>	118
5.11 After Lead Generation, which Stage in the Process Challenges Marketers Most?	121
<i>Marketer Insights: Key Challenges of Lead Management and the Marketing-to-Sales Process</i>	122
Chapter 6: Social Media's Role in Building B2B Brands	124
<i>B2B Leads the Adoption of Emerging Social Media Tactics</i>	124
6.01 Adoption of Social Media Tactics — B2B vs. B2C	124
6.02 Most Effective Use of Social Media Is Achieving B2B Branding Goals	125
6.03 Planning and Executing Social Media Programs	126
<i>“Conversation” Drives the Use of Social Media for Branding</i>	127
6.04 Where Customers Get the Information They Share with Peers about Your Brand Online .	127
6.05 Do Organizations Track and Respond to Negative Comments?.....	128
6.06 Do B2B Brands Have a Social Media Policy to Manage Communications?	129
<i>What Prevents B2B Organizations from Adopting Social Media?</i>	130
6.07 ‘Lack of Knowledgeable Staff’ a Significant Barrier to Social Media for B2B Marketers	130
6.08 ‘Lack of Knowledge’ Leads to Misconceptions about Measurability and Effectiveness	131
6.09 ‘Lack of Knowledge’ Leads to Missed Opportunities.....	132
<i>Notes from the Field: Creating and Distributing a Social Media Release</i>	133
<i>Integrating Social Media Tactics into the B2B Marketing Mix</i>	136
6.10 Marketers Integrate Social Media with Online and Offline Tactics	136
6.11 How Social Media Fits with Other Tactics in the B2B Marketing Mix	137
<i>Notes from the Field: Generating B2B Leads with Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Blogging</i>	138
Chapter 7: The Buying Process for Large and Complex Purchases	141

Factors for Aligning the Selling Cycle with the Buying Process 141

 7.01 How Technology Budgets Compare by Quarter 141

 7.02 How the Economy Has Changed the Buying Process for Purchases over \$25,000 142

 7.03 How the Economy Has Changed the Buying Process, by Purchase Amount 143

 7.04 Length of the Buying Process Today, by Purchase Amount 144

 7.05 Number of People Involved in the Buying Process Today, by Purchase Amount 145

 7.06 Importance of Factors Involved in the Purchase Decision Have Changed 146

 7.07 How the Economy Has Affected Relationships with Vendors 147

 7.08 How the Economy Has Affected Relationships with Vendors, by Purchase Amount 148

Technology Buyer Insights: The Impact of the Economy on Purchasing 149

Information Resources Relied upon during the Buying Process 151

 7.09 Which Information Resources Buyers Use in Key Stages of a Purchase 151

 7.10 How Trusted Is the Information Found on the Following Resources? 152

 7.11 To What Extent Does Information from Resources Influence Vendor Selection? 153

 7.12 Changes in the Use of Information Resources in the Past Six Months 154

Chapter 8: Marketing Trends for the Business Technology Sector 155

Challenge of the Unpredictable Sales Cycles 155

 8.01 Fewer Technology Companies Experiencing Short Sales Cycle of Less Than 3 Months.. 155

 8.02 Technology Companies See Sales Cycle Shift to 3-6 Month Range 156

 8.03 Technology Companies with 7-12 Month Sales Cycles Trend Downward 156

 8.04 Bumpy Trend for Organizations with Long-Term Sales Cycles..... 157

Business and Budget Trends 158

 8.05 Share of Revenue Spent on Marketing by Large Technology Organizations 158

 8.06 Share of Revenue Spent on Marketing by Mid-Size Technology Organizations 159

 8.07 Share of Revenue Spent on Marketing by Small Technology Organizations 159

 8.08 Share of Marketing Budget Spent Online by Large Technology Organizations 160

 8.09 Share of Marketing Budget Spent Online by Mid-Size Technology Organizations 161

 8.10 Share of Marketing Budget Spent Online by Small Technology Organizations 161

 8.11 Outsourcing Tactical Marketing Functions by Large Organizations (>1,000 Employees) .. 162

 8.12 Outsourcing Tactical Marketing Functions by Mid-Size Organizations (100-1,000 Employees) 163

 8.13 Outsourcing Tactical Marketing Functions by Small Organizations (<100 Employees) 163

 8.14 Customer Metrics Tracked by Technology Marketers..... 164

 8.15 Feedback Rate from Technology Channel Partners 165

 8.16 Closure Rates of Internal Sales Force vs. Channel Partners 166

Email Marketing Tactics and Trends 167

 8.17 Email Tactics Rated 'Very Effective' for Targeting Large Organizations (>1,000 Employees) 167

 8.18 Email Tactics Rated 'Very Effective' for Targeting Mid-Size Organizations (100-1,000 Employees) 168

 8.19 Email Tactic Rated 'Very Effective' for Targeting Small Organizations (<100 Employees) 168

 8.20 Email Design Tests Rated 'Very Effective' 169

 8.21 Email Targeting Tests Rated 'Very Effective' 170

 8.22 Average Open Rate of Solo Email Blasts 171

 8.23 Average Click Rate of Solo Email Blasts 172

 8.24 Average Conversion Rate of Solo Email Blasts 172

 8.25 Average Open Rate of Email Newsletters 173

 8.26 Average Click Rate of Email Newsletters 174

 8.27 Average Conversion Rate of Email Newsletters 174

<i>Website and Search Marketing Tactics and Trends</i>	175
8.28 Organizations Managing Their Website Capabilities at a 'High Level'	175
8.29 Website Metrics That Technology Marketers 'Track Regularly'	176
8.30 Website Visitor Behaviors That Technology Marketers 'Track Regularly'	177
8.31 Lead Generation Effectiveness on General Search Engines.....	178
8.32 Lead Generation Effectiveness on Vertical Search Engines.....	179
8.33 Lead Generation Effectiveness of Search Engine Optimization.....	180
<i>Tradeshow Marketing Trends</i>	181
8.34 2008-2009 Spending Plans for Technology Tradeshow Marketing.....	181
8.35 2009-2010 Spending Plans for Technology Tradeshow Marketing.....	181
<i>Trends in Managing the Marketing-to-Sales Pipeline</i>	182
8.36 What Technology Marketers Know about Leads before Handed off to Sales.....	182
8.37 What Technology Marketers Do with Leads in the Pipeline	183
Chapter 9: Marketing Benchmarks for the Industrial Sector	184
<i>Challenges for Today's Industrial Marketers</i>	184
9.01 Marketing Challenges Most Pertinent to the Industrial Sector	184
<i>Marketer Insights: Addressing the Challenges with Proven Strategies</i>	185
<i>Industrial Marketing Tactics</i>	187
9.02 Website Has Become Hub of Marketing Strategy — But Is It Managed Well?	187
9.03 Primary Strategic Objectives for Industrial Websites	188
9.04 Capabilities Found Most Often on Industrial Websites	189
9.05 Effectiveness of Search Marketing Tactics to Generate Industrial Buyer Leads.....	190
9.06 Effectiveness of Offline Marketing Tactics to Generate Industrial Buyer Leads.....	191
9.07 Effectiveness of Offline PR-Related Tactics to Generate Industrial Buyer Leads.....	192
9.08 Effectiveness of Event-Related Tactics to Generate Industrial Buyer Leads	193
9.09 Industrial Marketers Reveal Tradeshow Spending Plans for 2009-2010	194
<i>The Industrial Lead Management Process</i>	195
9.10 We Have a Nurturing Process for Leads That Aren't Ready for the Sales Force.....	195
9.11 We Have a Process for Sales to Hand Leads Back to Marketing	196
9.12 We Have a Rating System for How 'Qualified' or 'Warm' a Lead Is	196
9.13 Sales and Marketing Collaborate to Exactly Define a 'Sales-Ready Lead'	197
9.14 Marketing 'Closes the Loop' on Every Lead, Tracking It from Source to Conclusion.....	198
9.15 We Use a CRM System (Salesforce.com, Seibel, etc.) to Manage the Lead Pipeline	198
9.16 We Are Able to Measure the Revenue Contributions of Lead Generation Programs	199
9.17 We Identify the Source of Leads (Email vs. Search vs. Salesperson, etc.)	199
9.18 Information Obtained on a Lead before Marketing Hands off to Sales	200
Chapter 10: Best Practices of B2B Agencies and Marketing Consultants	201
<i>Agencies and Consultants Offer Specialized Perspective</i>	201
10.01 New Business Outlook Improving for the Rest of 2009.....	201
10.02 Effectiveness of Email Marketing Tactics for Targeting Clients' Buyers and Influencers .	202
10.03 Effectiveness of Social Media Tactics for Targeting Clients' Buyers and Influencers	203
10.04 Agencies and Consultants Rate How Well Clients Manage Website Capabilities	204
10.05 Quantity and Quality of Leads Generated for Clients by Search Marketing Tactics.....	205
10.06 Quantity and Quality of Leads Generated for Clients by Offline Marketing Tactics.....	206
10.07 Quantity and Quality of Leads Generated for Clients by PR-Related Marketing Tactics .	207
Primary Research Survey.....	208
<i>Methodology</i>	208

MarketingSherpa 2009-10 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report

Demographics 208
 Organization Size 208
 Industry Sector..... 209
 Professional Title 209
Research Partner..... **210**
 TechWeb Network 210

Director's Note

Welcome to the 2009-10 edition of MarketingSherpa's B2B Marketing Benchmark Report. In past years this book was exclusively focused on Business Technology marketing, and repeat buyers will find all of the same specific information and benchmarks. But this edition also looks at general and industrial markets.

As with all of MarketingSherpa's reports, the goal of this book is to provide practical benchmarks, insights and best practices. We hope it will help you to:

- Increase the effectiveness of your marketing
- Focus your efforts on the most profitable and actionable tactics
- Allocate budget for existing programs and exploring new opportunities
- Inspire you with ideas from B2B marketers who have achieved success
- Measure success and evaluate opportunity with nearly 1,147 of your peers

As you work with the 183 charts, tables and graphs in this report, look for these highlights:

#1. Information and collective wisdom from 1,147 B2B marketers.

Every edition of the Guide benefits from the input of B2B marketers from companies of every size and market focus. Most of the responses come from Managers, Directors and Executives in marketing – the people who know what's working, what's not, and what they need to be thinking about for the coming year.

#2. Benchmark data through multiple lenses.

Throughout this report, we've broken responses into useful lenses, so that you can compare benchmarks and tactics with your peers. In many areas, for example, we've isolated the data by company size or sector.

#3. Focus on the 'Complex Sale'

Whatever your niche of B2B marketing, chances are you deal with the demands of the 'Complex Sale' – one that takes time and multiple touch points to close. Working with research partner TechWeb, we've included a study of how the economy is affecting the buying process, what tactics are working, and how buyers trust and rely on different information sources.

We hope this report arms you for the year ahead, which promises to be just as interesting as the year behind us. Whenever you find yourself wishing for a piece of data or an exploration of a best practice, let us know by emailing us at Research (at) MarketingSherpa (dot) com. We want you in the driver's seat.

Our best wishes for a growing and profitable 2009 and 2010.

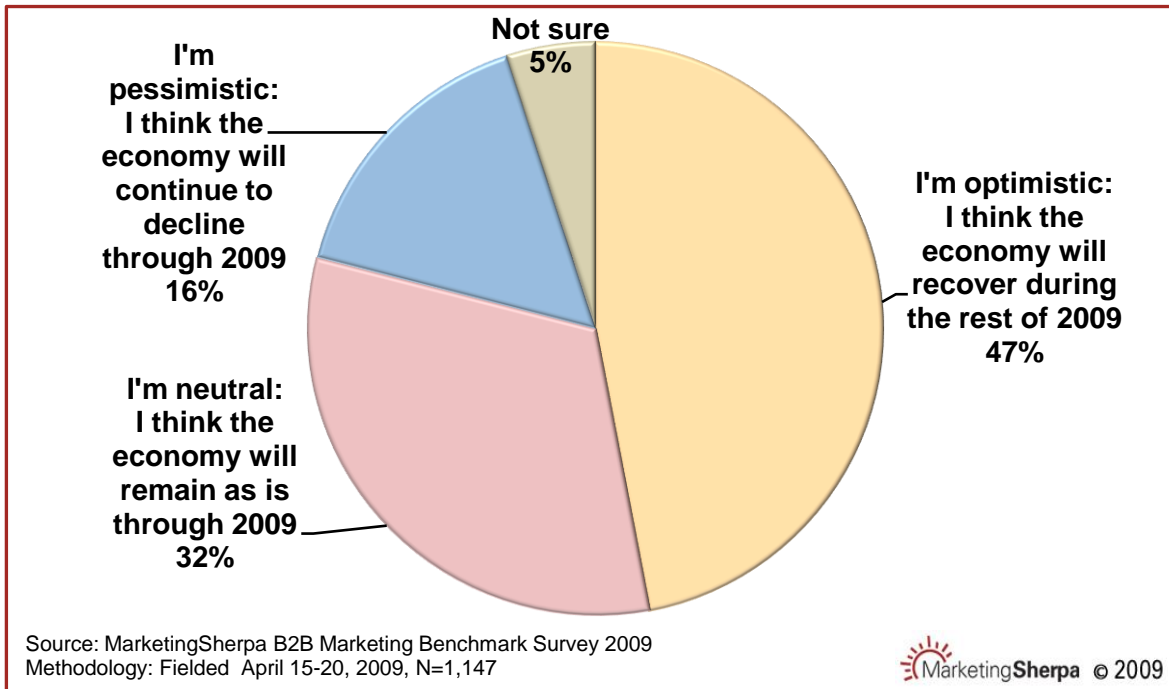
Stefan Tornquist
Research Director

B2B Marketing Research Highlights

The publication of this report coincides with what is expected to be a turning point in the economic cycle — from recession to recovery. Following are highlights from the most comprehensive study available of B2B marketing at a crossroads.

1. Signs of Economic Optimism

What Is Your Business Outlook in Relation to an Economic Recovery This Year?



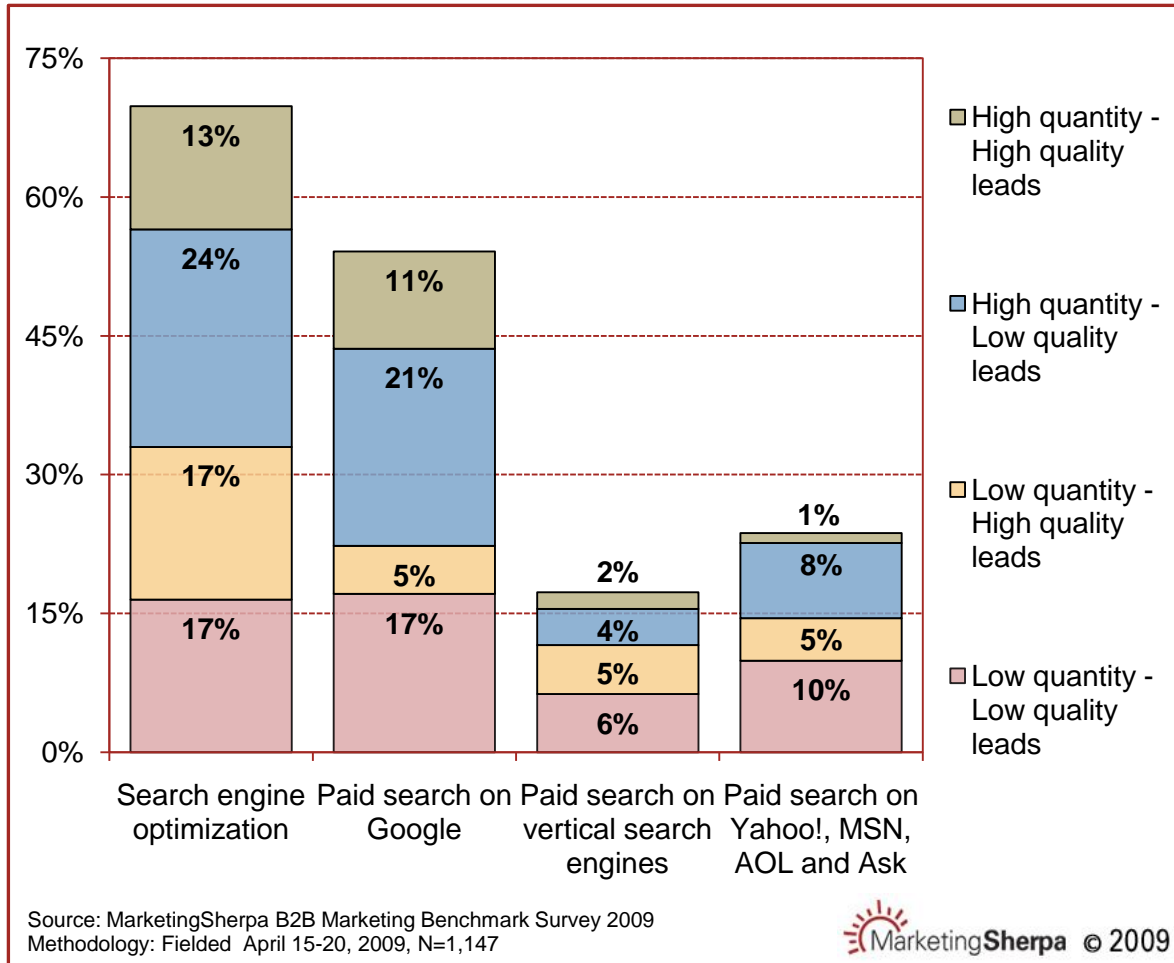
History has repeatedly shown us that marketing departments are the first and hardest hit during difficult economic times. On the other hand, marketing also has the most to gain from a rebound so it's not surprising that they watch the economic barometer closely.

While 16% of B2B marketers continue to be pessimistic, nearly half of all respondents to this study are optimistic that we will see the economy begin to rebound during the remaining months of 2009.

The expectation of better days ahead will mean a change in marketing objectives and the strategies required to achieve them for 2010. Those organizations that have learned to be efficient marketers on a lean budget will apply the lessons learned during these difficult times to become even more effective in the future.

2. Search Generates Bulk of B2B Leads — But Are Those Leads Any Good?

The Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by Search Sources



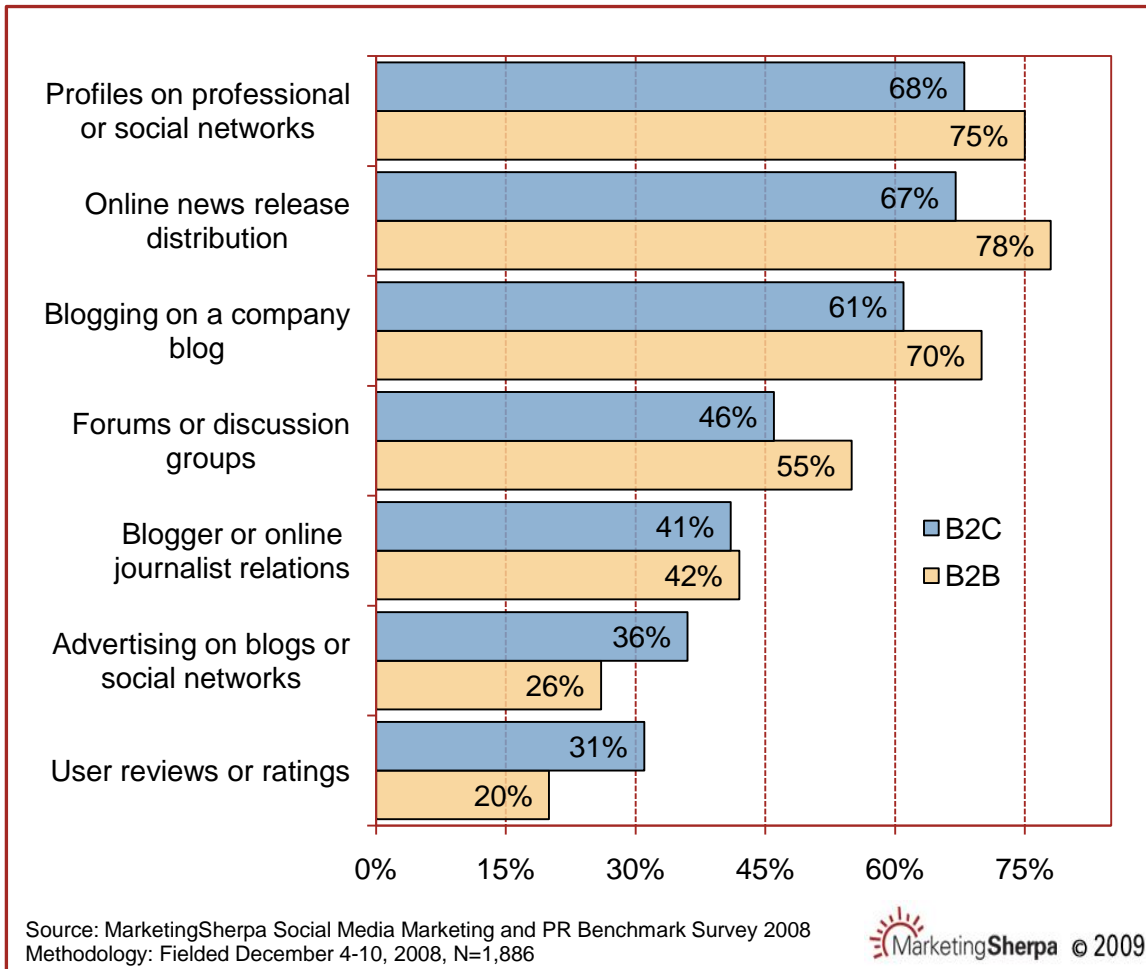
The success of a marketing program is too often judged by the quantity of leads produced, rather than the quality of those leads. But when it comes to converting leads to revenue, the sales force will tell you that more isn't necessarily better.

Every organization needs to find a proper balance between quantity and quality. Provide too many leads, even high-quality ones, and an overwhelmed sales team will be forced to allow opportunities to slip through the cracks. Provide too few leads or leads of low quality and productivity will plummet in the sales force.

Search has become an ideal solution to balancing lead flow because, in many cases, the spigot can simply be opened or closed to control volume. The more complex challenge is controlling lead quality. This requires a more strategic approach to optimizing not only Web pages for SEO, but in the case of paid search, carefully aligning the sequence of PPC keywords, ad listings and landing pages.

3. B2B Ahead of B2C in Adopting Social Media Strategies

Percent of Organizations Using Some Form of Social Media Marketing and PR



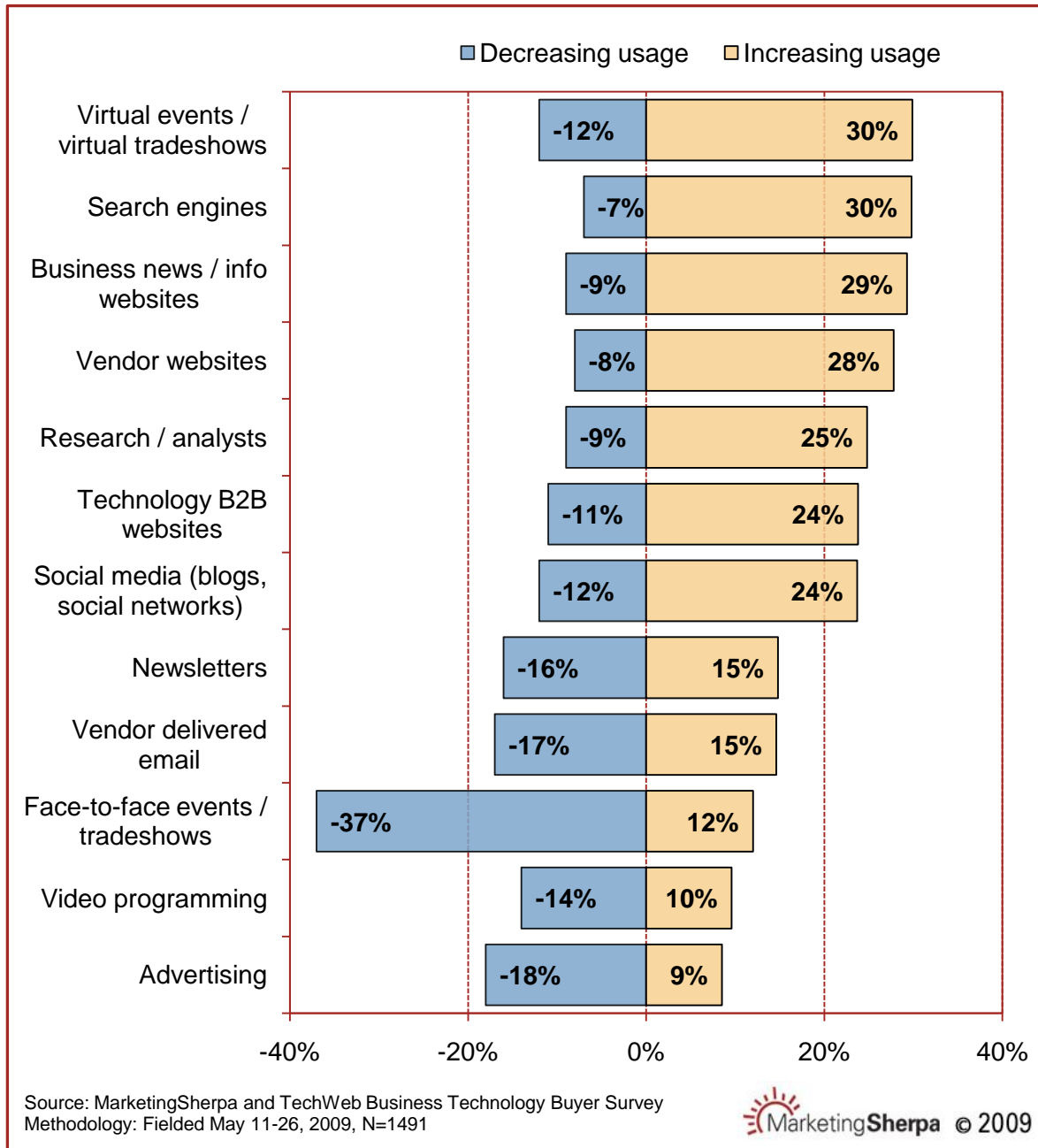
It's no secret that B2B marketing often trails B2C in adopting emerging new strategies. For example, as the World Wide Web first became an increasingly viable channel, B2B organizations generally waited to see whether a tactic worked in the consumer marketplace before implementing it in the business space. As this chart shows, however, B2B marketers have taken the lead in nearly every category of social media.

This role reversal is not surprising when you look at the B2B marketing-to-sales process and its reliance on trusted relationships. After all, the primary purpose of social media is to provide the means for interactions between people to build on these relationships.

Information about your products and services is being shared via social media. Your prospects, customers, the press and other influencers in the marketing process are listening and commenting on what's being said. And your organization is either part of that conversation, or potentially a victim of it.

4. Use of Information Resources in the Complex Purchase Process

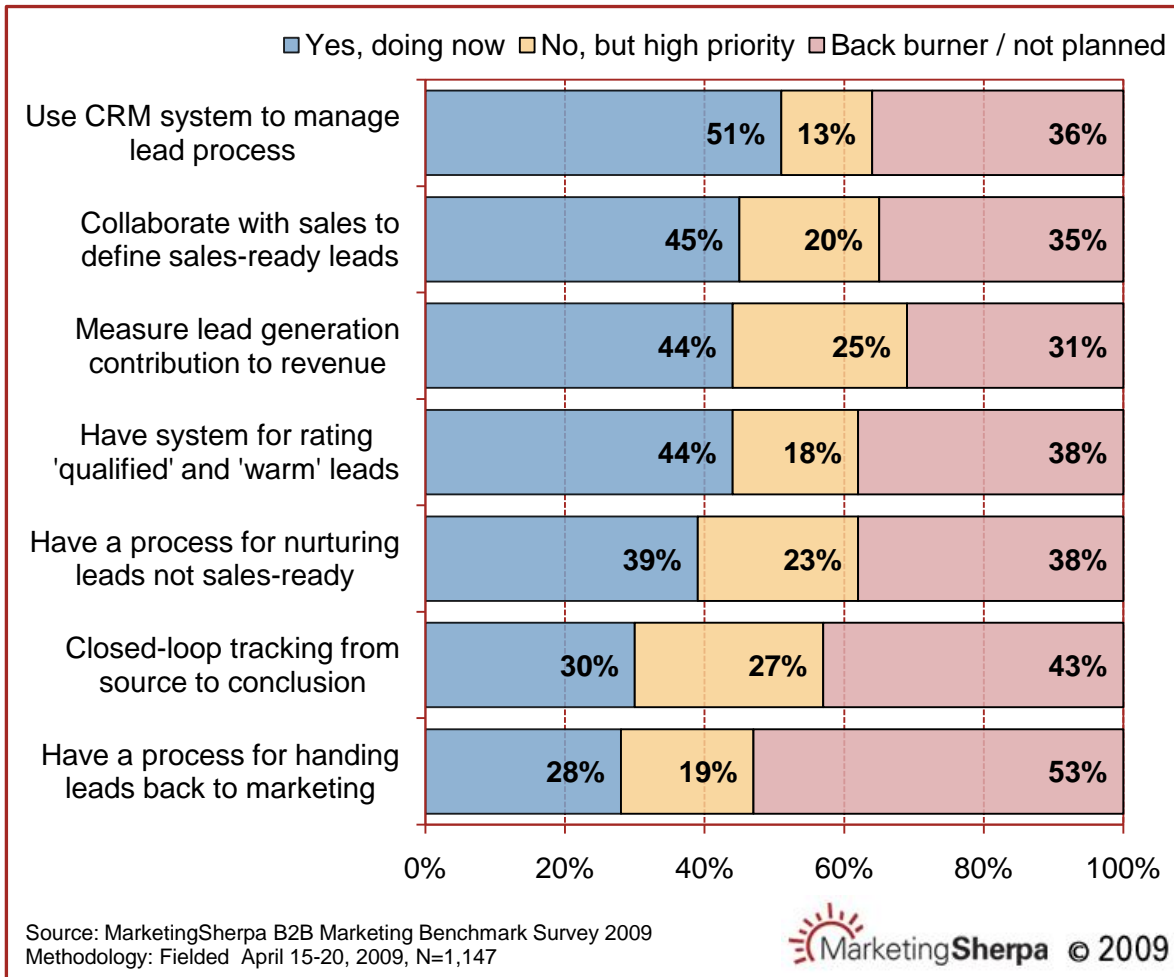
Changing Use of Information Resources by Technology Buyers in the Past Six Months



The sources of information relied upon for making large and complex purchases, such as business technology, are changing at a rapid pace. The most dramatic change reflected in this chart is the shift from face-to-face events and tradeshows to virtual events and virtual tradeshows. Use of search engines and websites to obtain the information needed for making large purchase decisions has continued to increase significantly during the past six months.

5. Controlling the Pipeline from Lead Generation to Sales Conversion

How Organizations Manage Their Marketing-to-Sales Process

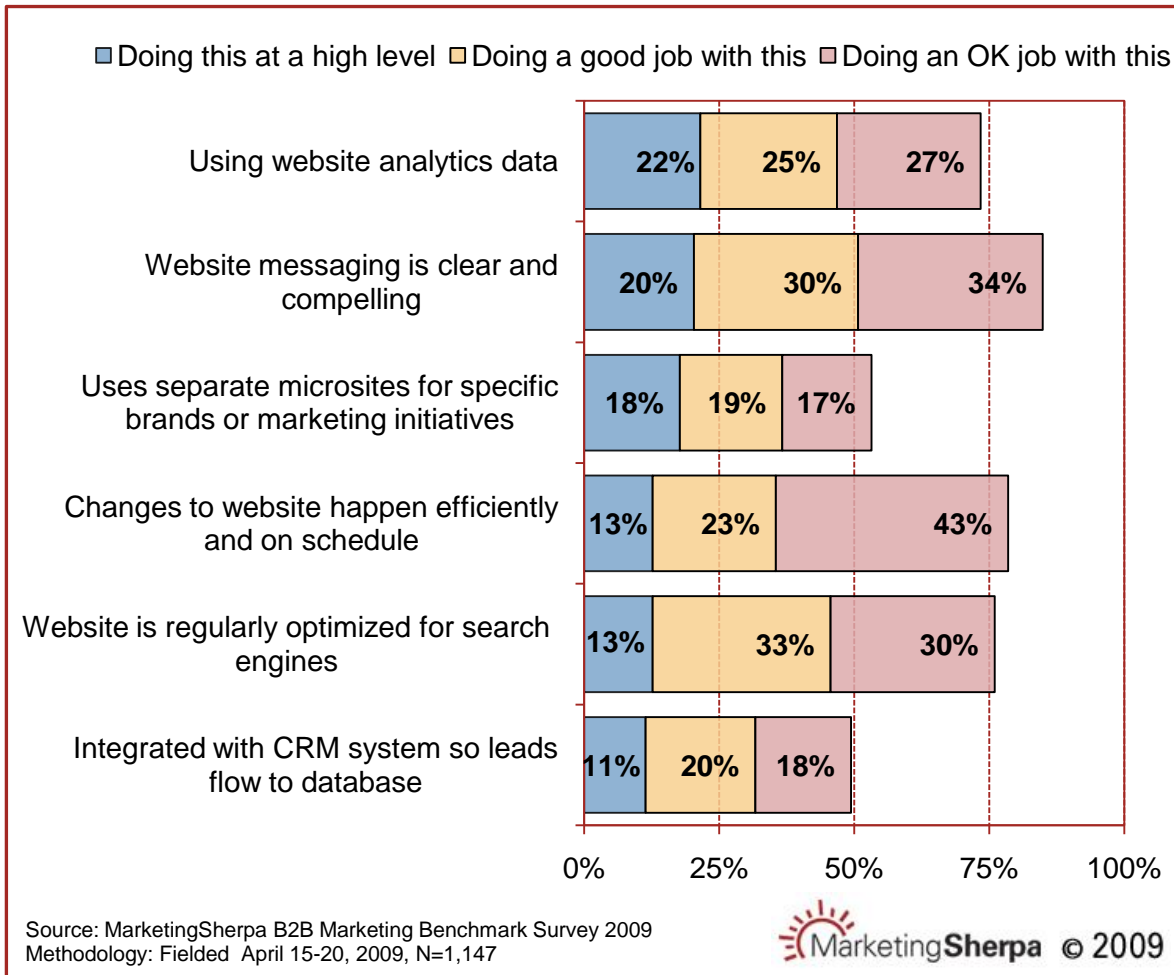


Closely aligning marketing and sales is essential to creating a productive new business pipeline. As this chart demonstrates, many marketing and sales organizations collaborate at the shallow end of the pool — by mutually engaging in best practices, such as defining what a sales-ready lead is — but few dive deeper to make the pipeline flow in both directions.

This two-way flow requires feedback from the sales department about leads that are not ready for conversion. That feedback results in highly effective practices, such as the closed-loop tracking of leads from source to conversion. A pipeline flowing in both directions can also enable a process for sales to give leads back to marketing for re-engagement and continued nurturing — creating opportunities for the sales force to pursue again in the future when the timing is optimal.

6. Is the Hub of Your Marketing Strategy Managed Well?

Agencies and Consultants Rate How Their Clients Manage Website Capabilities



The biggest change in B2B marketing during the past decade or so has been the emergence of a company's website as the primary point of contact with prospects and customers. The website has also become an extremely efficient platform to integrate and automate the lead generation process. As a result, the role of a company's website has been elevated from simply being a spoke in the marketing mix wheel to the hub of the marketing strategy.

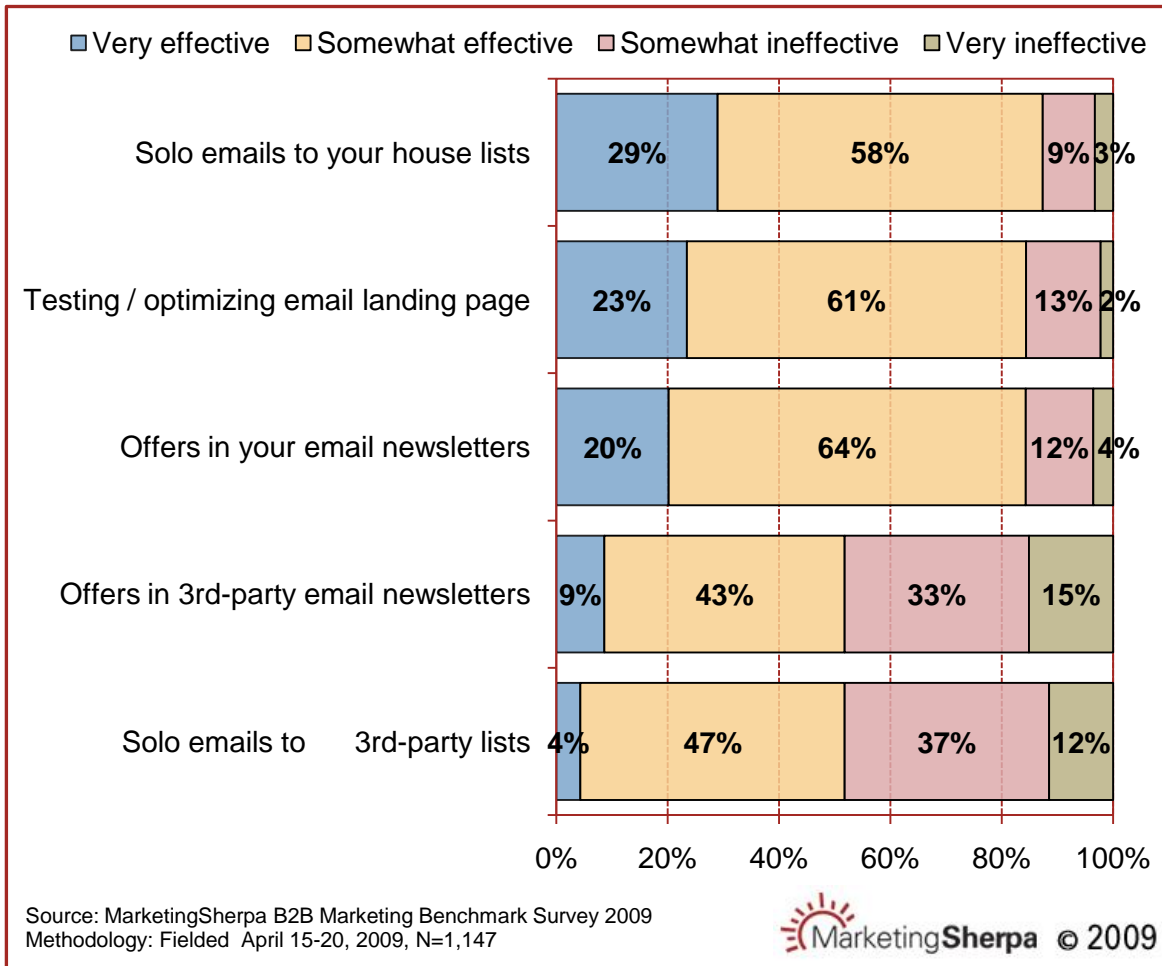
So, how well are B2B websites being managed? Rather than ask client-side marketers to self-evaluate their own performance, we asked their agencies and marketing consultants to provide a more objective assessment.

While many website capabilities are being managed at a high level, or clients were at least doing a good job of managing them, we found a weak point in system integration, which enables the flow of leads generated on a website to the CRM system. As we will discuss later in this report, the lead management process has become critical to the success of marketing and sales programs, and it all begins with the timely transfer of leads from their source to the lead management automation.

Chapter 4: Marketing Tactics and Best Practices

Email Marketing

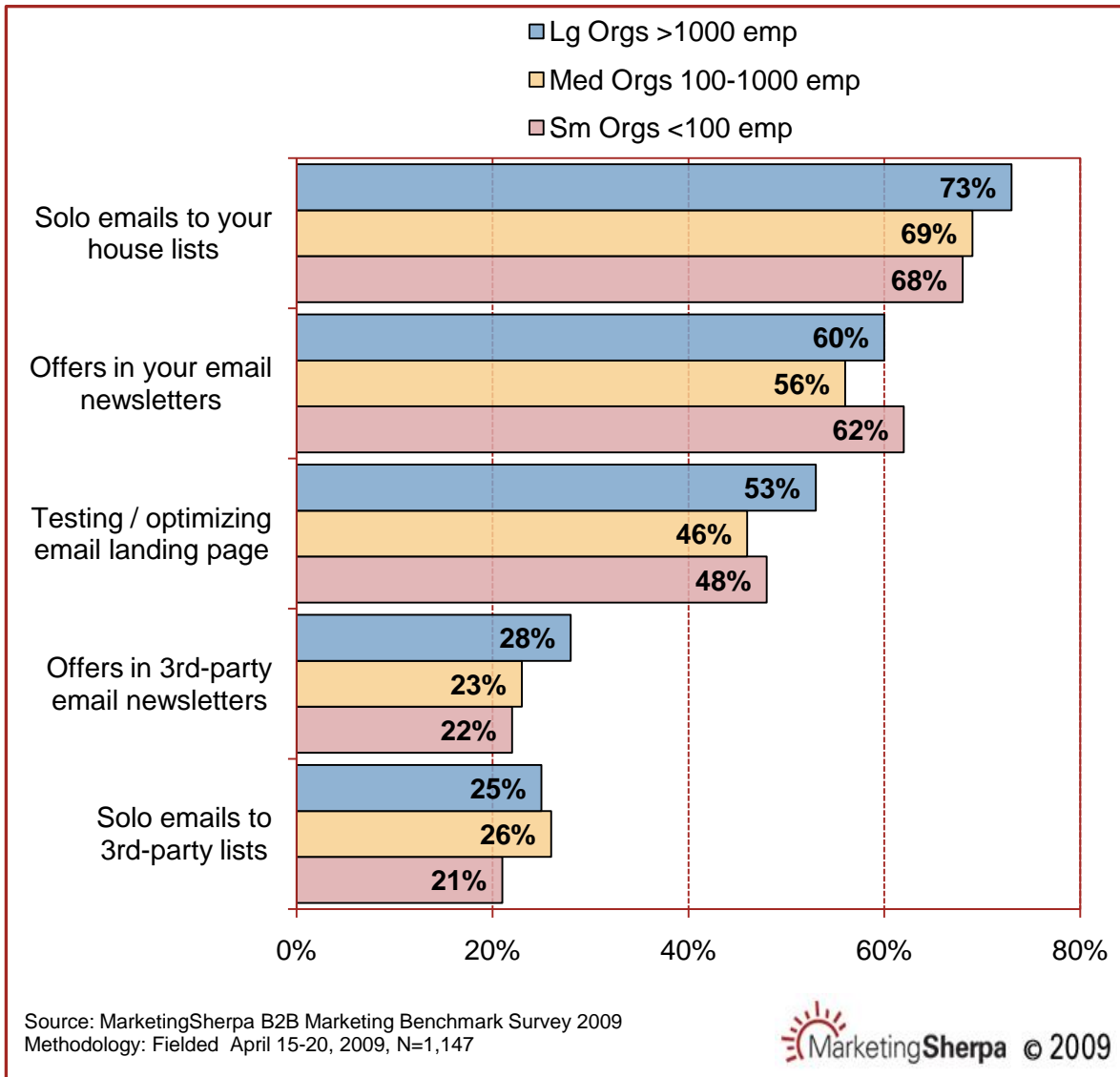
4.01 Effectiveness of Email Marketing Tactics Rated



This chart offers simple advice for executing email campaigns that are “Very effective”: Send solo email blasts to your house lists and link them to landing pages that have been tested and optimized. If you email newsletters with offers, do so to your own subscribers.

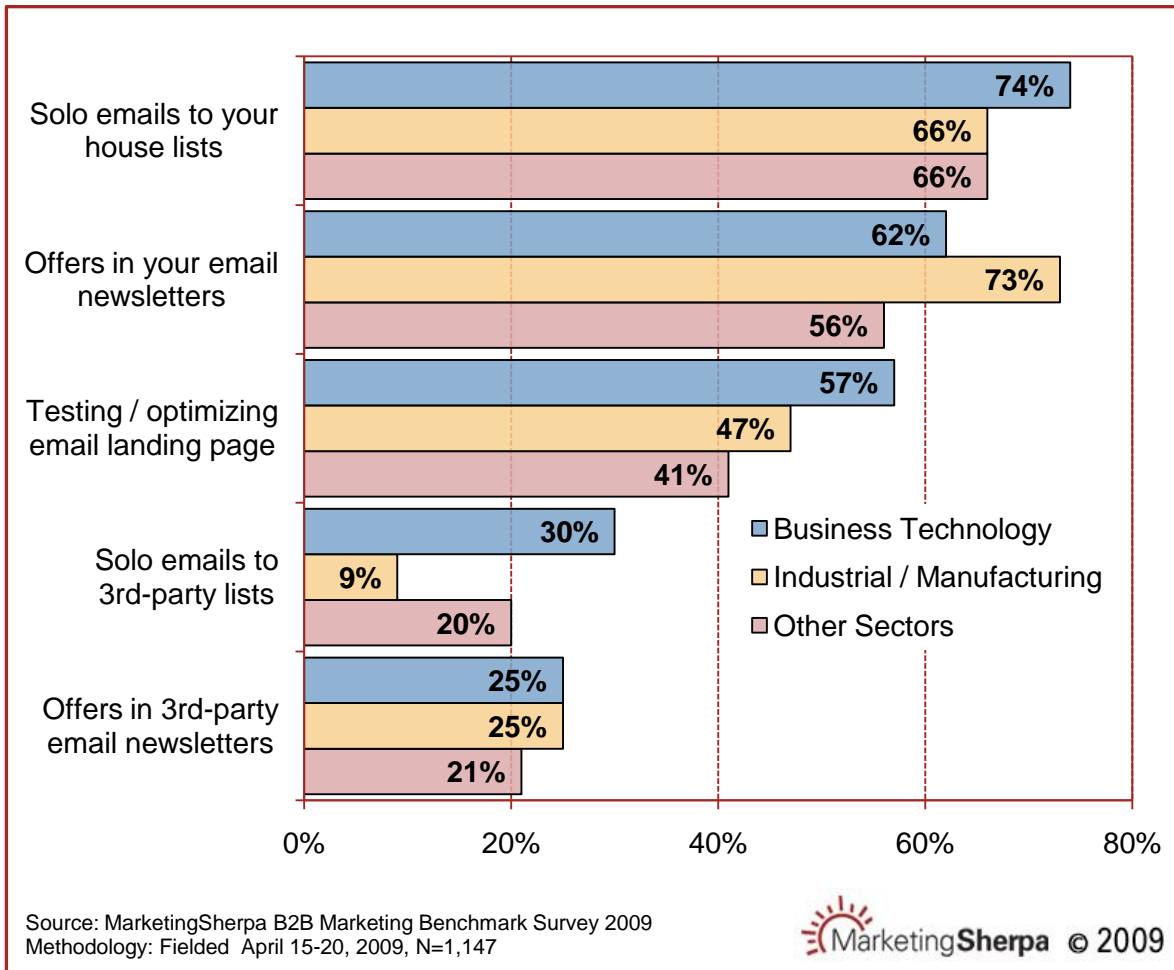
Email to third-party lists, whether solo blasts or newsletters, are not as effective as they once were. In fact, nearly half of all marketers rated them as “Somewhat ineffective” or “Very ineffective.”

4.02 Email Marketing Tactics Rated Effective, by Organization Size



The rules for executing effective email campaigns are not subject to change based on the size of the organization sending them. Keep it simple by sending solo emails or newsletters to you own subscriber lists and link them to landing pages that are proven to convert offers into actions.

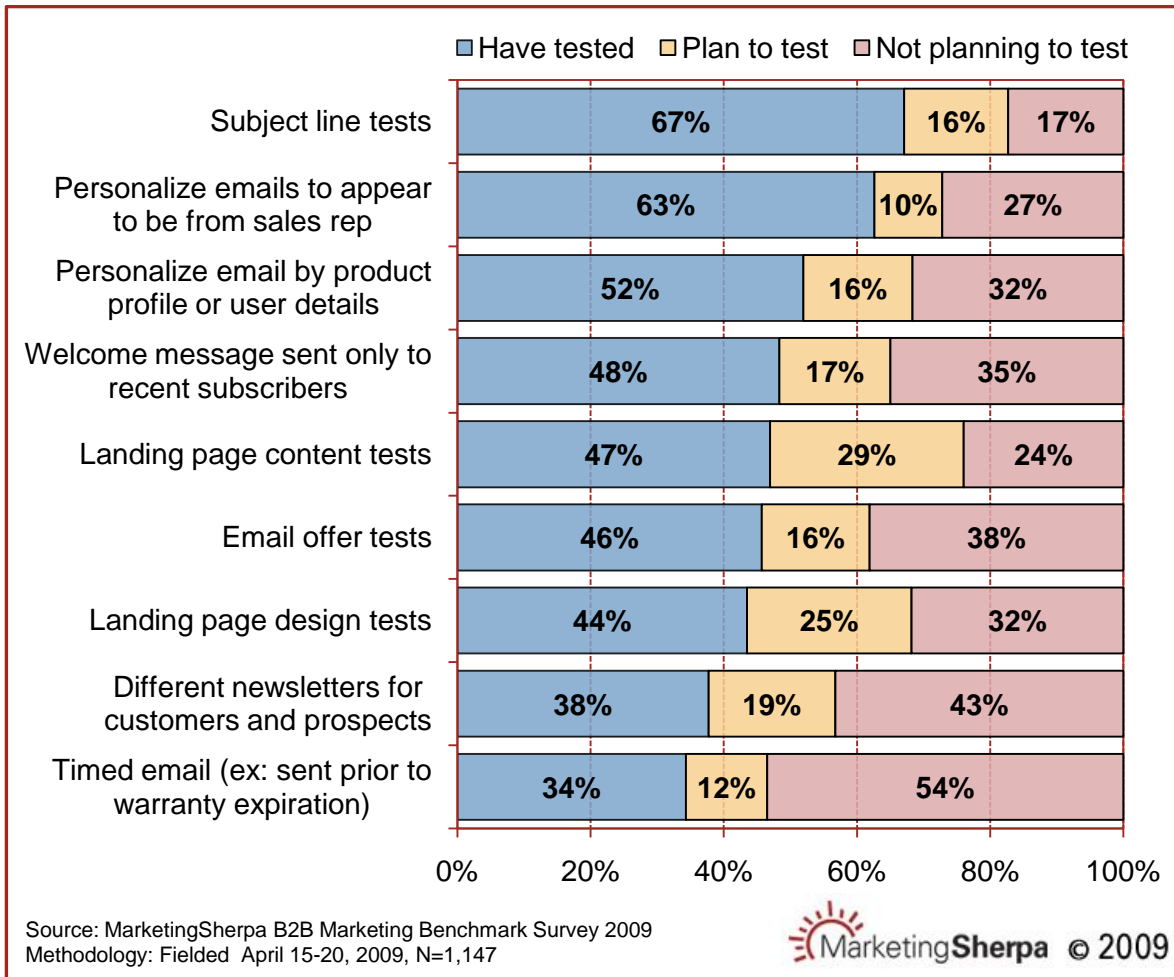
4.03 Email Marketing Tactics Rated Effective, by Industry Sector



One interesting point to mention about this chart: Business technology marketers are more likely to prefer solo email blasts to house lists while industrial / manufacturing marketers prefer email newsletters with offers to their subscribers.

This may reflect the use of personalization practices by business technology marketers, which affects solo email effectiveness more than it does newsletter effectiveness.

4.04 Which Email Tactics Are Being Put to the Test?



The tactics that marketers “Have tested” most often also reflect the effectiveness of those tactics. For example, the second-most frequently tested tactic is “Personalize emails to appear to be from sales rep.” While it’s often tested, this tactic is not used much. But when it is used, it’s extremely effective for boosting initial stage metrics, such as open and click rates.

The weak points here are the low levels of testing email offers and timed emails. These two tactics are no more difficult to measure, but they are proven to have a great impact on email performance. This especially applies to timed email which, when tested at various intervals, can produce substantially different results.

Notes from the Field: Testing Results in 1000% Increase in Opt-Ins

Conversion rates were dismal for this business technology marketer. The website was getting terrific traffic (44,000+ daily visitors) but had an abysmal subscription rate (only 10-15 newsletter subscriptions a day). In addition, the marketer wanted to reduce their reliance on Google for traffic to their website for techies looking for answers. Increasing their newsletter subscribers seemed to be the only clear-cut way of doing it without breaking the bank.

Their audience was fickle by nature, however. Viewers typically came to the site to get a specific how-to nugget of information and then left abruptly. Plus, techies are among the touchiest demographic to market to online.

They started by investigating alternatives and looking at analytics data. The average time visitors spent on their site was 66 seconds.

They decided to test an opt-in process that used a dhtml (dynamic html) time-delay “hover box,” which mimics the actions of a pop-up. Unlike a pop-up, a hover box — sometimes called a “slide-in” — doesn’t get produced by another window being opened. Rather, the hover box code is part of the actual Web page being viewed; it remains hidden for an amount of time to avoid pop-up blockers.

A key part of his plan was the delay: not serving viewers with the offer right away but after they took some time to explore the site. But how long should they delay it? They followed three steps to get the answer:

Step #1. Set up A/B test

They knew readers normally stuck around for about a minute before leaving the site. So, they decided on a time-delay at or near the 60-second mark with A/B testing. They tested three combinations three days apiece — “long enough for the results to become statistically significant.”

The test combinations:

- 60 vs. 75 seconds
- 60 vs. 45 seconds
- 60 vs. 30 seconds

Step #2. Design the hover box

They wanted the time delay to be the only test variable. But they still had to design an eye-pleasing hover box for the test. Here’s what they came up with:

- Box size of 35,781 bytes
- Two-tone blue background color
- Two paragraphs of copy in white type

Underneath the copy, viewers were encouraged to sign up by inputting the following information into entry fields:

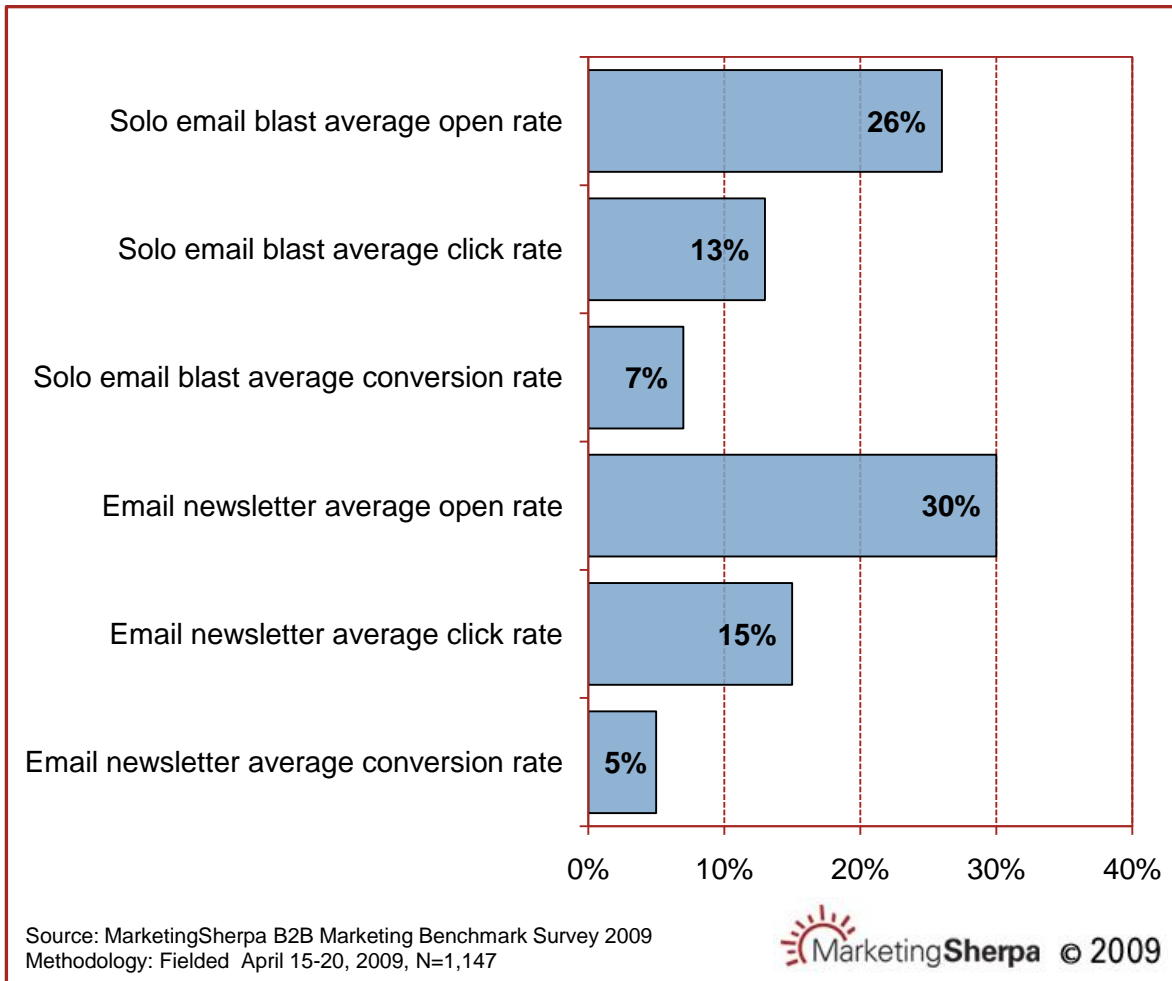
- Name
- Email address
- Where you heard about us (optional)

Step #3. Set restriction

They set a restriction on the hover box. Regular readers who didn't subscribe would see it only once every six months at that IP address. The exceptions were users who changed computers or cleared their cookies.

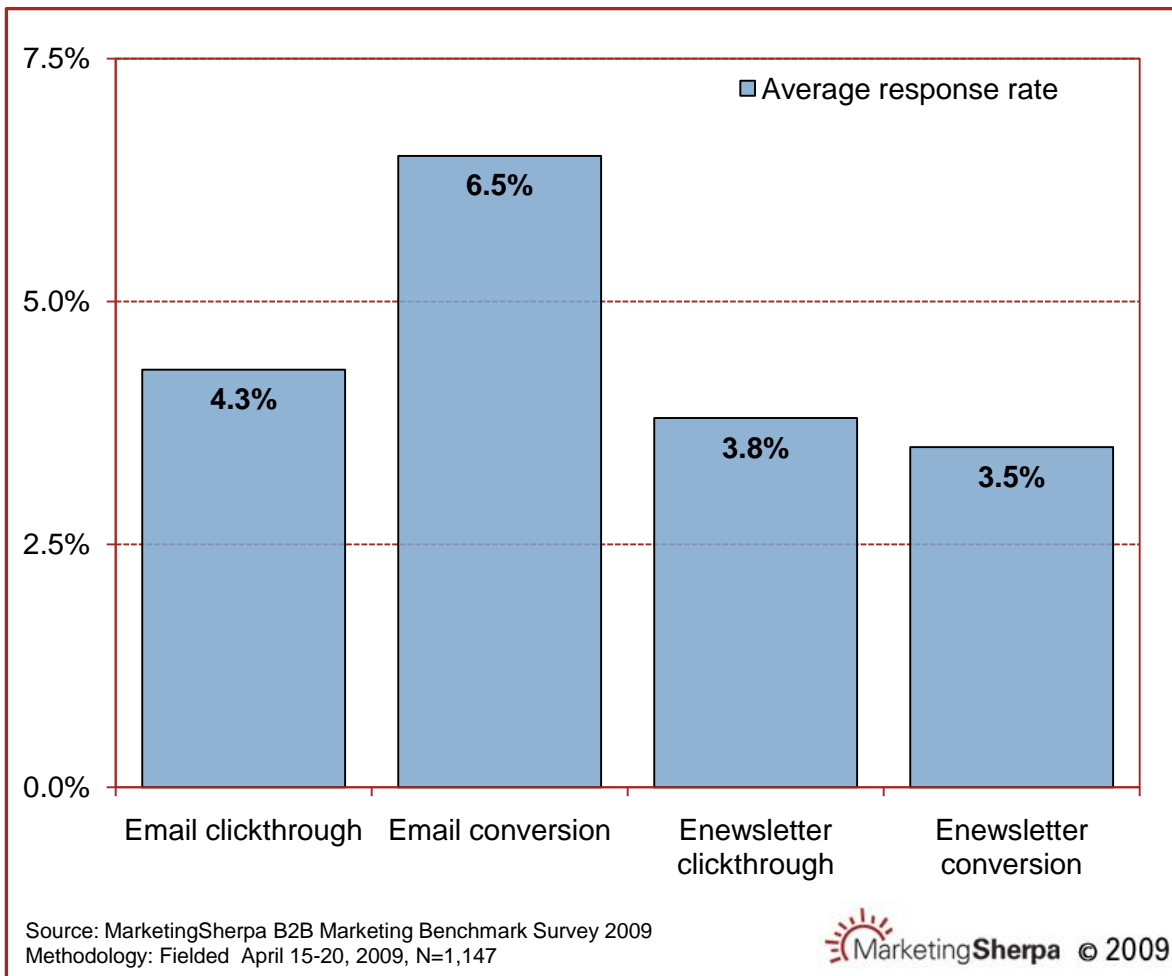
The test demonstrated that the time-delay hover box worked and that it worked best at 60 seconds. It has been capturing a 1000% average daily increase in subscriptions.

4.05 Performance Metrics for Email Campaigns to House Lists



How well do in-house email blasts perform compared to email newsletters? In this comparison of average metrics for opens, clicks and conversions, we see that the two tactics perform at similar rates for individual metrics. But because open rates are difficult to establish and the definition varies widely, the more critical metric is the rate of clicks to conversions. In this case, a significantly higher rate of solo email clicks convert compared to the rate of newsletter clicks to conversion.

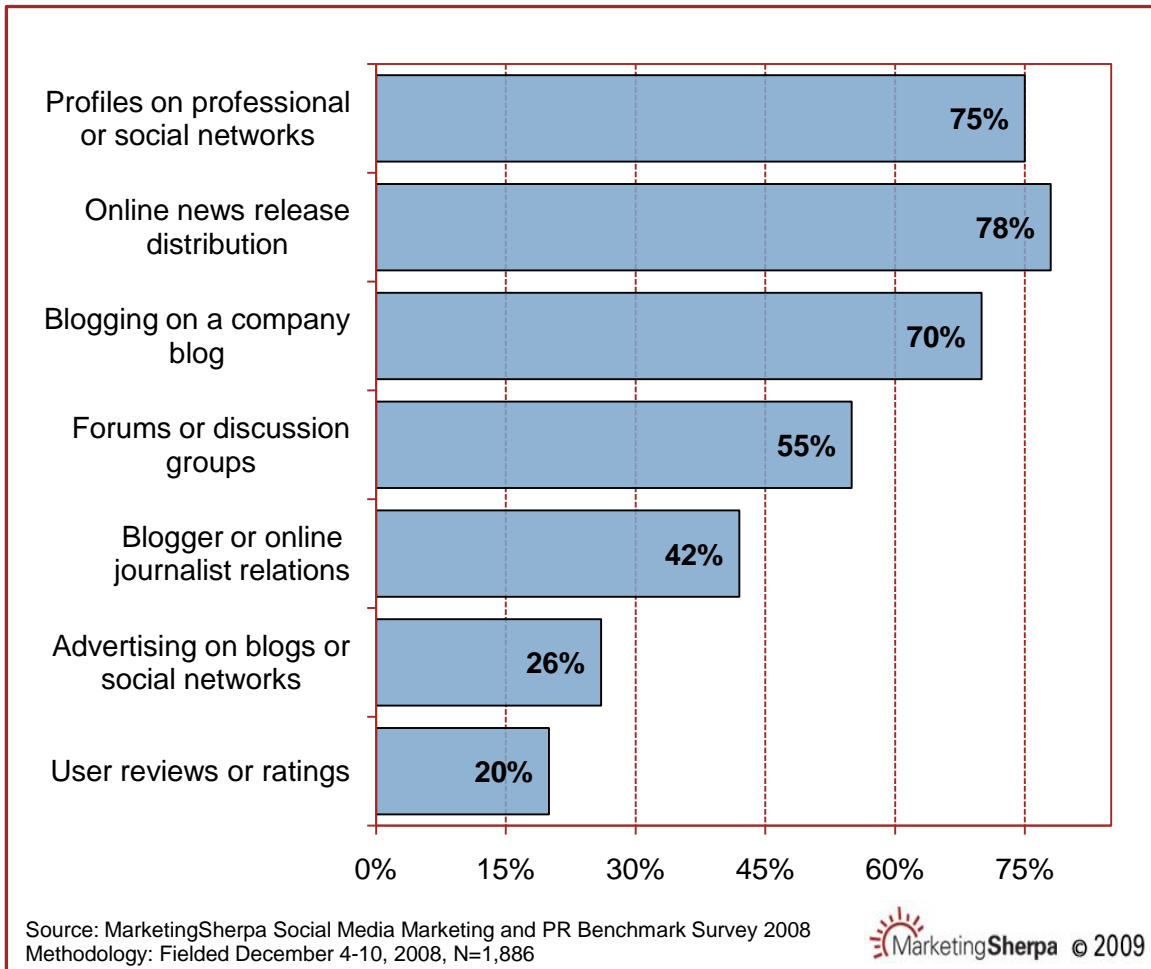
4.06 Performance Metrics for Ads in Third-Party Emails and Enewsletters



Email to third-party lists, whether using solo blasts or newsletters, have lost their effectiveness as inboxes have become increasingly overburdened and deliverability issues have risen. While the average rate of email clickthroughs to conversions may appear considerable, the extremely low rate of emails sent to emails clicked has become increasingly discouraging.

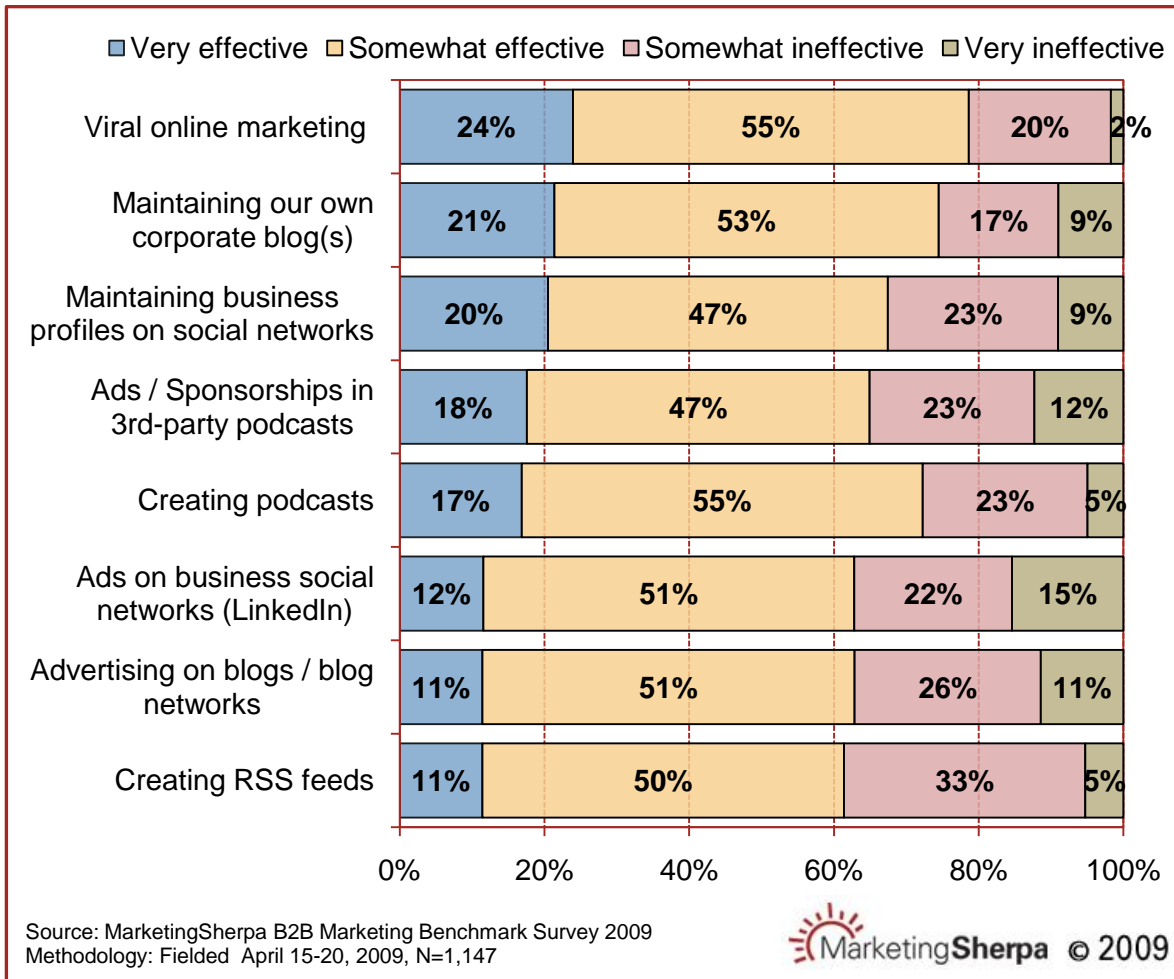
Social Media Marketing

4.07 B2B Marketers Using Social Media Tactics



Social media for B2B marketing purposes has crossed the chasm between the stages of early adoption and mainstream use. The medium is still evolving, but B2B marketers are becoming more sophisticated about not only engaging in social media but, as the following charts show, determining the effectiveness of the social media tactics and the Web 2.0 technologies they use.

4.08 Effectiveness of Social Media Tactics and Web 2.0 Technologies Rated



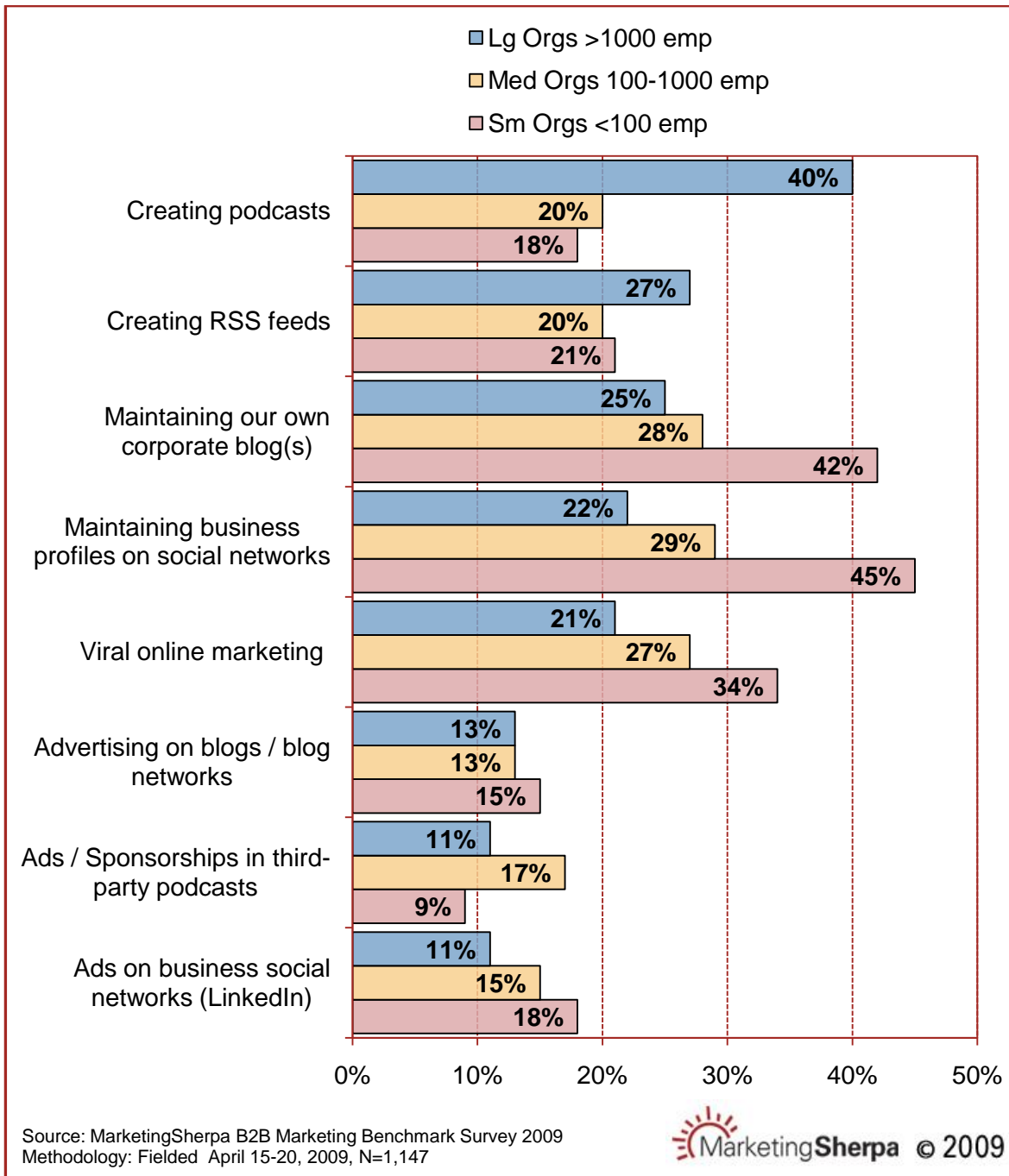
The difference between social media tactics and Web 2.0 technologies is often confusing.

For marketing purposes, social media is a collective group of sites or networks, such as a corporate blog or a company profile on a social network like Facebook, that provide a means to build relationships among people with common interests and the sharing of content published by its owners and users.

Web 2.0 technologies are tactical applications, such as RSS feeds, podcasts and video interfaces, that are used to enable the sharing of content and information.

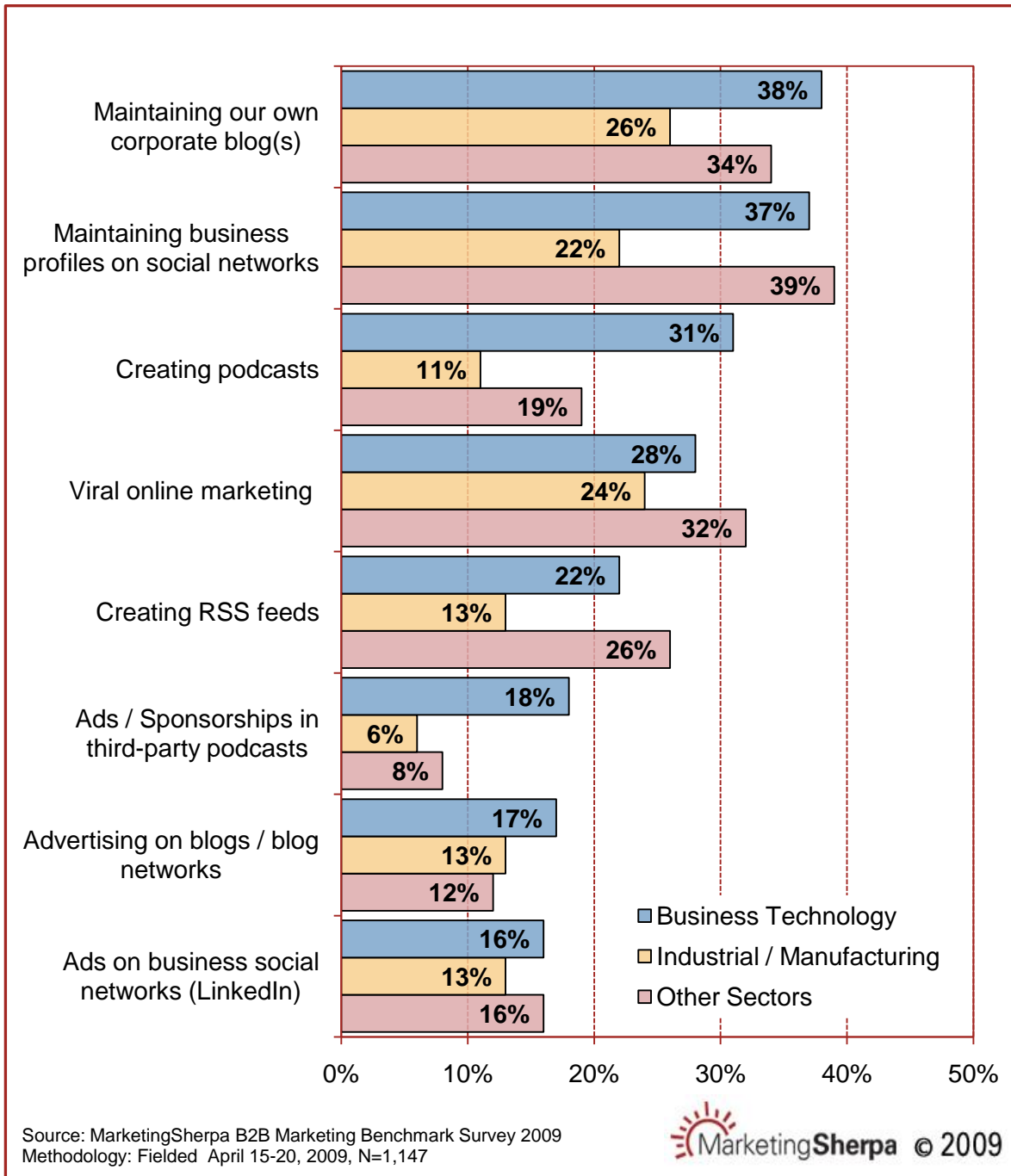
The similarity in effectiveness ratings between the tactics and technologies listed above may reflect the current broad diversity of social media options and the continued experimental use of a variety of options by marketers to determine a preference.

4.09 Social Media Tactics and Web 2.0 Technologies Rated Effective, by Organization Size



Large organizations seem to find Web 2.0 technologies, such as podcasts and RSS feeds, most effective while small organizations prefer social media, such as corporate blogs and business profiles on social networks.

4.10 Social Media Tactics and Web 2.0 Technologies Rated Effective, by Industry Sector



Business technology marketers find relationship-building interactions on social media, such as corporate blogs and profiles on social networks, much more effective than advertising on any form of social site or network.

Notes from the Field: Generating Leads with Social Media Strategy

The Marketing VP at this startup company didn't want to adopt a typical demand generation strategy after joining a networking-equipment testing system provider. The company had a limited budget, and their target audience of security and quality assurance professionals in R&D laboratories wasn't merely skeptical of marketing — they hated it.

The marketing team wanted to supplement traditional PR, events and demand-generation campaigns with a social media strategy that created strong relationships with hard-to-find prospects. But they wanted to make sure those efforts were reaching the right audience and turning them into leads.

The team tested several social media channels while revamping their public relations tactics to drive visitors to the company's website. They tracked growth and engagement metrics from those initiatives. They then correlated those results to traditional metrics, such as unique visitors, leads, and pipeline activity.

Here are the six steps they took:

Step #1. Create blog to start and join online conversations

The team began its foray into social media by launching a company blog. They didn't wait to finalize a blog strategy before launch, however. Their blogging approach evolved over time, based on observation of online conversations related to their network equipment testing niche.

First, the team set up an online monitoring system that scanned the Web, the blogosphere, online forums and communities to find conversations relevant to their industry and their technical audience. The results were consolidated into an RSS feed that a team member could review each morning. Scanning tools included:

- TweetScan, for Twitter posts
- Google Alerts for industry terms, such as “security threats” and “equipment testing”
- Boardtracker.com, which monitors technology forums and message boards

When the scanning tools found a relevant conversation, such as a blog post about cost of network equipment-testing tools, a team member would join that conversation. They would comment on the blog post and point readers to content on the same topic at their blog.

The team also used their blog to break stories with the potential to go viral. For example, the company's security research team published tests and research related to clickjacking — a recently discovered security flaw within websites that takes clickers from a legitimate-appearing button to an illegitimate site. Those stories generated links from other industry blogs and articles in major trade publications.

Step #2. Establish a Twitter account

The team supplemented their blog with a company Twitter account. This allowed them to post shorter, more frequent updates to their niche audience.

Company “tweets” included:

- Notices of new blog posts and webinars

- Fun entries (trivia questions and quizzes)
- Informal focus group questions (poll of Twitter followers about potential names for the company newsletter)

As they did with the blog, the team used their scanning tools to find and participate in Twitter conversations that were relevant to their industry. They were particularly interested in community members asking for advice about equipment testing, so they set up alerts to find key terms, such as:

- “Bake off,” an industry term for a head-to-head equipment test
- “Test methodology”
- Competitors’ names (along with the word “sucks”)

They also re-tweeted relevant information found through their scans, such as reports about equipment testing results or interesting industry news. It gives them a reason to stay in front of their followers and stimulate conversations.

Step #3. Create LinkedIn and Facebook groups

To explore an array of social media channels, the team created groups on LinkedIn and Facebook. They quickly realized that their target audience wasn’t represented well on Facebook, but the LinkedIn group began attracting members with the right professional backgrounds.

The team established the group as an open forum to discuss issues related to network test equipment and security — not to the company or its products. Group members took the lead in starting conversations among themselves. Typical topics included:

- Advice on vendors
- Reviews/suggestions for industry events
- Feedback on new testing approaches or programs

The team acted as hosts, joining discussions when they had a pertinent point to contribute, or sharing relevant industry news, blog posts or other content to keep members engaged.

Step #4. Modify press release strategy for blogger coverage

The team revamped the company’s press release strategy to encourage more online coverage. Actions they took:

- Release at least one new press release each week.
- To encourage inbound links, press releases were shorter and contained more links to specific sections of the company website.
- Shift their release time from 8 a.m. Eastern time to late morning/early afternoon, when West Coast bloggers were more likely to begin scanning for news.
- Publish press releases using a service called PitchEngine and post releases to social media channels, such as their Twitter feed and LinkedIn group.

Step #5. Promote social media channels on company website and in email signatures

To encourage customers and prospects to participate in their social media channels, the team included links to different accounts from the company’s website and in their email signatures.

The news section of the website, for instance, included links to the company's Twitter feed and LinkedIn group under a "Join us" headline. They also included updates from the company Twitter account in the right-hand column of the company blog.

Employees' email signatures included links to the blog, Twitter account or LinkedIn group, along with their name, email address and telephone number.

Step #6. Measure growth of social media accounts and Web traffic

The team was determined to measure the contribution social media efforts made to the company's marketing and sales activity. So, they tracked metrics to determine the growth of their various social media channels, such as:

- Unique blog page views
- Twitter followers
- LinkedIn group members

At the same time, they tracked a series of marketing metrics, such as:

- Unique website visitors
- Traffic generated by SEO
- Leads
- Leads by source (inbound Web, email, tradeshow, seminars)
- Marketing-influenced pipeline activity, by source

When comparing the metrics side-by-side, they looked for correlations between activity in social media outlets and an increase in leads and sales pipeline activity.

In just six months, the team's analysis showed a dramatic correlation between the use of social media channels and the growth of the company's Web traffic and leads. Their social media campaign analysis resulted in:

- 10,230 unique blog page views in Q3
- 280 Twitter followers
- 141 members of their LinkedIn Group
- 155% increase in unique Web visitors

Most important, that Web traffic is now contributing the majority of the team's leads and pipeline activity. Leads by source:

- 55% inbound Web
- 23% tradeshow
- 20.5% email
- 1.5% seminars

Marketing-influenced pipeline by source:

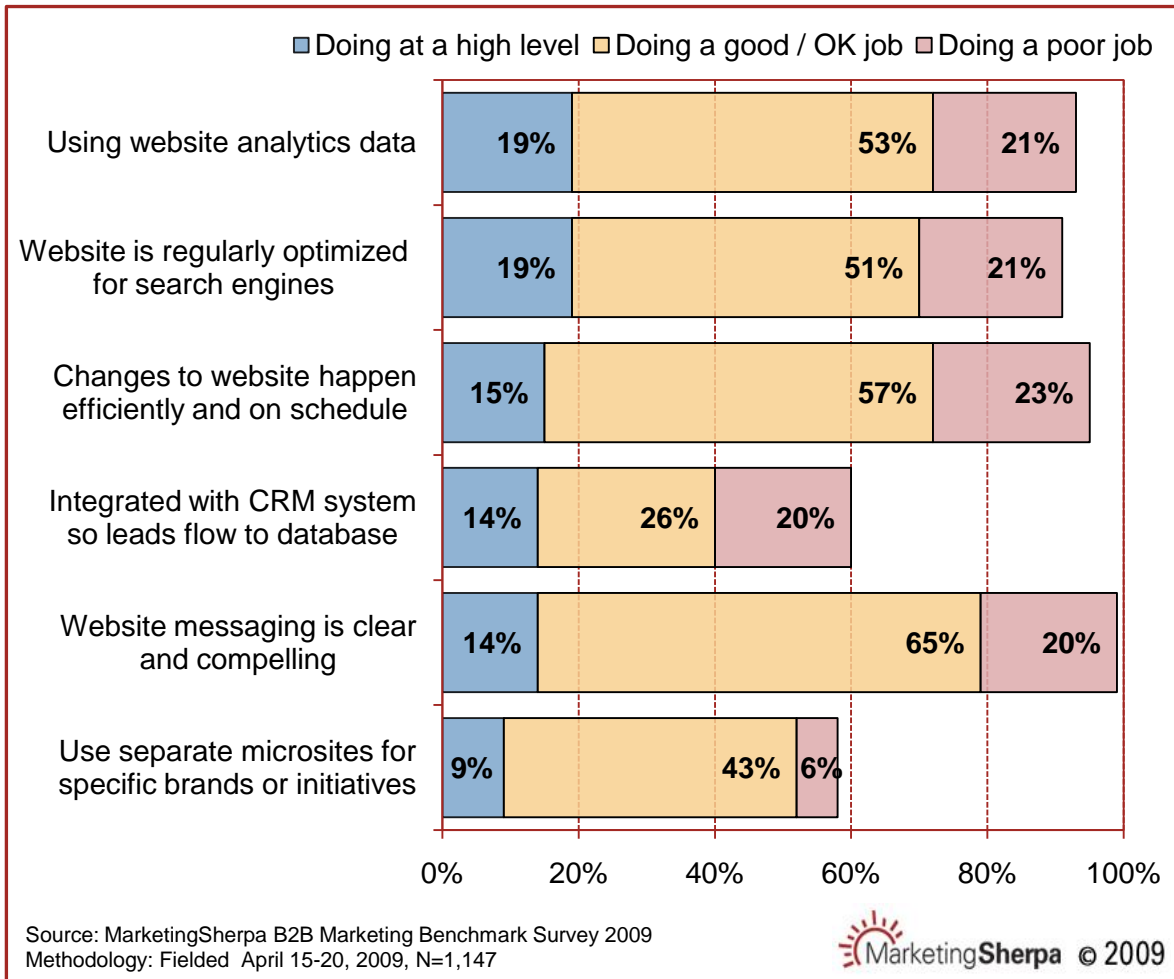
- 75% inbound Web
- 17% email
- 4% seminars
- 4% tradeshow

The amount of leads and pipeline activity generated from Web traffic demonstrates that their social media strategy is reaching their marketing-averse audience.

The team's social media efforts also support their ongoing search-engine optimization strategy. By engaging in conversations about industry issues, they are generating more links on non-brand search terms that help boost their search engine results positions. Non-brand search terms are typically those used by prospects when searching for testing equipment.

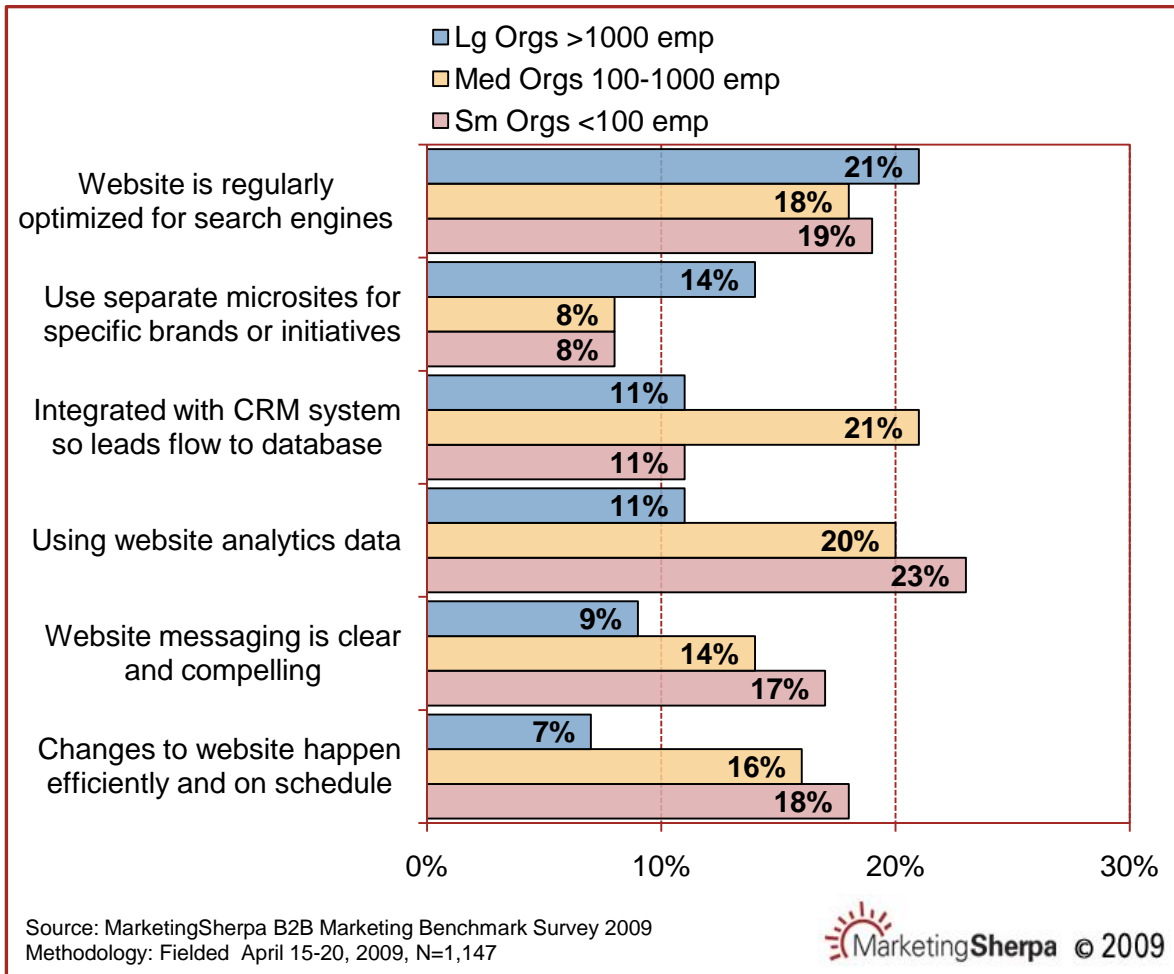
Website

4.11 Management of Website Capabilities Rated



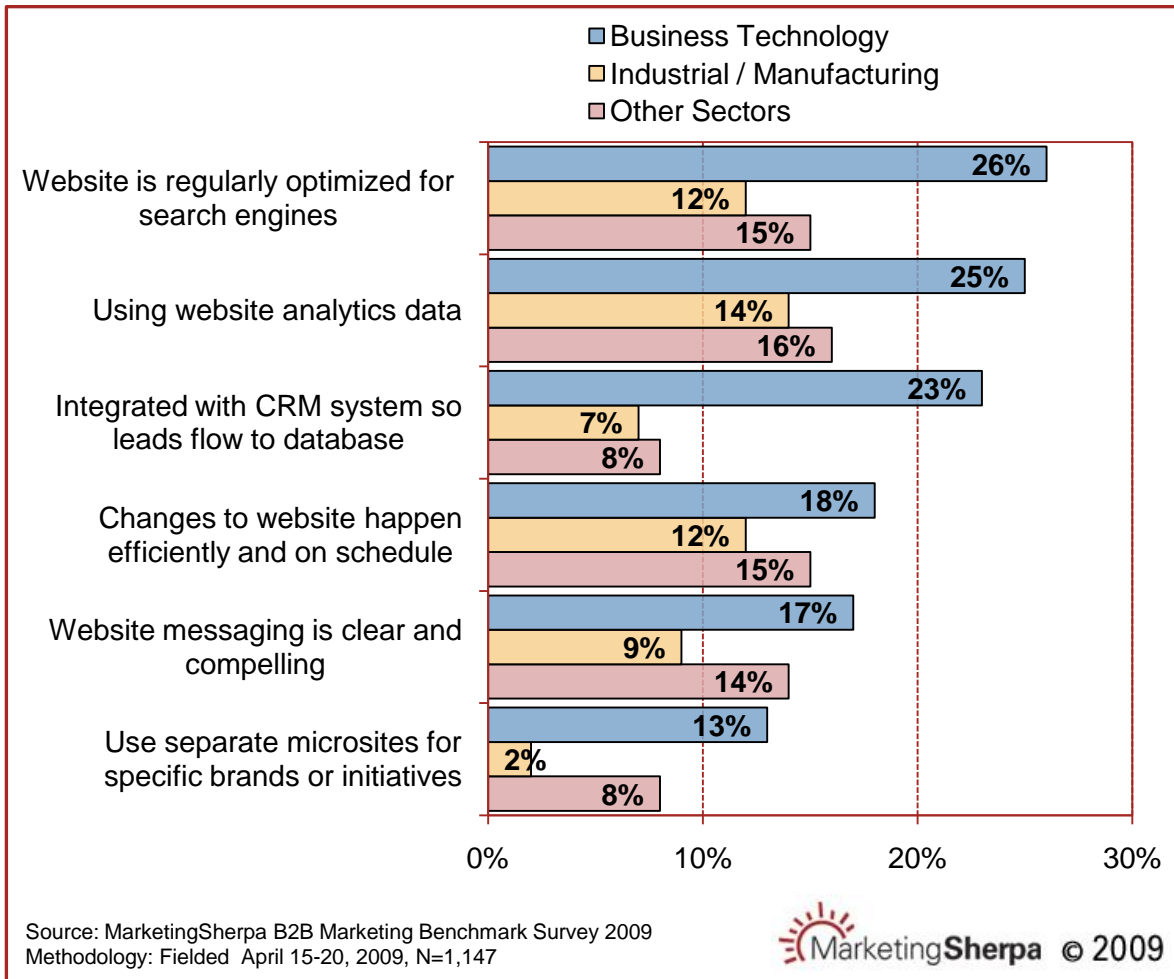
A majority of marketers think they do at least a good or OK job of managing nearly every major website capability. The weak link is in managing system integration for the automated flow of leads from the website into a CRM database. This important capability is not only used by far fewer organizations than other capabilities, it is not being well managed by those who do.

4.12 Managing Website Capabilities at a High Level, by Organization Size



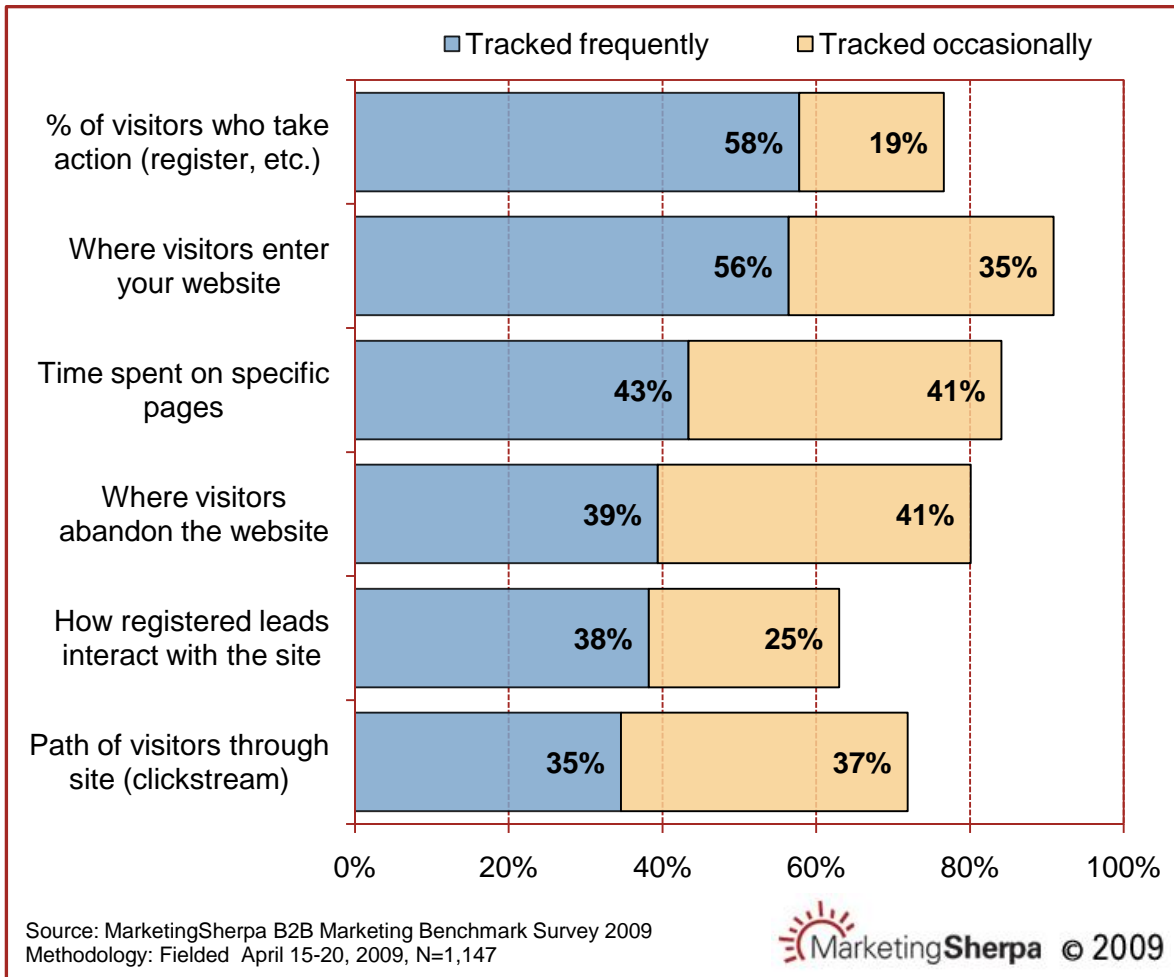
Managing website capabilities at a “high level” appears to have little to do with the size of the organization managing it. Across the board, small, medium and large organizations have revealed strengths and weaknesses when it comes to website management.

4.13 Managing Website Capabilities at a High Level, by Industry Sector



While organization size has little to do with how well websites are being managed, business technology clearly stands out as the sector that is much more likely (in some cases twice as likely) to manage its website capabilities at a high level.

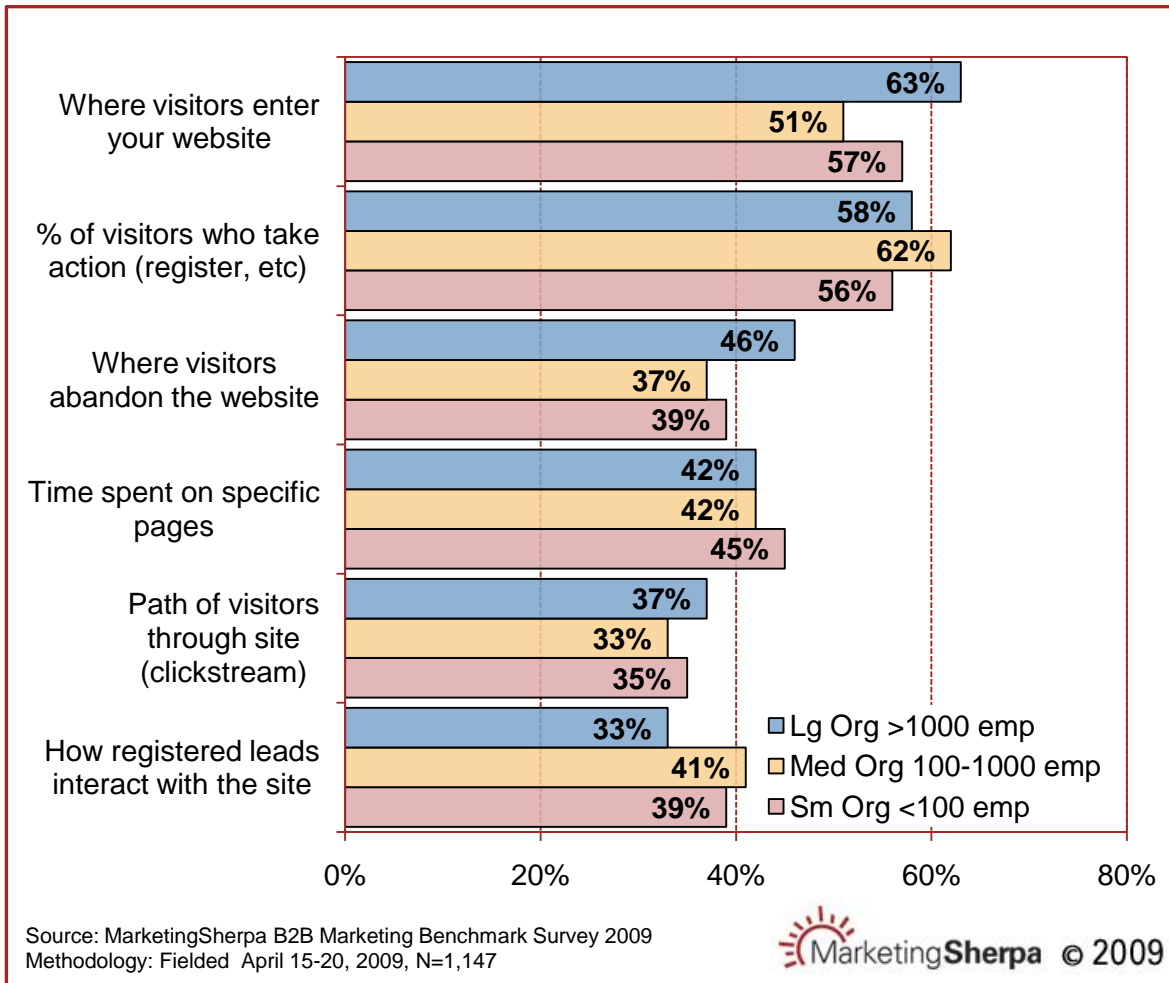
4.14 Web Metrics Tracked by B2B Marketers



The adoption of Web analytics increased significantly with the introduction and availability of highly sophisticated and often free applications (e.g., Google Analytics). But B2B marketers still have a long way to go. Only two metrics — percent of visitors who take action and where visitors enter a site — are being tracked by a majority of marketers.

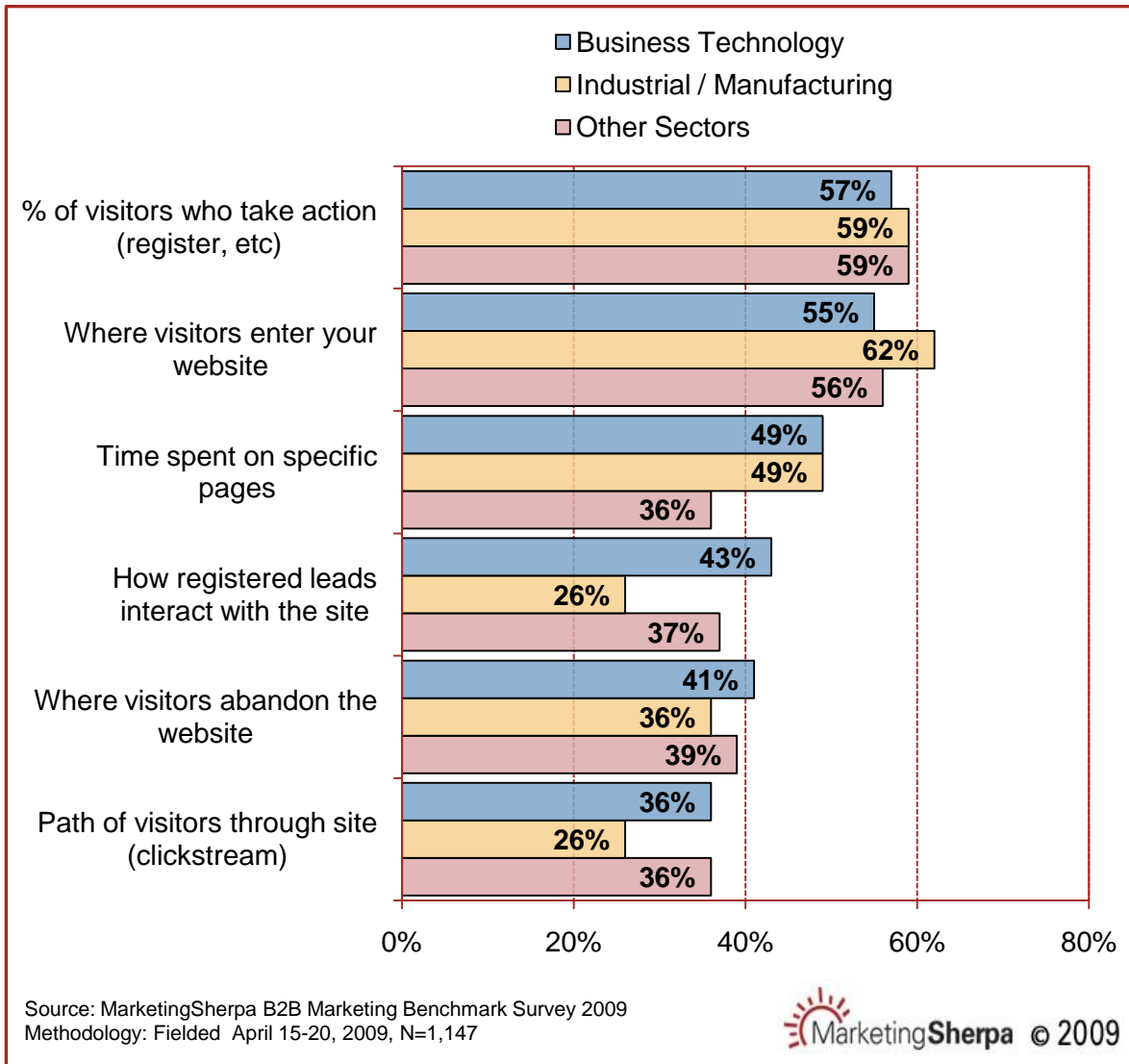
With natural search and social media driving so much traffic, referral page volume can change rapidly. This metric is an important source of strategic information. A posting on a popular blog with a link to your site, for example, can be shared across the blogosphere at the speed of light and generate an enormous volume of referrals to a given landing page.

4.15 Web Metrics Tracked Regularly, by Organization Size

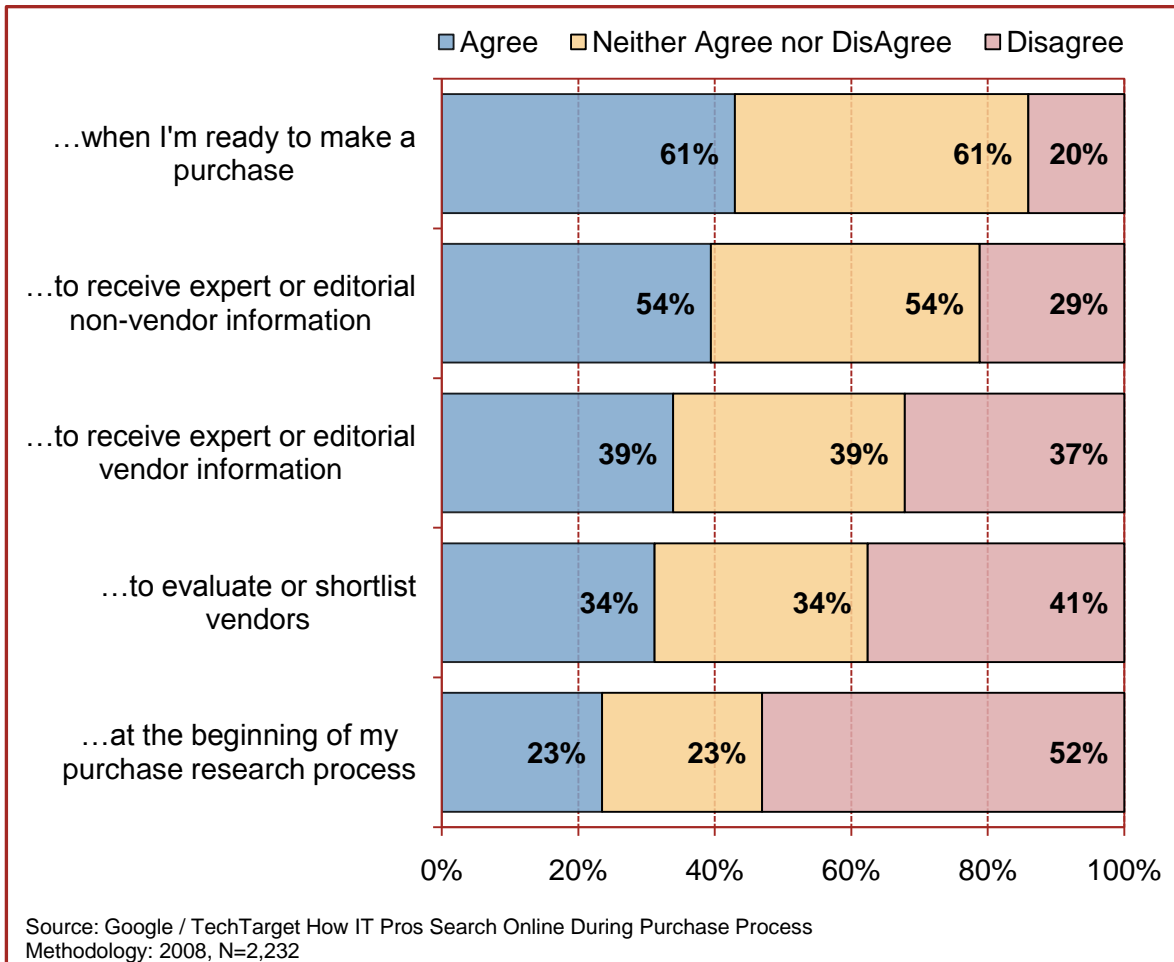


Surprisingly, small and medium organizations track the same website metrics with similar regularity. On-demand applications, such as Google Analytics, has made this not only possible but practical.

4.16 Web Metrics Tracked Regularly, by Industry Sector

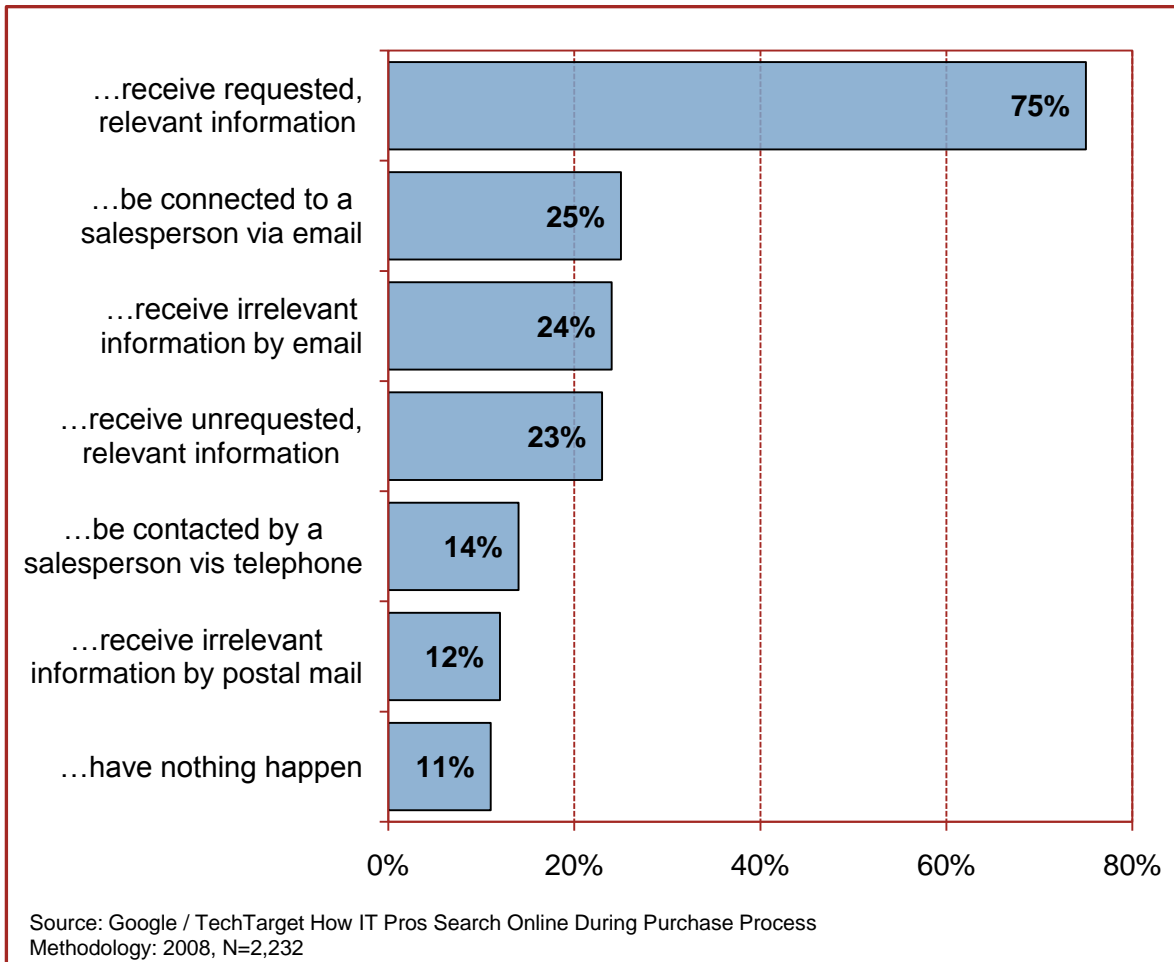


4.17 Buyers Are Open to Providing a Website with Professional Contact Information ...



Buyers are much more likely to provide their professional contact information at the end of their purchase decision process than at the beginning. They are also more likely to provide their contact details in exchange for expert or editorial information about products and services. This finding suggests that search is as logical a precursor to lead generation as it is for establishing brand awareness.

4.18 Once Buyers Have Registered on a Website, They Expect to...

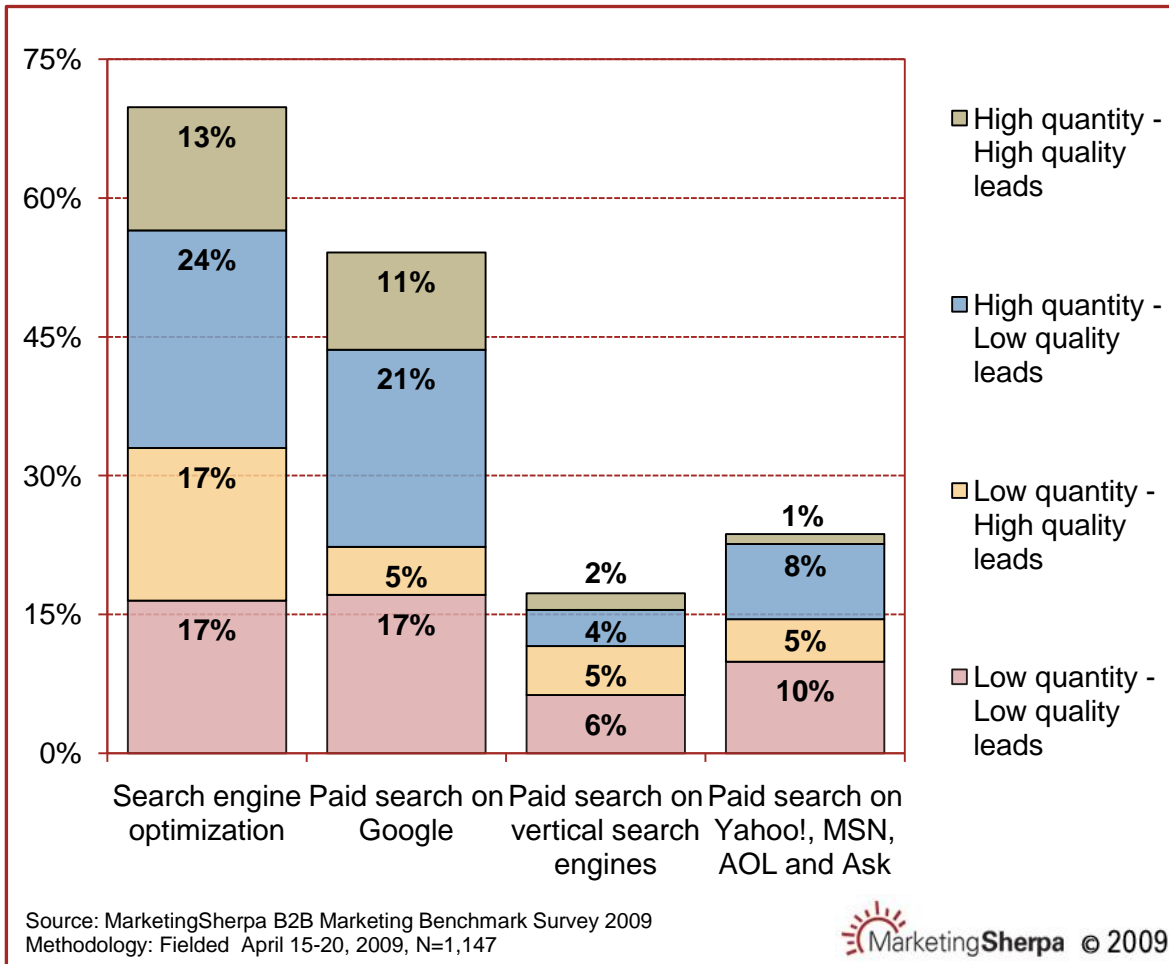


Once they register on a website, 75% of buyers expect to receive the requested / relevant information. In addition, buyers expect irrelevant information by email and postal mail, as well as other unwelcomed contact. Part of the reason purchase decision makers and influencers are reluctant to register may be that they expect sales and marketing teams to be more aggressive in re-contacting them than they would like.

This points to a lead generation challenge to be addressed: making the act of registration seem like it won't lead to unwanted vendor phone or emails.

Search Marketing

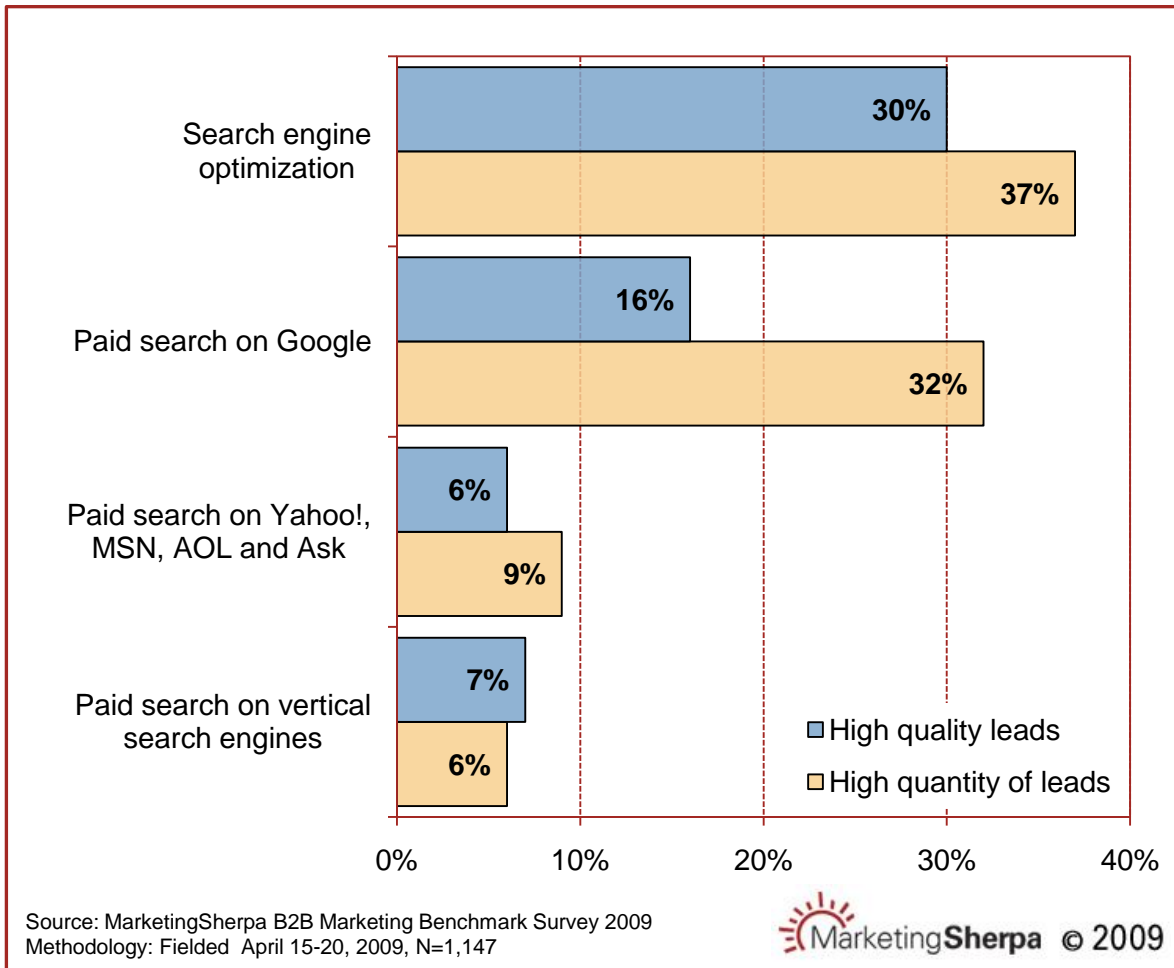
4.19 Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by Search Sources



Google continues to clearly separate itself from the field in terms of both the quality and quantity of leads generated by paid search marketing.

Natural search page rankings driven higher by search engine optimization tactics generate as many high-quality leads as all paid search sources combined.

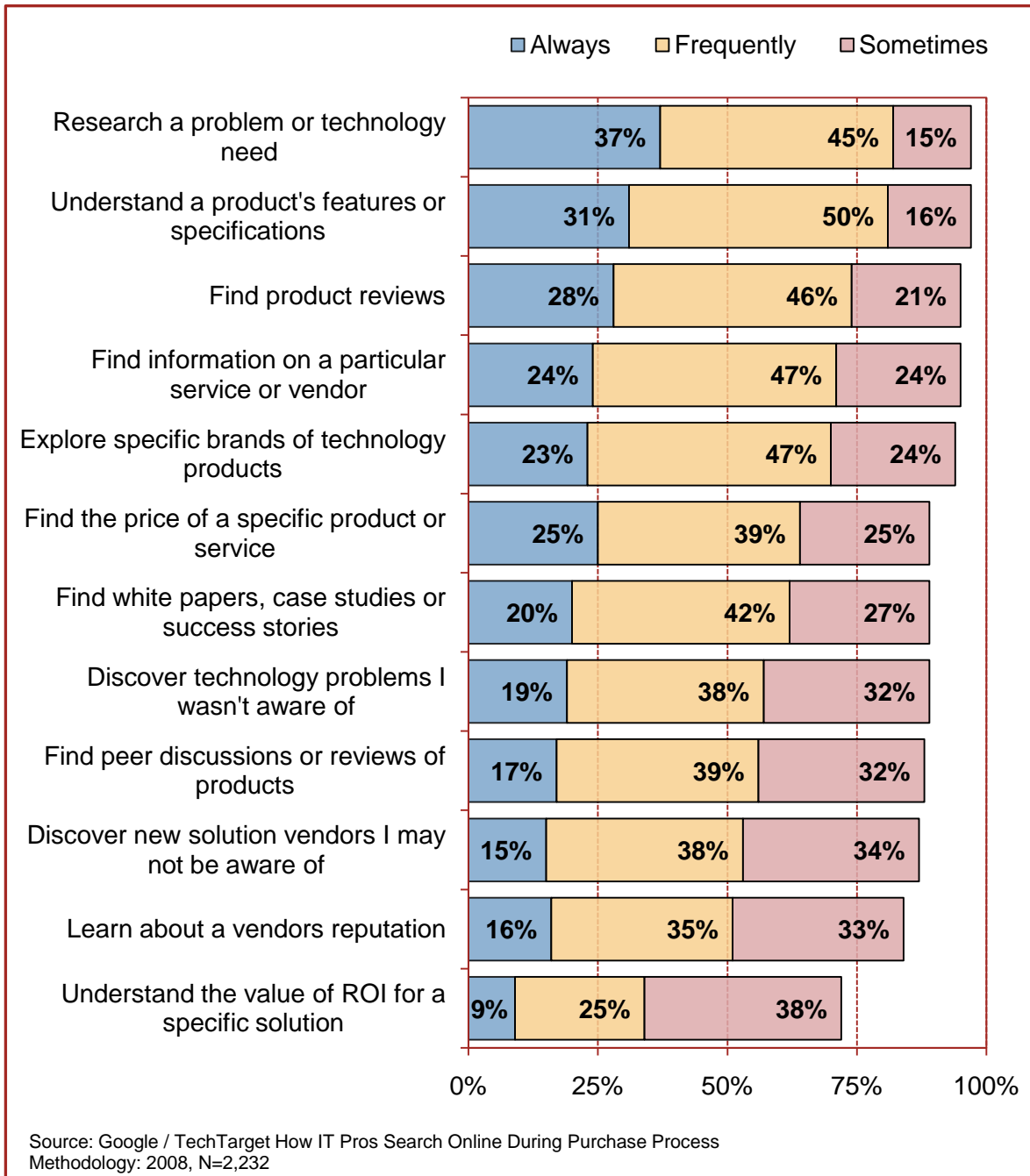
4.20 High-Quantity vs. High-Quality Leads Generated by Search Sources



The sales team is calling for not just more leads but better leads. And while SEO generates the highest rates in both categories, it is paid search that enables marketers to control the timing and placement of search result listings.

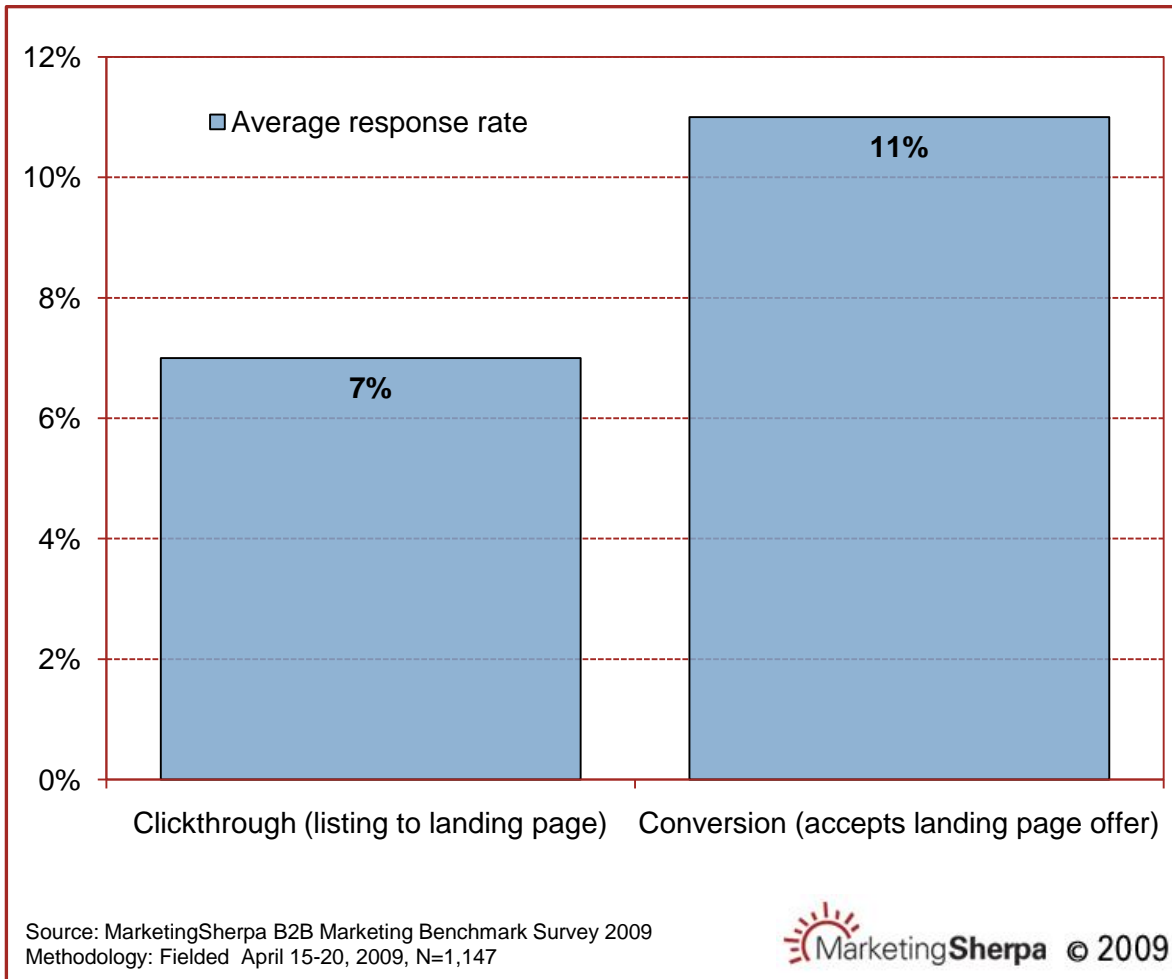
The most effective search strategies combine search engine optimization and paid search to give marketers and their sales teams the best of both worlds.

4.21 How Business Technology Buyers Use Search



Search is used in a variety of capacities throughout the buying process. Top activities conducted at search sites include researching a problem or technical need, understanding technology product features or specifications, finding product reviews and finding information on a particular service or vendor.

4.22 Performance Metrics for Paid Search on Google AdWords, Yahoo!, Etc.



The Holy Grail of optimizing paid search results obtained through any provider is the sequential relevancy of the search term to ad listing to landing page. A search that produces a highly relevant ad listing for the search term used will increase the clickthrough rate. A landing page offer that is highly relevant to both the search term used and the ad listing will increase the conversion rate.

Notes from the Field: Rethink Your Search Marketing to Boost ROI

We asked a search marketing expert with in-house and agency experience to share her advice for creating a budget that will help you optimize your dollars. The advice includes tips on:

- Creating goals based on the right metrics
- Managing SEO and PPC
- Setting aside money for testing
- Defending your budget requests

Planning a search marketing budget is challenging. The elastic nature of cost-per-click pricing, plus continual changes in competition levels and the effectiveness of targeted keywords, can overwhelm your best spending expectations.

Data from MarketingSherpa's most recent Search Marketing Benchmark Guide shows, in fact, that 49% of marketers set their PPC budgets too low and burn through that money too quickly. Many marketers also consider SEO efforts as "free," causing them to overlook the costs of external consulting or in-house staff time needed to implement tactics.

Our search marketing expert has managed search budgets at Smartsheet, Concur and Classmates.com. Before that, she experienced budgeting issues from the agency side, working with clients that often didn't know exactly how much to set aside for their campaigns.

Here is her advice for planning a search marketing budget that can adapt to changes in PPC and SEO strategies and create opportunities for additional testing that's essential for optimizing search efforts. She suggests five tactics for the budgeting process:

Tactic #1. Set goals based on the quality of the leads or customers generated by search marketing

You must start with a goal for your search campaigns when establishing a budget. The problem is that many marketers base their goals on metrics that don't reflect the true value of the leads or customers generated by search activities.

Too many marketers base their goals on conversions — without tracing those conversions farther down the sales pipeline to learn what they're really worth to the company.

She bases her search budget on the value of the subscribers generated through marketing. She traces visitors who converted from a search ad to a free trial as well as those free trial members who then converted to paying customers.

Ecommerce marketers have a slightly easier task. They can measure the average percentage of search visitors who buy and calculate the average value of those sales. Using those numbers, they can decide how much traffic they need to generate to reach a sales revenue goal.

B2B marketers using search for lead generation must trace the value of a lead beyond the conversion point — downloading a white paper or webinar — to a subsequent activity — moving from lead to opportunity to closed sale.

In each case, the key is determining the ultimate value of search visitors to correctly budget for cost-per-acquisition.

Tactic #2. Combine SEO and PPC into one search marketing budget

Next, combine SEO and PPC into one search marketing budget. Many organizations, particularly larger companies, operate SEO and PPC separately and, therefore, create distinct SEO and PPC budgets.

Operating the two channels under one budget gives you greater flexibility when spending your overall search marketing dollars. For example:

- Certain search terms may become too expensive to maintain high advertising placements. You can back off on PPC spending and focus more money and effort on increasing your natural search rankings for those terms.
- You may be nearing the end of a quarter and aren't making your PPC goals. You can temporarily suspend certain SEO projects and increase your budget in paid search to make up the difference.
- When you find yourself achieving great results with paid search campaigns — thanks to strong keyword selection, landing page optimization and bid management — you may find yourself under budget for paid search.

Rather than throwing more money at those paid search campaigns, she looks for opportunities to boost natural search rankings or even hire more internal or external help for specific SEO projects.

Important tip: Don't forget to budget for the work that goes into SEO projects. Just because you're not bidding on keywords does not mean there is no cost associated with those efforts.

Budget items include:

- Cost to create new search-optimized content
- Fees paid to external consulting agencies
- Value of the time spent by in-house IT or marketing personnel on SEO projects.

Tactic #3. Carve out a percentage of your search budget for testing

Testing is an essential tactic for managing search marketing campaigns. It's even more important for marketers who face tight limits on their search spending and feel they may have maxxed out their cost on PPC ads.

In that case, they can optimize the campaigns they're already running by testing new keywords, landing pages or advertising copy.

She recommends setting aside a percentage of your overall search marketing budget for ongoing testing. The exact percentage will depend on your unique needs. Here's how to calculate it:

Look back at your previous test results to determine an average success rate.

- Start by analyzing test result data for a meaningful period of time — the past year or two. Look for the rate at which those tests demonstrated a meaningful improvement in tactics. For example, historical analysis may show that you

conducted on average five tests per quarter, and two of those five tests generated significant improvements.

Plan next year's testing activity on that average success rate.

- You can set a goal for the number of tests you need to perform the following year based on that analysis. By examining the potential ROI of those tests, you also can estimate the potential payback from testing activity — but be conservative. “Tests are always going to go differently.”

Spread testing activity out across the year.

- It helps to maintain a consistent, ongoing approach to testing. This way you can adapt to challenges in your current search campaigns or new opportunities as they arise. Plan to conduct a certain number of tests each quarter.

Tactic #4. Analyze past campaign and test results for new activities

An added benefit of analyzing your past campaigns and test results is the ability to plan new campaign activities for the coming year. You will know which campaigns are your highest performers and which past tests delivered the best results. So, you can budget for those activities next year.

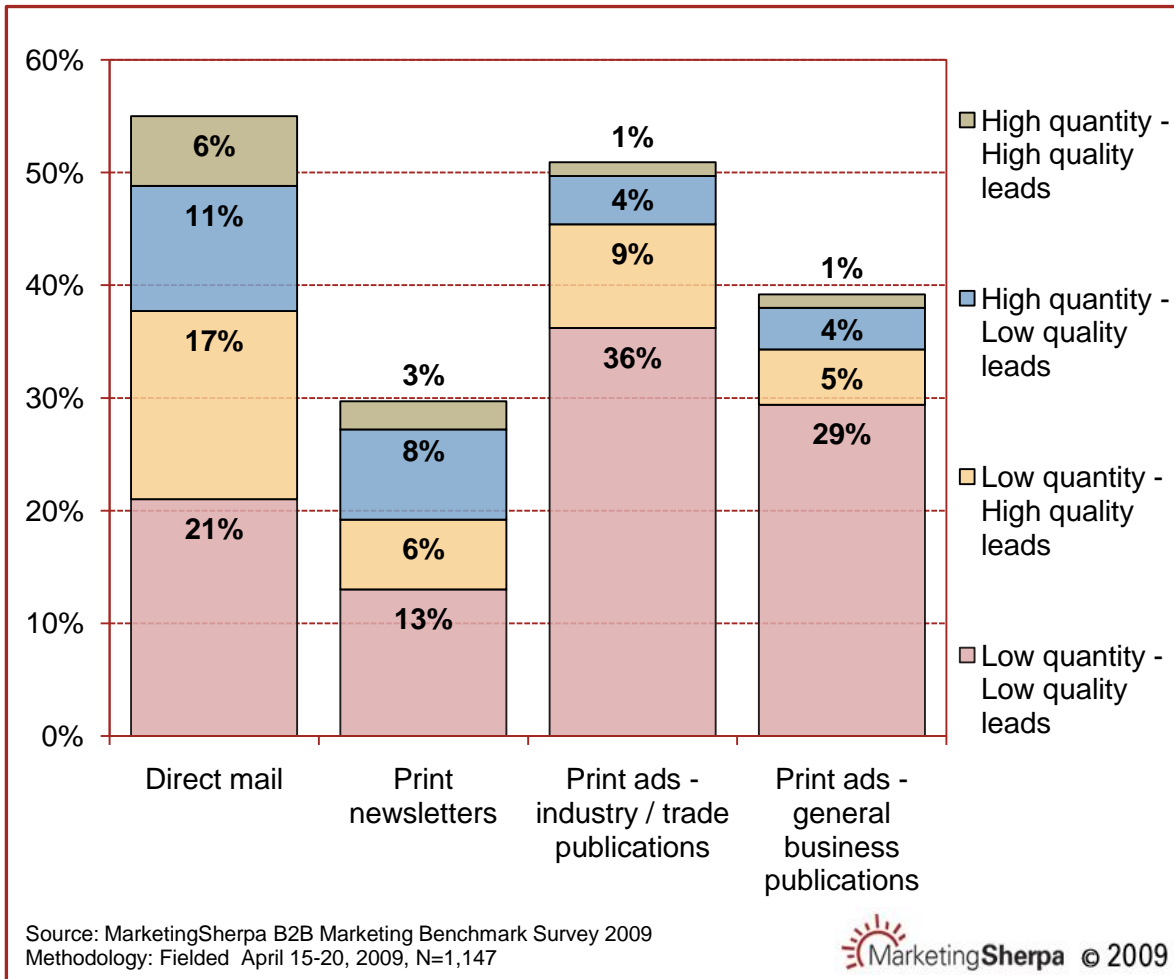
Tactic #5. Support your budget requests with facts

You've identified your most successful campaign tactics and may need to defend your current budget against potential cuts. You may have even targeted new tactics that will add to your budget. Be prepared to justify your budget requests with data that shows potential results.

- Prepare detailed data on tactics used in every campaign in that summary to answer additional questions from your boss or budget committee.
- Prepare data on the campaigns or tests that didn't perform well so you can answer questions about why certain tactics failed and what you learned from the experience.

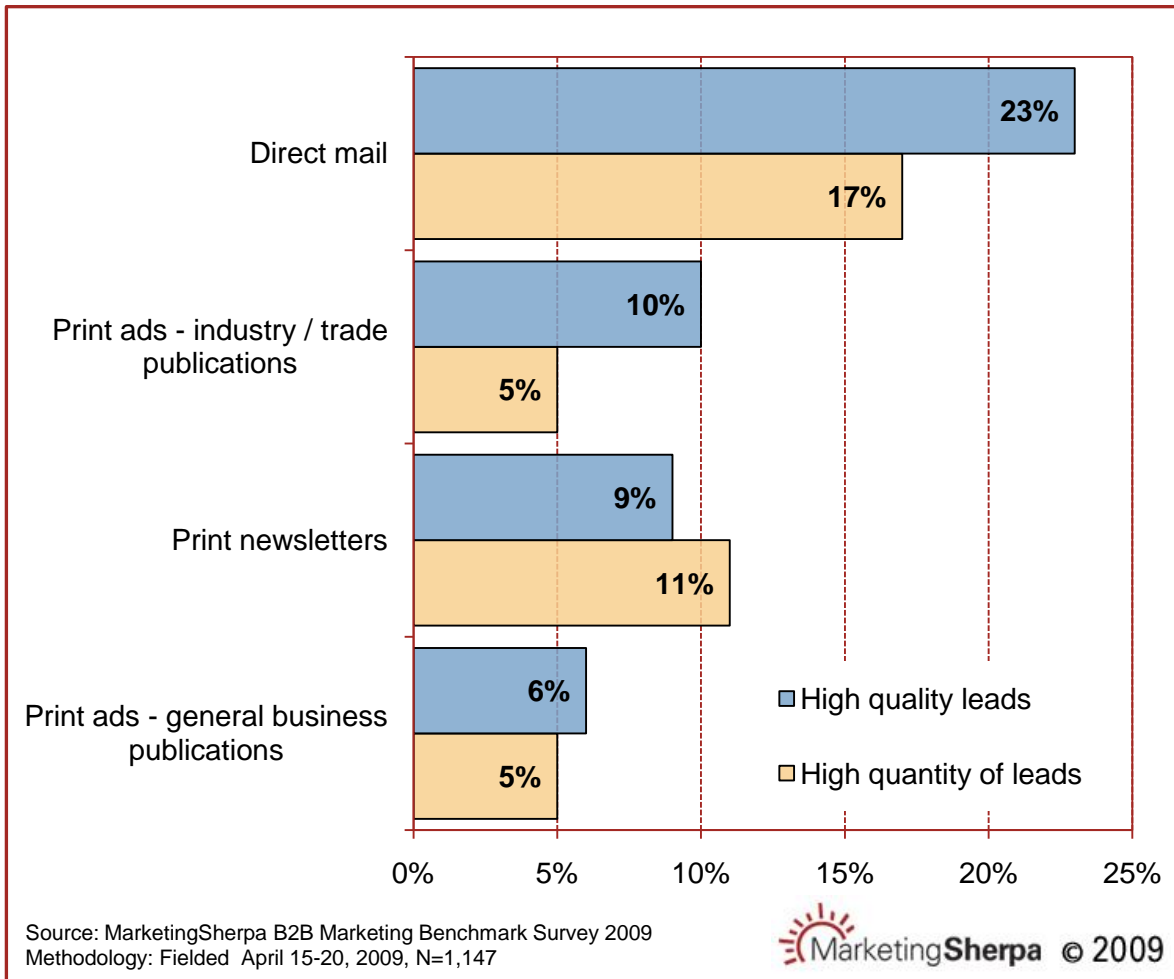
Offline Marketing

4.23 Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by Offline Marketing Tactics



The most notable takeaway from this chart is the bottom section of each bar, which represents low quantity / low quality leads generated. Offline tactics are less viable to marketers when the rate of low quantity / low quality leads increases CPM and conversion costs.

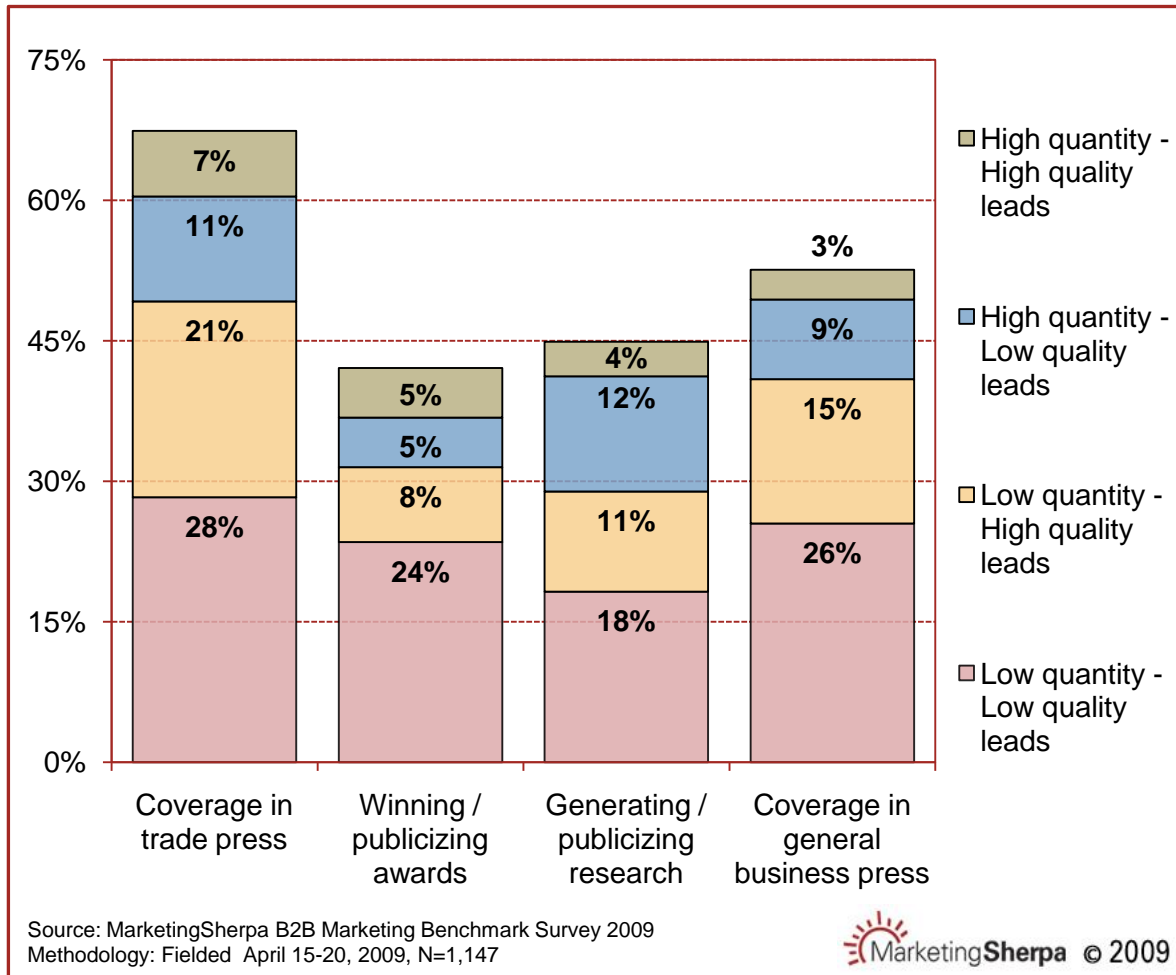
4.24 High-Quantity vs. High-Quality Leads Generated by Offline Marketing Tactics



Of the offline tactics rated, direct mail is more likely to generate the most — and best — leads. Fewer than 1 in 10 leads generated by other offline tactics are considered to be high quality.

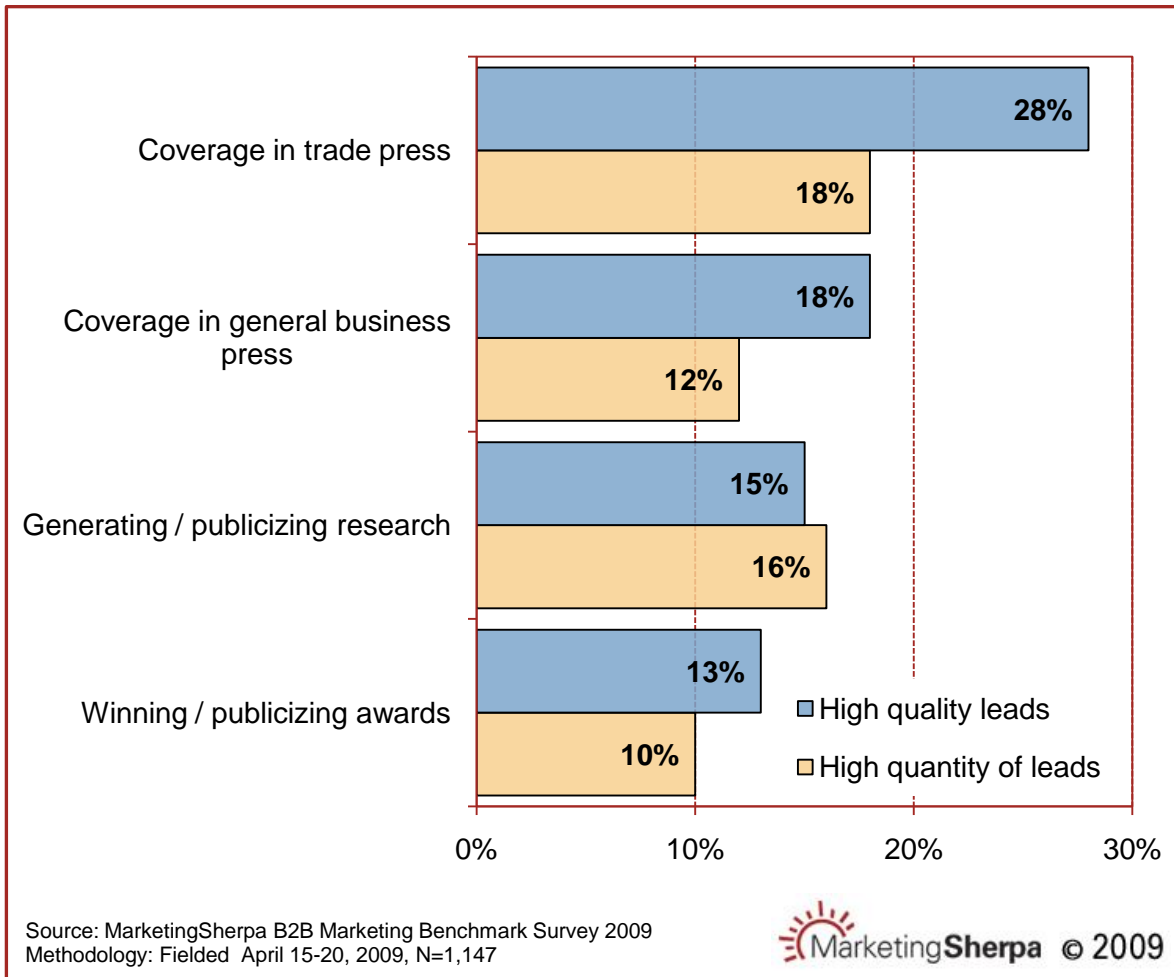
Public Relations

4.25 Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by Public Relations Tactics



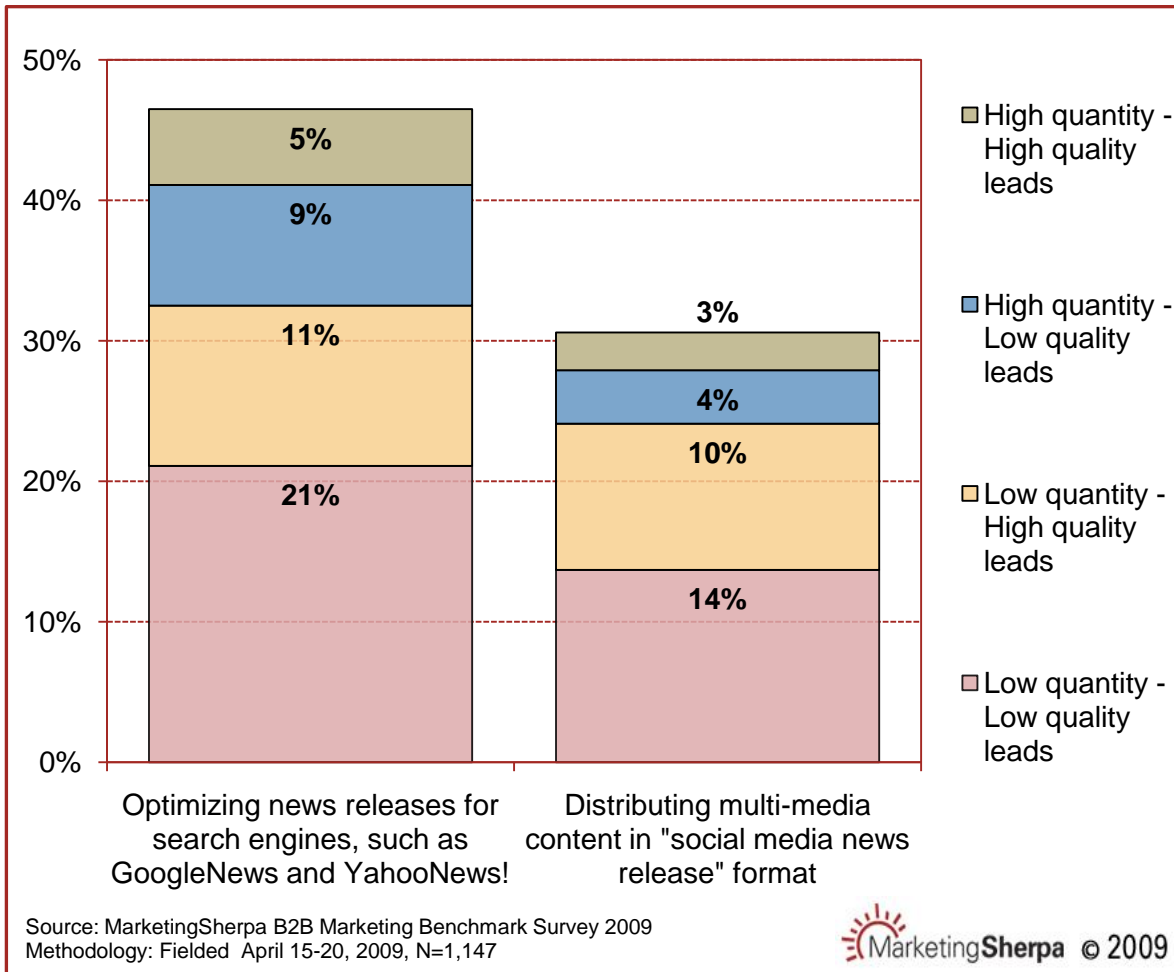
The practice of PR has been given a new set of rules, which has enhanced this field of communications. PR, more than any other marketing discipline, has been affected by social media and its influence on the way an organization communicates. Social media has provided publicists with new tools and techniques not only for reaching journalists, but also for sharing their message directly with prospects, customers, employees and online influencers.

4.26 High-Quantity vs. High-Quality Leads Generated by Public Relations Tactics



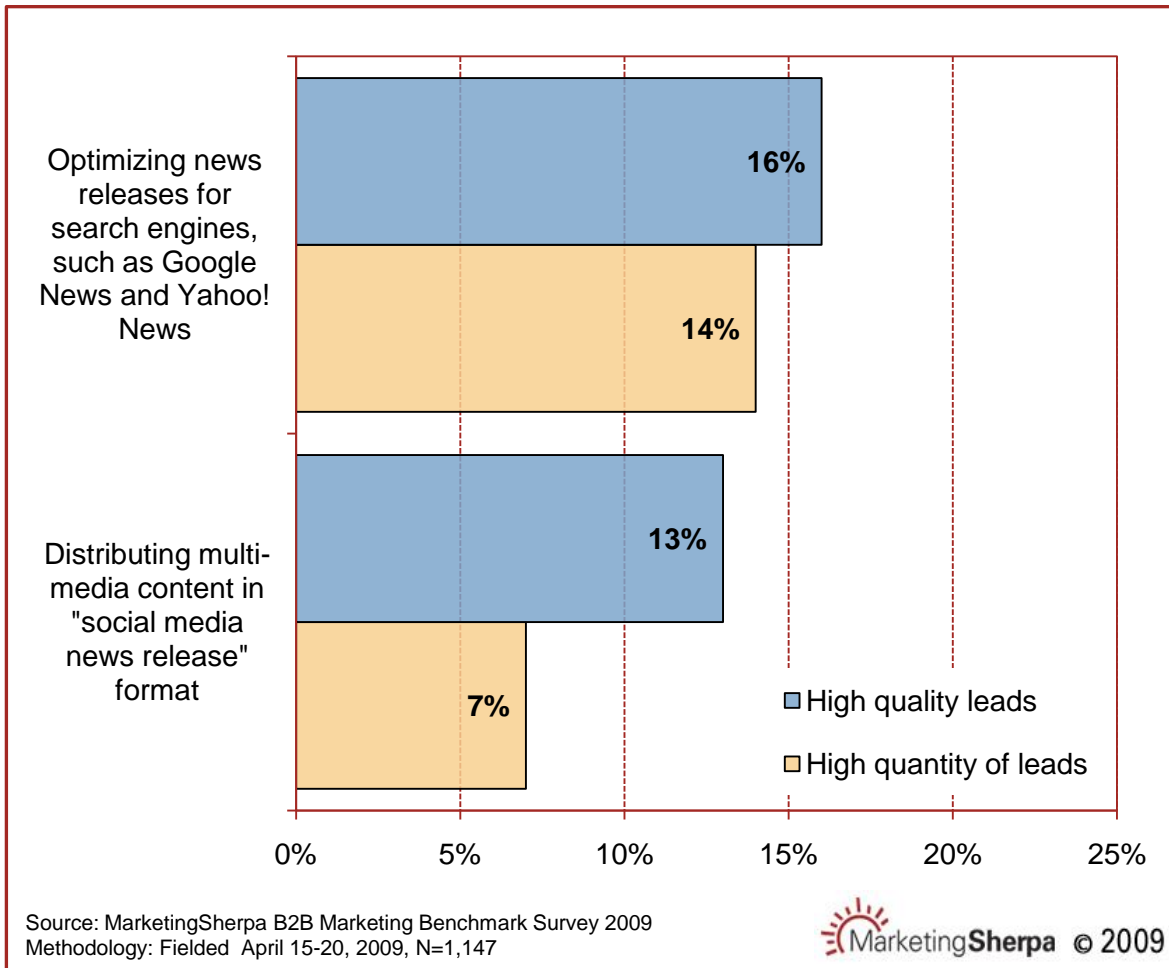
Coverage in the trade press, a mainstay of B2B publicity, continues to generate the highest rates of lead quantity and quality.

4.27 Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by News Release Tactics



Optimizing and distributing news releases via online wire services is driven by two goals: to generate publicity and to increase natural search rankings. What many marketers are still not aware of is that social media releases take these goals a step further by embedding and distributing content that is of value and accessible to bloggers, online journalists and other influencers in the social space. The social media news release is simply a Web 2.0 version of the traditional press release.

4.28 High-Quantity vs. High-Quality Leads Generated by News Release Tactics



While less than 20% of B2B marketers use social media news releases (MarketingSherpa Social Media Benchmark Survey, January 2009), the rate of leads generated that are considered to be high quality is has increased to 13% in a short period of time compared to 16% for the more established online news release.

Notes from the Field: Five Steps to Implementing PR 2.0

Building relationships with key influencers involves creating credibility for a product or service or brand without “selling” it through one-way messaging. One good word from a highly regarded blogger could equal thousands of impressions with customers and prospects. Here are five steps to implementing PR 2.0:

Step #1. Become an expert on your product, service and industry

You should be an expert user of the product or service you represent. It may seem rudimentary, but PR professionals often fail to do this. You should know everything that news outlets, trade journals and bloggers have to say about your product, service or industry.

Step #2. Find conversations taking place in Web 2.0

Finding conversations involves doing simple keyword searches. Start with the company name, brand name and product name to see what is being said about them. Then move on to industry-specific keyword searches. Take the digital camera industry, for example. Search for words like “shutter lag” since it’s a major pain point among buyers, experts and reviewers.

Tip: Search for conversations about competing brands and products. Document some of those conversations for future reference. It could help in measuring the success of your social media campaign.

Step #3. Find key influencers

Each basic search in a Web 2.0 community should produce opportunities to find influencers and experts talking about topics important to your client’s or company’s industry.

Perhaps it’s a Twitterer with 10,000 followers or a respected author of an online trade publication. Finding influencers takes some digging. It involves a great deal of searching, reading and documenting who the influencers are, what they’re writing about and where they’re writing.

Step #4. Become a resource for influencers

Demonstrate that you, too, can be a key resource for influencers. Here are some major dos and don’ts when conversing with influencers through social media outlets:

- **Do answer questions not related to your client or company.** This is where becoming an expert in the field comes in handy. You’re there to be a resource for them and to introduce them to things that don’t, in any way, shape or form, come across as a sales opportunity or marketing opportunity or pitch.
- **Do be proactive.** Observe what influencers are writing about before offering links to articles, statistics, blog posts or personal observations. Provide additional information on a topic they’re writing about. Do this before you ask anything of them.
- **Do converse and comment.** Comment on blog posts and write blogs that link to influencers’ websites, blogs and tweets.

- **Do connect influencers with other influencers.** Connecting influencers to other influencers can be a powerful step in building relationships.
- **Don't misrepresent who you are.** When commenting on blogs or forums, define yourself by name and provide the URL to your blog. People can see your background and experience on PR and social media. This personal branding provides a higher level of credibility because it shows that your intention isn't merely to promote your clients.
- **Don't send out spam.** Social media influencers will see right through intentions to praise a client or company or to sell something. Influencers don't want to be pitched. What they are looking for is others who can help them do things better, more efficiently.

Tip: Use a social bookmarker, such as Delicious, to save posts relevant to specific influencers. Try tagging each post with the name of the influencer it's meant for. This is an easy way to organize the content.

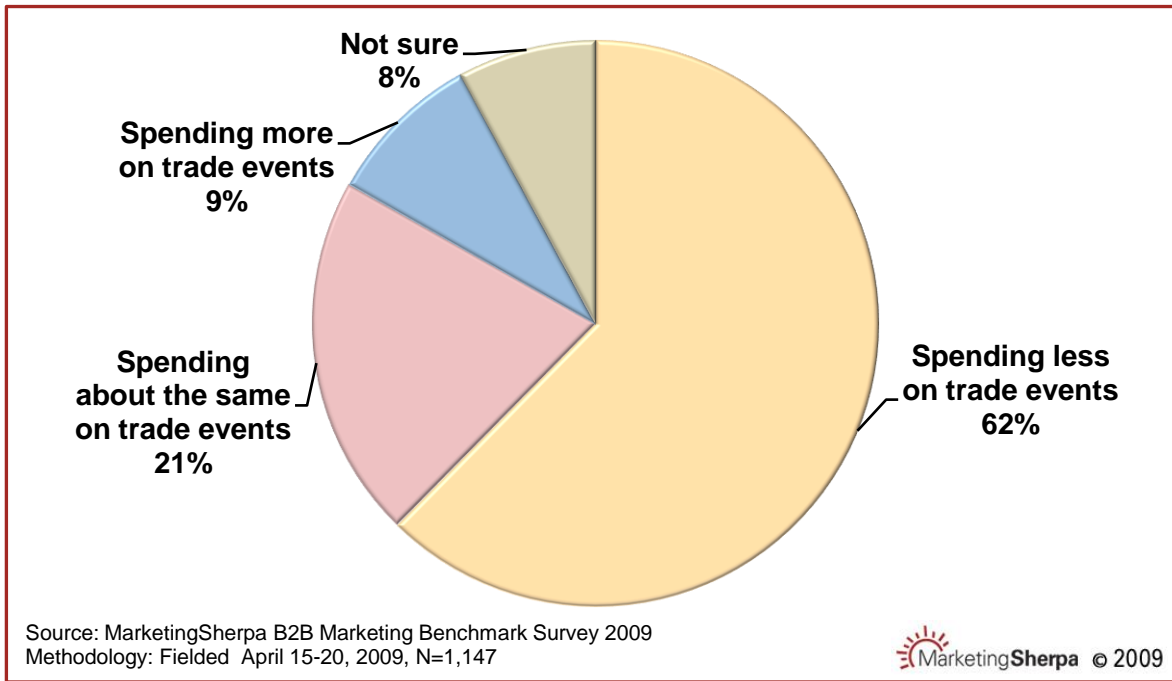
Step #5. Record and measure conversations

There are basically three items to record and measure with a PR 2.0 strategy:

- **Average frequency of relevant conversations.** You will participate in many relevant conversations each day, week and month. Keep a record. This will give you a comparison of the number of conversations to how well the brand is doing in sales or conversions or feedback from consumers.
- **Frequency of conversations about the brand on the most active communities.** This is a good way to measure if the conversations you engage in are having the desired outcome of increasing conversations about the brand on highly trafficked Web 2.0 sites.
- **Amount of time, resources required to make the conversations happen per community per day.** Compare the time it takes to create conversations to the number of estimated impressions on Web 2.0 sites. If you can connect that to an increase in sales, for example, it proves the effort was worth it. These conversations are called social capital and "the new currency."

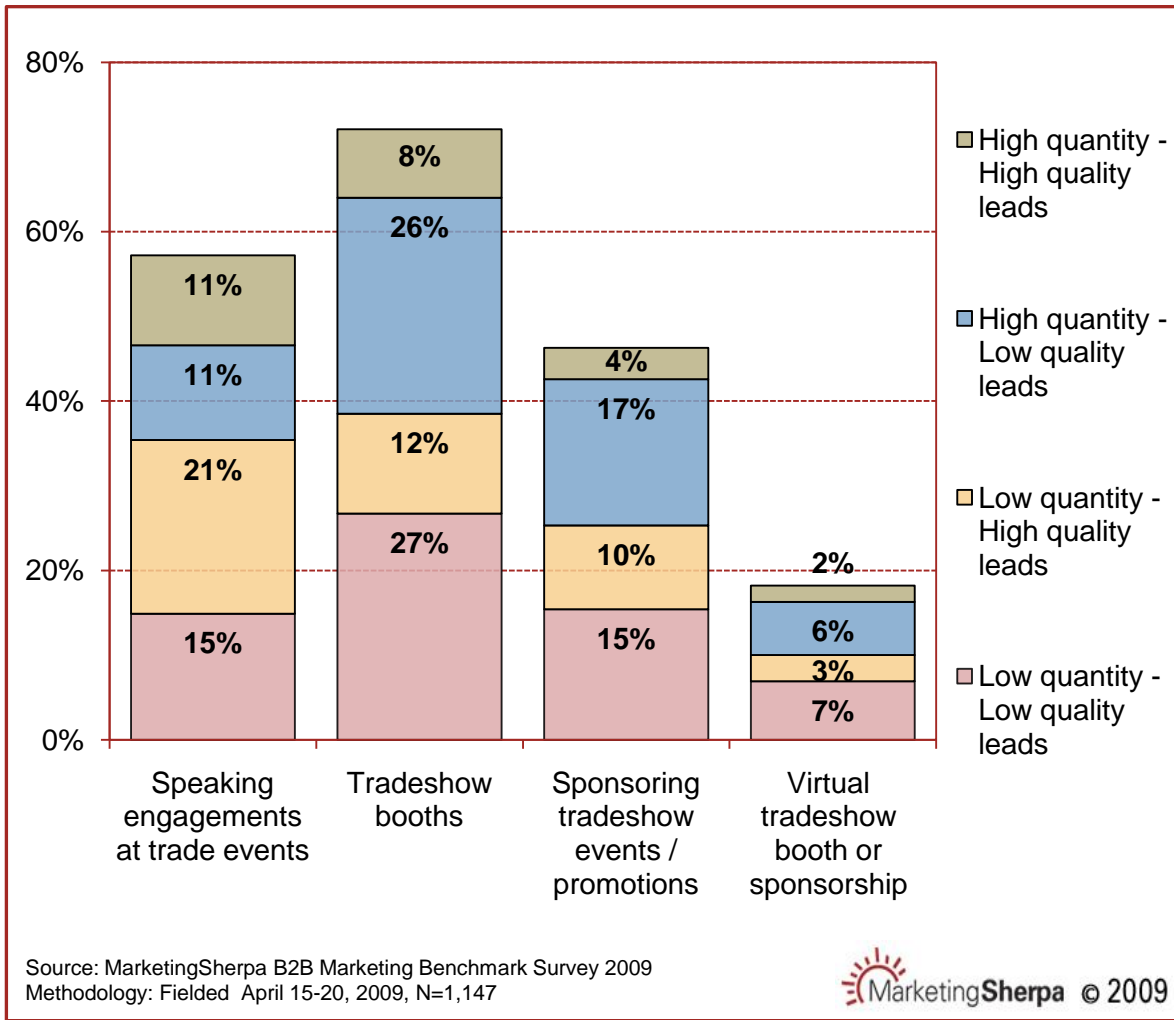
Tradeshows

4.29 Organizations Spending Less on 2009-2010 Tradeshows



Tradeshow budgets are usually hit hard during difficult economic times, and this recession is no different. More than twice as many marketers say their organization will spend less on tradeshows in the 2009-2010 season than those who will spend more or about the same combined.

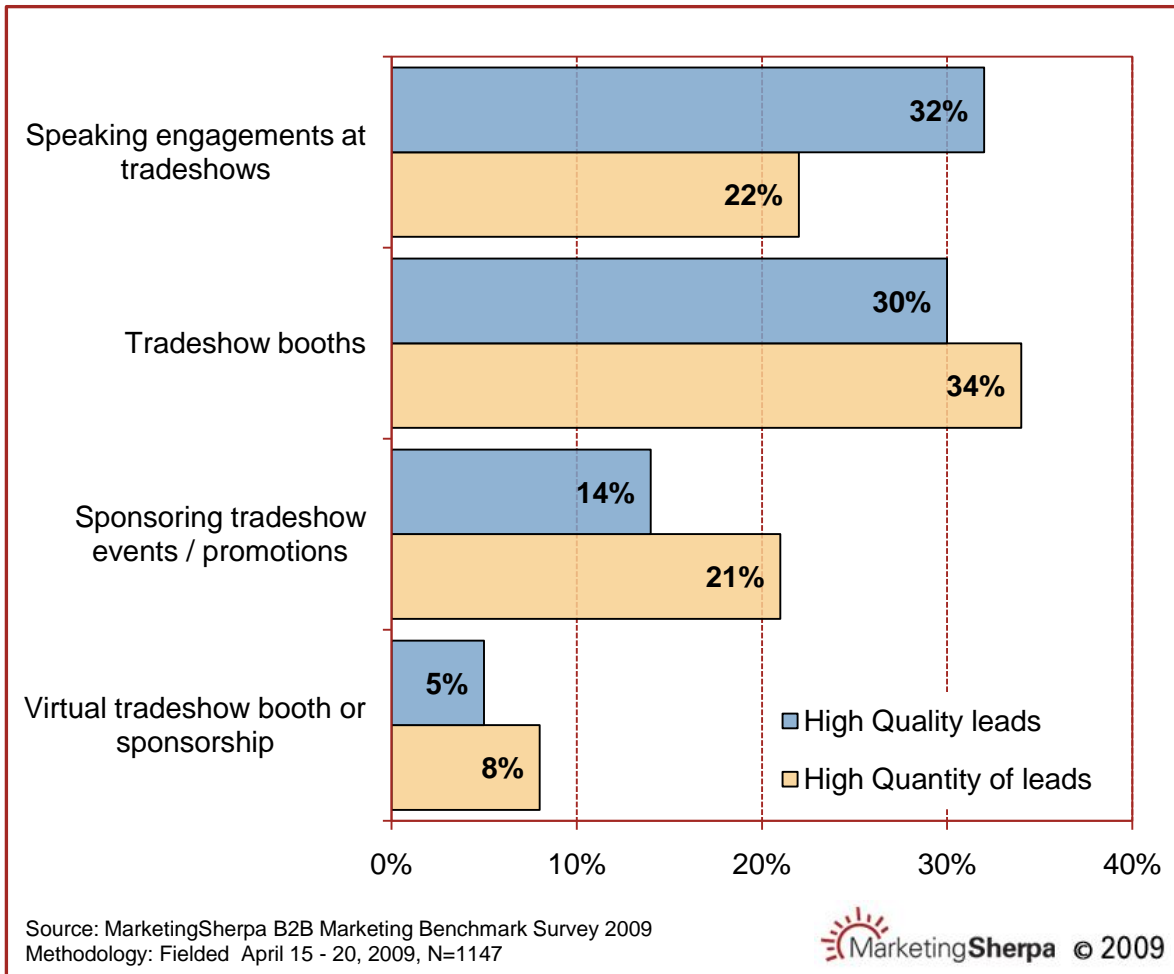
4.30 Quality and Quantity of Leads Generated by Tradeshow Tactics



Even though organizations will spend a great deal less on tradeshow marketing, the events arena is still a very viable source of high-quality leads. And tradeshow booths continue to be the primary source of event leads.

Virtual tradeshows are rapidly increasing in popularity, in part because they are free of travel expense, which has been a significant factor in driving tradeshow attendance lower during this downturn.

4.31 High-Quantity vs. High-Quality Leads Generated by Tradeshow Tactics



Speaking engagements at tradeshows are not only low cost (usually limited to travel expenses) but they also produce the largest percentage of high-quality leads. Combine a speaking engagement with the presence of a tradeshow booth to achieve the best of both worlds in terms of lead quality and quantity.

Notes from the Field: On-Site Conference Doubles Attendance Virtually

The recession has put corporate travel budgets under the microscope. That's the environment the commercial director of a scientific journal faced while marketing a three-day conference for vaccinologists worldwide. The director's team worried that many prospects with limited travel budgets would skip the event.

The director realized that for every conference delegate they attract, there were many more that wouldn't attend because of time constraints or limited travel budgets. Scientists and researchers in developing nations, in particular, often can't afford the expense. They wanted to take our scientific knowledge to as wide an audience as possible.

The team was familiar with the potential reach of online products. They wondered if a virtual component tied into the on-site event could replicate the conference experience.

The team developed a free Vaccine Virtual Congress for one of the three days of the event. It featured audio and video presentations streamed live from the conference and a virtual tradeshow complete with online chats and visits to sponsors' booths.

Here are the five steps they took to market the virtual event:

Step #1. Choose presentations to feature

First, the team focused on ways to satisfy the two primary reasons prospects come to conferences:

1. Access relevant content from industry experts
2. Network with their peers

For the content, they streamed six presentations on the broadest range of topics, including:

- Research on specific applications
- Vaccine research models for influenza
- U.S. government funding for vaccine R&D and acquisition
- Vaccine safety

They also looked for a mix of speakers with a good draw, including:

- Representatives from major pharmaceutical companies
- University researchers
- A representative from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

To test reactions to different virtual formats, they offered full streaming video for three presentations and audio and online slides only for the other three. For online networking, the team offered:

- Q&A with the presenters at the end of each session
- Instant messaging capability between virtual attendees
- Online discussion forums and chats

Attendees could begin their own discussions, but the team also prepared a schedule of specific chat topics to get conversations started. All virtual sessions and interactive features have been archived and made available on-demand for three months after the live event.

Step #2. Invite sponsors to create virtual booths

Replicating the conference experience online included creating a tradeshow floor with sponsor booths. Because they tested the virtual conference concept, the team didn't sell virtual booth space. Instead, they included it as a bonus for their in-person conference exhibitors.

Five sponsors created virtual booths. In the online booths, attendees could ask questions of sponsors and download educational content.

They also created a unique feature of scientific conferences: "poster sessions." These involved PhD students presenting new research to the scientific community in the form of graphic posters. The virtual session displayed all the posters included in the in-person event in a searchable format. Attendees also could download PDF versions of each poster.

Step #3. Promote virtual event through email

A prime concern of the team was whether the free event would cannibalize attendance from the in-person event, but they decided they didn't need to market the virtual event until after most delegates had registered and booked their travel arrangements.

The team began promoting the virtual congress two weeks before the live session with email invitations and an online registration form:

- They selected names from the in-house database of customers and prospects, focusing on contacts from the vaccine field.
- The team de-duped names of contacts who had registered for the in-person event.
- The first HTML email message included:
 - Introduction to the virtual congress concept
 - Program of the online sessions
 - Description of the interactive features
 - Hotlink to an online registration page
- The second email invitation was sent one week before the event. In addition to the program information and link to the registration page, this message included graphics and videos that demonstrated the look and feel of the virtual environment.
- The last email invitation was sent two days before the event. It featured a final reminder that pre-registration was necessary and a large call to action that sent prospects to the registration form.

Step #4. Send email reminders to convert registrants to attendees

As with any virtual event, the marketing plan included a campaign to convert registered users into attendees. The team used three messages to encourage attendees to log in on the day of the event:

- The first reminder went out three days before the event. It included a confirmation of the attendee's registration and a basic reminder of the schedule and log-in procedure.
- The second reminder was sent the day before the event. Message copy emphasized that there was only one day until the virtual congress and reminded attendees to run a system check to make sure their log-ins worked.

- The final reminder was sent four hours before the start of the event. It included the URL for logging in.

Step #5. Use support team to manage virtual congress and assist attendees

On the day of the virtual congress, members of the team managed the event by logging in to the system. Team members at the in-person event monitored online activity on their laptops. Also, a dedicated virtual events team stayed logged in during the entire event.

The virtual team acted as moderators and greeters for virtual attendees. Tasks included:

- Welcoming attendees
- Announcing session schedules
- Answering questions and receiving feedback
- Starting and moderating scheduled chat sessions

The virtual event nearly doubled the total attendance of 400 for the conference:

- 309 virtual delegates attended the online event
- 1,300 prospects registered to attend the virtual congress

Other session statistics:

- Attendees spent an average of 86 minutes in the virtual congress.
- Video webcasts had slightly higher attendance than audio-only portions, which could have been because of the topics or the popularity of the speakers.

The team expects to offer the full video webcast format at future virtual events because it gives a better user experience.

The virtual congress also expanded lead generation capabilities for their sponsors. Because the archived version of the virtual congress is still active, the team is still tracking registration rate and leads generated through booth visits.

Notes from the Field: Stealth Product Launch at Tradeshow Generates 374% More Leads

Marketers plan campaigns around new product launches to maximize the impact of industry buzz and generate sales leads. The Marketing Services Director for a medical technology company faced a rare opportunity when supporting the launch of the company's new CT scanner.

Advances made during the product-development process allowed the company to leapfrog over the highest level of scanner technology on the market. The marketing team realized they were sitting on a blockbuster and wondered whether keeping product details secret until launch day would create an outsized response from industry media reps and prospects.

The team decided to conduct a stealth product launch to unveil the product at a five-day event that attracted 60,000 attendees from the medical community. The industry expected the launch of a new scanner — but not one that could create the most complete image of a human body ever made.

They developed marketing materials and activities without revealing the secret of their scanner. Here are the six steps they took:

Step #1. Require team to sign non-disclosure agreement

To reduce the chance of news leaking before the conference, only a small group of people were informed about the plan to launch the scanner. Each team member had to sign a non-disclosure agreement when they were brought into the process.

Among the approximately 30 people who signed the NDA:

- Business unit managers
- Marketing managers
- Service engineers who installed trial units at hospitals

Trials on the units took place at five partner hospitals. Here, the team faced a separate challenge of recruiting those institutions to keep quiet about the scanner as well because they didn't think it was appropriate to ask customers to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

Instead, the head of the worldwide imaging division visited each hospital and asked the key players in the trials not to reveal the scanner's capabilities. Plans for the surprise launch were explained, and the institutions were offered the chance to be a part of the expected buzz at the tradeshow.

Step #2. Adapt marketing materials

The marketing team learned that they would be launching a scanner only a few months before the tradeshow. They adapted marketing materials already in the works to reflect the change. A name for the new device eased the adaptation by reflecting its ability to deliver a complete organ image in one pass. Names of previous scanners had included a number of detector rows.

The new name allowed the team to retain much of the marketing materials already in development and simply update the specifications to reflect the expanded capabilities.

Step #3. Decline to comment about launch

In the run-up to the launch, the team replied with “no comment” to typical questions from reporters and customers about a new scanner being unveiled at the tradeshow. The scanner had been in development and beta testing for several years, so many customers and reporters were anticipating an official launch.

The team simply said it was too early to discuss details of the launch and adopted a strict policy of neither confirming nor denying assumptions, and they encouraged reporters to visit the company booth at the tradeshow.

Step #4. Hold press conference and media tour

The team made the new scanner the focal point of its tradeshow booth and events. They kicked off the event with a press conference and media tour that set the tone for the five-day meeting. Details included:

- Media members were briefed when the tradeshow floor opened on the first day of the conference.
- Reporters were invited to hear a discussion and take a walkthrough of the new scanner. That education was designed to have them spread the news to attendees from day one.

The company booth, which opened at the same time, was dedicated to explaining the development of the new scanner. It included:

- Model of the new scanner unit
- Display that explained the evolution of scanner technology
- Technical and sales staff on hand to answer questions

Step #5. Private events for customers and prospects

The media tour and product-launch announcement were followed by two invitation-only events for customers, prospects and medical personnel. Separate sessions were held on the first and second nights of the show. They hosted two versions of the event because tradeshow rules limited each to 500 radiologists.

The marketing team sent invitations to a list of customers, prospects, radiologists, hospital administrators and technologists. They identified potential attendees using several sources:

- Sales team recommendations of their top prospects
- House database of customers
- Radiologists and other medical staff registered for the tradeshow

Invitations were sent by email or through personal notes and telephone calls by sales and marketing staff. Print and online advertisements also ran with major industry publications. Attendees had to register for the events using a special landing page linked to email invitations and industry ads.

The events featured presentations from the company and the radiology staff of the five hospitals that had installed test units. They gave the audience a description of their hands-on experience with the scanner.

Step #6. Track tradeshow leads and follow up

The events team kept track of tradeshow leads by scanning attendee badges of prospects who visited the booth.

As soon as the product was revealed, the team launched a series of online marketing materials to maintain momentum. Materials included:

- Microsite dedicated to CT technology that outlined the specifications of the new scanners and examples of clinical applications
- New white paper discussing the technology
- PowerPoint presentation for sales team
- Q&A document to answer questions about the scanner's technical capabilities
- Bound book — rather than the typical brochure — that discussed the improvements of the new system

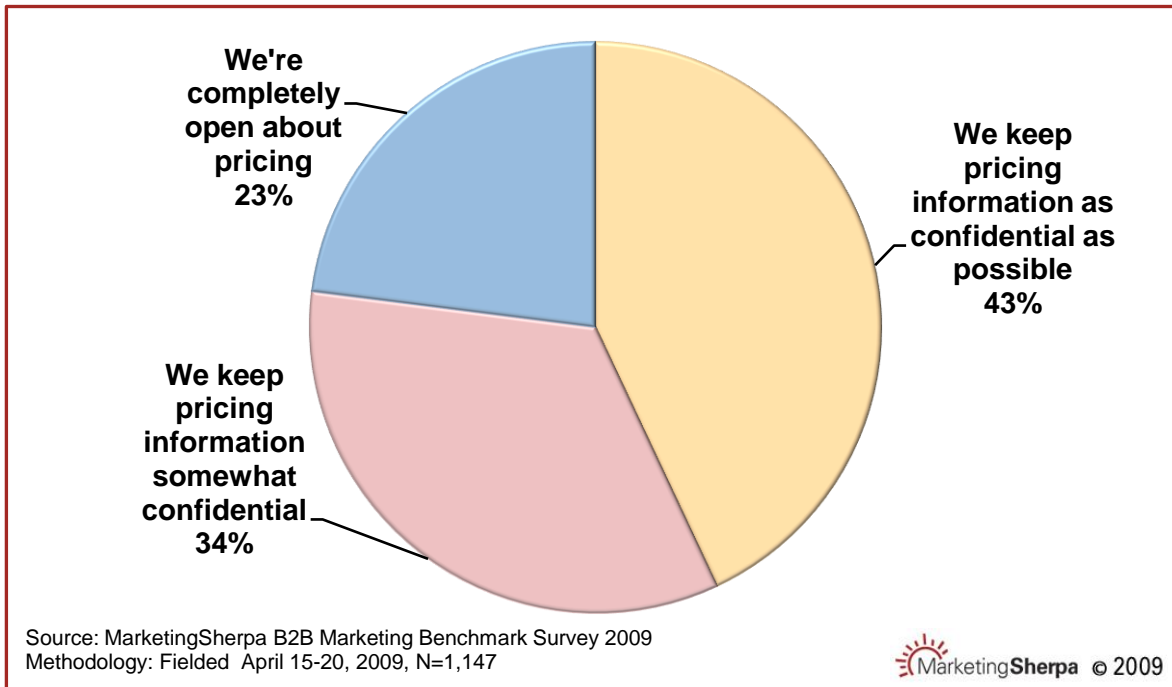
The stealth launch turned out to be an overwhelming success. Not only did they manage to keep the technological advancement under wraps, the surprise made the new scanner the talk of the tradeshow.

The buzz showed up in the key metrics the team tracked:

- 98% of the trade media at the show attended the product launch; some reporters had articles available online the same day.
- More than 1,600 guests attended the private events, doubling the team's goal.
- Booth traffic translated into 299 leads generated at the event — a 374% increase over the number of leads generated the previous year.
- 50 orders for the \$2.5 million scanner from hospitals around the world had been placed by June.

Pricing Information

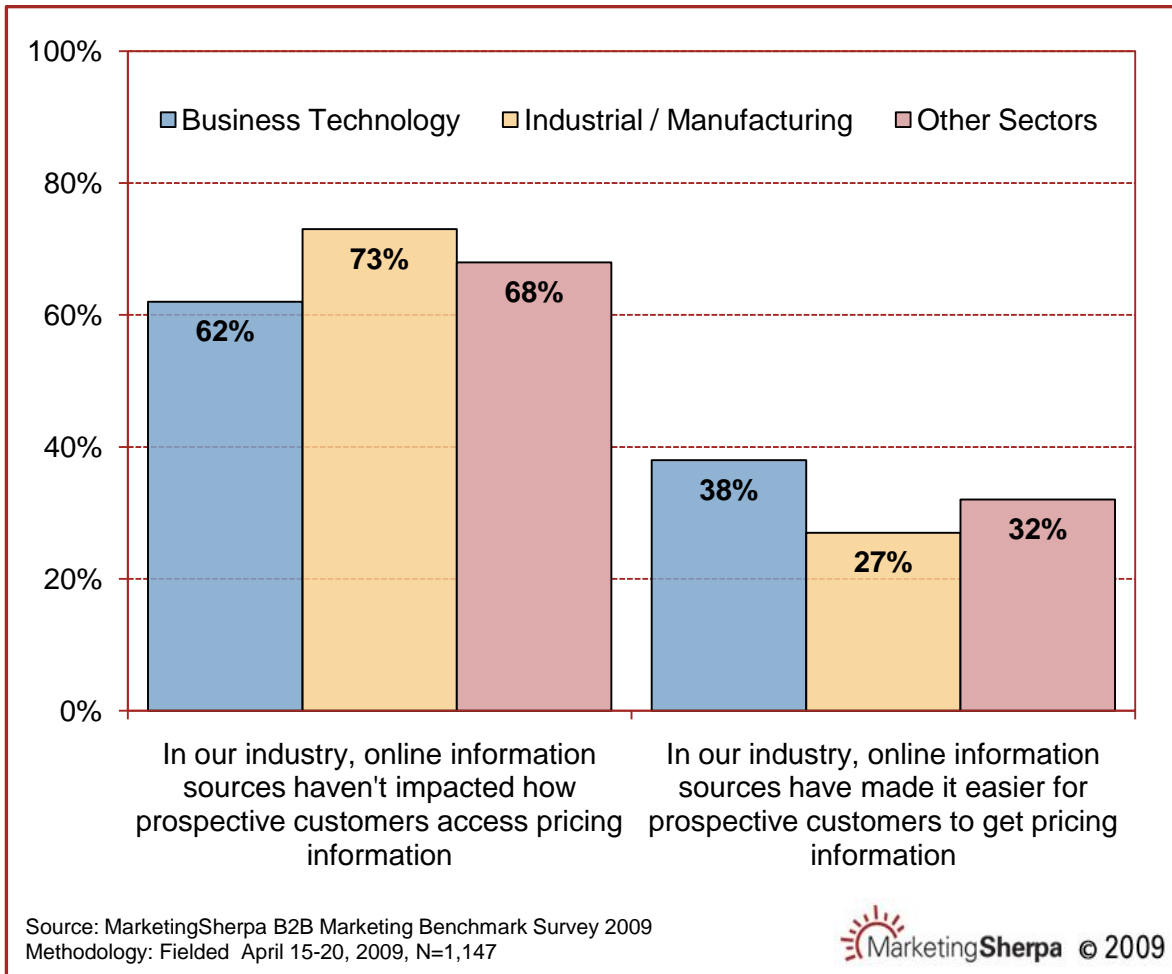
4.32 Marketer Attitudes about Access to Pricing Information



Keeping pricing information confidential has long been a coveted business practice. But the Internet has changed that with less than half of marketers now saying their organizations continue to keep pricing information confidential.

Today, nearly a quarter of B2B organizations are completely open about their pricing. Why? Because it can create a competitive advantage. Openness results in a path of least resistance that buyers are often more likely to take, at least in the beginning of the research process. For products or services with a long sales cycle or high degree of consideration, it can be a real advantage by allowing lesser-known, second- or third-tier brands to get a foot in the door.

4.33 How the Internet Has Changed Access to Pricing Information, by Industry Sector



While online access to pricing information has not affected marketers as much in some industries, such as the industrial / manufacturing sector, it has become easier for prospective customers in other sectors, such as business technology, to find pricing information online.

Notes from the Field: Integrated Marketing 2.0 Tactics Boost Lead Generation and Reduce Cost per Lead

Like most marketers, the VP Marketing for a business technology brand was experiencing changes in the B2B lead generation landscape. Factors, such as lengthening sales cycles and expanding buying committees, were making traditional tactics less effective at generating demand for the company's business-intelligence software.

Rented email lists weren't performing as well as they once did. The company's house email list was being bombarded with offers, and, as a result, open and clickthrough rates were dropping. The marketing team needed a new strategy.

The team's Marketing 2.0 initiative examined their strategy in the context of three major goals:

- Presenting the company as a thought leader
- Generating demand
- Supporting and enabling the sales team

They saw a lead nurturing strategy as the common thread connecting those three goals and developed a new process to shape outreach efforts, engage prospects and qualify them for the sales team.

Here are four key strategies they used to refine their lead nurturing process:

Strategy #1. Revamp website with additional offers

The team first examined how well their website functioned as an entry point into the lead nurturing funnel. With engagement in mind, the team overhauled its website to provide additional offers and features for prospects. Their goal was to appeal to a range of prospects and to determine which types of offers or content strategies created the most interest.

The result was a site that included varying types of content, such as white papers, online demos, events and online communities.

Information organized by product line or business task, such as performance management, budgeting and forecasting, measurement and reporting and scorecarding.

Information organized by industry, such as finance, government, retail, manufacturing and healthcare.

Prospects who wanted to download content or register for events were required to fill out a Web form. That form helped establish a prospect profile. Key fields included name, company, industry, department and job title.

Strategy #2. Create lead nurturing program based on prospect profile

The website served as the entry point for the team's new lead nurturing program, which sent additional relevant offers based on the prospect's profile and previous activity. Information from registration forms was sent back to the team's central data warehouse. There, the data was analyzed for variables, such as:

- New or returning prospect

- Frequency of visits
- Additional contact within customer company
- Previous actions taken

Each prospect then received an initial follow-up response that was relevant to the offer to which they had responded. For example, if a prospect viewed an online demo on reporting, they would receive a follow-up offer for a reporting white paper.

Two more follow-up emails pointed prospects to additional relevant content, and invited prospects to contact a member of the sales team, or sign up for an email newsletter. The follow-ups were automated to deliver a flow of offers based on three major categories:

- Key marketing program, such as promotions around an annual event, a product launch, or a campaign aimed at prospects using SAP or other software
- Key industry, such as retail or banking
- Job title targets, such as IT or line-of-business managers

Within each of those three primary categories, the team created a custom sequence of messages that were further organized according to three major product focus areas:

- Reporting
- Scorecarding
- Planning

The result of that segmentation strategy was 1,460 unique lead nurturing paths for prospects to enter.

Strategy #3. Conduct statistical analysis of marketing interactions

To further refine their lead nurturing program, the team examined historical data for correlations among variables in the marketing cycle and their outcomes. Working off a database of more than 200,000 marketing interactions, the team conducted a statistical analysis to help them prioritize their marketing tactics and investments.

Trends uncovered during this analysis included:

- Online demos had the highest rate of opportunity creation.
- Face-to-face events had the largest impact on increasing deal size and close rate.
- The conversion rate from lead to opportunity virtually died 10 days after the prospect first engaged with an offer or piece of content.

Strategy #4. Test response time for three-touch nurturing program

Statistical analysis gave the team a new hypothesis to test with their automated three-touch email protocol. Historical data indicated higher lead-to-opportunity conversion rates when prospects had repeated interactions with the company within 24 hours of registration. So, the team decided to condense the time between its automated response emails.

They tested the following nurturing schedules:

- First response email — two days vs. four hours after registration
- Second response email — 10 days vs. 24 hours later
- Third response email — 20 days vs. 10 days later

The team's adoption and refinement of its lead nurturing strategy has yielded dramatic results. Thanks to the new website, 11% of website visitors now complete a registration form. That compares to an average industry capture rate of 3%.

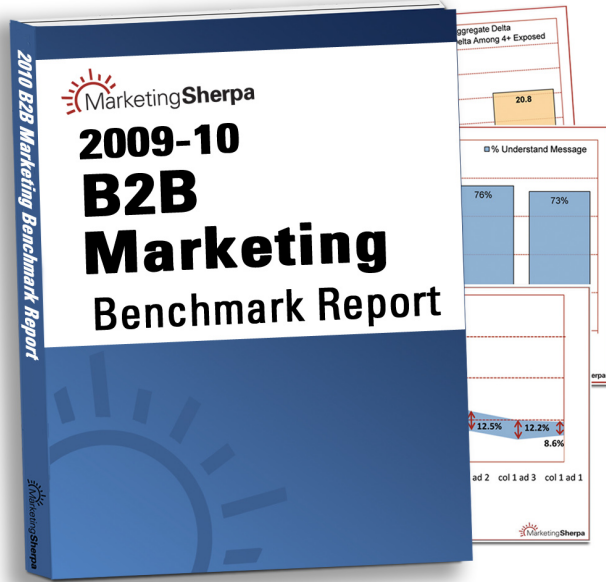
The team compared results from its segmented, three-touch nurturing emails to those of traditional multi-touch campaigns to the entire house list. The improvement was remarkable:

- Open rates increased from 13.2% to 33.3%
- CTR increased from 0.09% to 15.5%
- Response rate increased from 0.05% to 17.5%

The team also reduced their cost per lead 30% to 40%. Better alignment between sales and marketing goals means that the marketing team generates 30% of the company's pipeline per quarter.

Fax form to: (401) 247-1255

Special Hubspot \$100 Webinar Discount (ends 12/31)



Improve the Effectiveness of Your B2B Marketing! MarketingSherpa 2009 - 10 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report will help you:

- Focus your efforts on the most profitable and actionable tactics
- Allocate budget for existing programs and exploring new opportunities
- Inspire you with ideas from B2B marketers who have achieved success
- Measure success and evaluate opportunity with nearly 1,150 of your peers

PDF & Print (\$347 plus shipping & handling). Please email me my PDF instant download, plus ship my printed 219 page copy when available. (originally \$447)

PDF Only (\$297). Please email me my PDF instant download. (originally \$397)

About  **MarketingSherpa**

Praised by The Economist, Harvard Business School's Working Knowledge Site, and Entrepreneur.com, MarketingSherpa is a research firm publishing benchmark data and how-to guidance for marketing professionals.

237,000 marketers read our exclusive Case Study newsletters every week, and thousands attend our annual Summits on email, subscription sales, and b-to-b marketing.

100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEE

MarketingSherpa guarantees your satisfaction. If anything we sell doesn't meet your satisfaction, return it for a 100% hassle-free refund immediately!

MarketingSherpa, Inc.
499 Main Street, Warren, RI, 02885
Phone: 877-895-1717
(if outside the US, call 401-247-7655)
Fax: (401) 247-1255

First email my PDF copy to: _____
(we respect your privacy)

Then mail my printed copy to:

Name _____ Title _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov _____ Country _____ Zip/Postal _____

Phone (in case of questions) _____

Charge my: MasterCard Visa AMEX

Card# _____ Exp. Date _____

Print Cardholder Name _____

Signature _____

OR Bill Me* Check Enclosed to MarketingSherpa Inc.

* Billing: I understand I will not receive the Guides until payment is received

CODE: ES1010

Fax form to: (401) 247-1255