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Demand Generation Primer for 2023

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Initiatives: Demand Generation

> Building awareness, creating and nurturing demand, and driving engagement through an intentional content strategy are keys to growth. Technology marketing teams must develop strategies that fuel field and partner marketing, demand generation and account-based marketing programs.

Scope

This initiative covers planning, developing, and executing traditional demand generation and account-based programs to create awareness and engagement from both prospects and existing customers.

Topics in this initiative include:

- **Build Awareness:** Increase visibility and establish your position in the market by using influencer marketing, paid and earned media, owned social channels, and events channels.

- **Develop ContentStrategy:** Design, create and utilize content that interests, informs, engages and guides buyers throughout their journey.

- **Generate and Nurture High-Quality Leads:** Execute multichannel approaches to reach and progressively engage qualified buyers across the buying journey, supported through informative campaigns, content and programs.

- **Plan and Run Account-Based Marketing:** Develop and orchestrate an ABM program that leverages sales and marketing channels with personalized content to drive awareness, reach, engagement and opportunities in selected accounts.

- **Support Partner and Field Marketing:** Scale revenue growth through partners, targeted content and programs tailored to resonate with buyers in different regions and markets.

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Analysis

Figure 1. Demand Generation Overview

Demand Generation

Source: Gartner
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In 2022, technology marketing teams strove to capture attention and drive engagement of buyers in increasingly crowded, and at times evolving, channels. The 2022 Gartner Technology Marketing Benchmarks Survey shows that the average number of channels used is 13 and outside of events, the top four most utilized marketing channels were digital for organizations with revenue of more than $100 million (see Tech Marketing Benchmarks Survey 2022: Demand Generation Insights). To effectively generate demand leading to opportunities and revenue, technology marketing teams must address questions in the following areas:

- **Awareness and content**: How do I create brand awareness and shape brand perception? How can I ensure that my content is interesting, informative and engaging to buyers?

- **Marketing mix**: How do I optimize channels, content and calls to action (CTAs) to build awareness, engage buyers and acquire new customers via digital experiences and events?

- **Account-based marketing (ABM)**: How do I expand the use and internal support of ABM programs across multiple geographies or product lines?

- **Partner and field marketing**: How do I effectively collaborate with partner and field marketing teams to build out programs to generate demand?

Respondents to the 2022 Gartner Technology Marketing Benchmarks Survey indicated that the top three marketing channels in terms of generating marketing-qualified leads were paid social advertising, social marketing (owned social) and pay per click (PPC) advertising. Marketers also revisited their channel mix as the pandemic tapered and in-person events began to return. The same study indicates that usage of third-party in-person events (tradeshows, conferences, roundtables, executive forums and "speed dating" events) grew to 69% in 2022 (up 12 percentage points versus the prior year). To identify opportunities for improvement, technology marketing teams should evaluate their marketing mix in comparison to benchmark data.

For ABM programs, 44% of respondents to the benchmarks survey indicated that "proving ROI" is one of the top three challenges for running ABM programs (see Tech Marketing Benchmarks Survey 2022: Account-Based Marketing Insights). And to drive international revenue growth, 48% of respondents have deployed ABM across multiple countries. To address these challenges and opportunities, marketers continue to invest in people and process changes such as forming a center of excellence (COE) for ABM programs (see Infographic: Developing an ABM Center of Excellence to Scale ABM Programs). Furthermore, to effectively run ABM programs at scale by engaging buying teams across channels and orchestrating automated plays and cadences with sales teams, 58% of marketers with ABM programs also have a marketing budget that includes ABM technologies.

As technology marketing teams seek growth outside of their "home" region or country, they face challenges in tailoring programs and campaigns to address regional differences. Economic uncertainty and a potential global recession (see Navigate Inflation and Recession Resource Center Primer for 2022) create a complex set of issues for partner and field marketing teams around the world.

Our 2023 initiative will help technology marketing teams make informed decisions about the marketing mix, along with marketing programs, to generate and nurture high-quality leads and opportunities for new customer acquisition, existing customer retention and account expansion.

Topics

Effective demand generation programs are about focus, with a clear alignment to business objectives for revenue growth. Program goals should include metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) that support business objectives and sales targets across the product portfolio. To build awareness and shape brand perception, technology marketers must use a diverse set of customer experiences and communication channels. In addition, marketing teams must develop a content strategy that maps content to target buyer personas and their questions to answer as they navigate different buying activity streams.

To capture the attention of target audiences, marketers are increasing the use of thought leadership content created by their own organizations or third parties, as well as case studies. Specifically, survey respondents chose "thought leadership content created by an independent third party" and "thought leadership created by/for your organization" as the top two content drivers of marketing-qualified leads (MQLs), indicating their vitality in the content mix. Case studies are also important in the content mix and highly performant, with 11% of respondents indicating that this asset type generated the largest volume of MQLs.

With the right set of content assets, providers must implement a multichannel campaign approach by effectively utilizing sales development representatives and optimizing the use of marketing technology and data strategies to capture interest from target buyers. However, capturing interest is not enough. Providers must also continue to engage buyers to keep their attention, nurture leads and accelerate opportunities throughout the buying journey.

Gartner assists technology marketing teams in developing, launching and optimizing demand generation strategies to drive revenue growth.

Our research in this area addresses the following topics:

Build Awareness

For large technology providers, building awareness shifts from simply establishing brand recognition to shaping brand perception and credibility via a range of customer experiences and communication channels. Simply capturing attention is only part of the challenge. Awareness requires a focused, multipronged approach that involves connecting with influencers and telling your story through paid, earned and owned media, coupled with a content strategy that engages and ensures consistent representation of the brand, portfolio and products. Technology marketing teams must hone their influencer, media, social marketing and events programs to evolve the market's perception of your business value as the company grows, new markets are entered, new products are launched or technologies are acquired.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How do I develop and optimize influencer marketing, public relations, and social media to broaden my reach?

- How do I develop a balanced event strategy to increase visibility and amplify messages for this year and beyond?

Recommended Content

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- Modernize Public Relations to Increase Market Awareness

- Build a Technology Influencer Social Marketing Program That Delivers Results

- 5 Success Factors of Effective Thought Leadership Marketing

- Large Technology Providers Abandon Third-Party Tradeshows for Their Own Hosted Events

Planned Research

- Toolkit: estimating hosted event costs and creating a planning checklist

- Case study: top tech companies leveraging the power of thought leadership

- Social platform use cases for B2B tech buyers

Develop Content Strategy

For content to drive interest and engagement, technology marketing teams must first understand how buyers research products and services and their decision-making and buying process. These insights can inform the selection of channels, content and CTAs for engaging buyers. Next, technology marketing teams should develop a content strategy targeted to the needs of specific account and market segments along with enterprise and buyer personas, including existing customers. The strategy must span and support the range of channels and use cases, such as the company website, media outlets, sales interactions and events. Furthermore, the strategy must encompass an understanding of each activity stream in the buyer's journey and the "jobs to be done" by those buyers during the buying process. This leads to the generation of higher-quality leads, improved account engagement, sales opportunities and ultimately revenue growth.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- Which content types and topics should be included in my content plan?

- How can I map content to buyer personas and buying activity streams?

Recommended Content

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- Tool: Content Marketing Strategy Template for Tech Marketers

- Grab the Attention of the Entire Buying Team With Relevant Content

- Enable Growth With Interactive Value Assessment Tools

- Innovation Insight: Always-On Experiential Marketing to Support Buyer Engagement

- Listen Up: It's Time to Add Podcasting Into Your Content Marketing Mix

Planned Research

- How tech marketers use PESO to increase visibility and content amplification

- Critical components of a winning interactive content strategy

- Fire your content marketing agency and get up to speed on GPT-3 now

Generate and Nurture High-Quality Leads

Successfully generating leads at the top of the funnel begins with a prescriptive approach to understanding target segments along with enterprise and buyer personas. It then requires a balanced focus on buyer needs and behavior, aligned with marketing channels, situationally relevant CTAs and expert sales development representative (SDR) interactions to create and nurture highly qualified leads. Technology marketing teams must execute targeted, multichannel campaigns with a marketing mix inclusive of content, channels and CTAs that keep buyers engaged throughout the buying cycle. Furthermore, to optimize campaign performance, technology marketing teams must embrace data-driven marketing approaches to identify, reach and engage buyers while measuring and optimizing performance within budget and resource constraints.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How should I segment my audience to ensure the effectiveness of my demand generation program?

- Which channels, content types and calls to action should I leverage to reach technology buyers?

- What types of lead nurture campaigns are needed to meet my demand generation objectives?

- How do I measure the performance of my demand generation programs?

- How do I use SDRs to find, qualify and engage prospects?

Recommended Content

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- Accelerate and Focus Your GTM Strategy With Third-Party Intent Data

- Product-Led Growth Requires Product Qualified Leads: Here's How to Create Them

- Measure Beyond Tactical Levers to Improve Demand Generation and Revenue Performance

- Quick Answer: How Do We Move Leads That Are Stalled Midfunnel?

- Top 3 Areas Where Sales Development Representatives Need Support From Marketing

Planned Research

- Don't stop at the decision maker when creating demand generation programs

- Why you should or should not add connected TV to your marketing mix

- Managing the gray area between sales and marketing: SDR best practices

Plan and Run Account-Based Marketing

As the challenge of reaching buyers and the complexity of the buying process both increase, ABM offers a new go-to-market strategy by moving toward a targeted and personalized engagement approach for account segments. For ABM programs to succeed, marketing and sales must work as partners, starting with account selection and leveraging both sales and marketing channels to engage accounts. In the area of account selection, technology marketing teams should bring together first-party and third-party data — including firmographics, psychographics, technographics, intent and sales insights — to effectively identify accounts that match their ideal customer profile. Furthermore, marketing and sales teams should orchestrate interactions across channels based on account engagement levels and buyer journey stages to optimize outcomes. In addition, to scale ABM programs, technology marketing teams should evaluate ABM platforms that enable better decision making, improve engagement across accounts and deliver measurable value. When managed effectively, these programs can be highly effective in boosting pipeline and opportunities leading to revenue growth.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How should I measure the performance   of my ABM program?

- How can I align my sales and marketing teams to optimize the effectiveness of my ABM program?

- How can I effectively scale an ABM program?

- How should I optimize my ABM program to increase pipeline growth?

- What ABM automation capabilities do I need to scale my program?

Recommended Content

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- Tech Marketing Benchmarks Survey 2022: Account-Based Marketing Insights

- Research Roundup: Account-Based Marketing

- Driving Alignment Between Marketing and Sales With Account-Based Marketing Best Practices

- Orchestrate ABM Engagement According to Acquisition, Expansion or Retention Goals

- Critical Capabilities for Account-Based Marketing Platforms

Planned Research

- How to choose between one-to-one, one-to-few, and one-to-many account tiering approaches

- Quick answer: How do I evaluate early performance of my ABM program?

- Why your sales colleagues are not on board with ABM and what to do about it

Support Partner and Field Marketing

Since growth opportunities will vary by geography and market, technology marketing teams need to develop programs that are agile and adaptive to the specific needs of each country, region and target market. These marketing teams with responsibilities for field activities will also need to adapt their programs to current health mandates and changing economic conditions. In some cases, buyers may prefer to interact or buy through indirect channels that require partner marketing programs. To broaden reach, technology marketing teams should co-market with trusted partners and connect buyers to partners who can sell your products and services.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- How do I allocate and structure resources and responsibilities for field marketing?
- What should I consider when building field marketing programs in new geographies?
- How can I strengthen partner relationships and build effective co-marketing programs to drive business growth?

Recommended Content

🔑 Some recommended content may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

- Align Product Marketing Support of Field Marketing Based on Team Structure
- 3 Steps to Build Collaboration With Field Marketing
- Drive These Co-marketing Activities With Your Channel Partners to Respond to Buyer Readiness
- Tool: Job Description for Hiring a Field Marketing Leader

Planned Research

- The evolution of the field marketing role: Should it be considered a strategic function?

- What are the key metrics for field marketing?

- Balancing to-through-for partner marketing to achieve better adoption and performance

Suggested First Steps

- High Tech Marketing Score: Demand Generation

- Set Demand Generation Goals Based on Business Objectives and Sales Targets Across Your Portfolio

- Develop Marketing Content That Drives Conversion Throughout the Buying Journey

- Improving Buyer Engagement With Situationally Aware Calls to Action

- Account-Based Marketing Program Template

Essential Reading

■ Improve Demand Generation Targeting and Engagement Across the Buying Team With B2B Buyer Personas

■ Implement a Balanced Marketing Mix to Improve Demand Generation Conversion Rates

■ Ignition Guide to Creating an Effective B2B Lead Nurturing Strategy

■ Use Value Management Platforms to Assess and Convey Value to Buyers and Customers

■ Quick Answer: How Do I Evaluate Early Performance of My ABM Program?

■ Next Steps for Your Account-Based Marketing Pilot

■ 3 Reasons to Stop Generating MQLs

■ Overcome 5 Potential Gaps With Buyer Intent Data

■ How to Get the Most Out of Your Virtual Event Sponsorship

■ Quick Answer: What Criteria Should Tech Marketers Use to Evaluate Content Marketing Agencies?

Tools and Toolkits

■ High Tech Marketing Score: Demand Generation

■ Tool: Content Marketing Strategy Template for Tech Marketers

Evidence

2022 Gartner Technology Marketing Benchmarks Survey was conducted online from 8 March through 9 May 2022. A total of 381 respondents were collected from technology-focused organizations with more than $10 million in revenue located in the U.S., Canada and the U.K. This report is focused on the 238 respondents in organizations with more than $100 million in revenue.

Respondents were required to have one of the following primary job functions/roles: CEO/president/founder, demand/lead generation, marketing leadership, sales leadership, web/digital social marketing, and marketing operations/analytics. They were also required to have knowledge of the marketing budget and spend for the company or business unit and knowledge of the marketing campaign/programs tactics. At the country level, quotas were established to guarantee a good distribution in terms of product offering (software, technology services and hardware) and company size (revenue). Disclaimer: Results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.
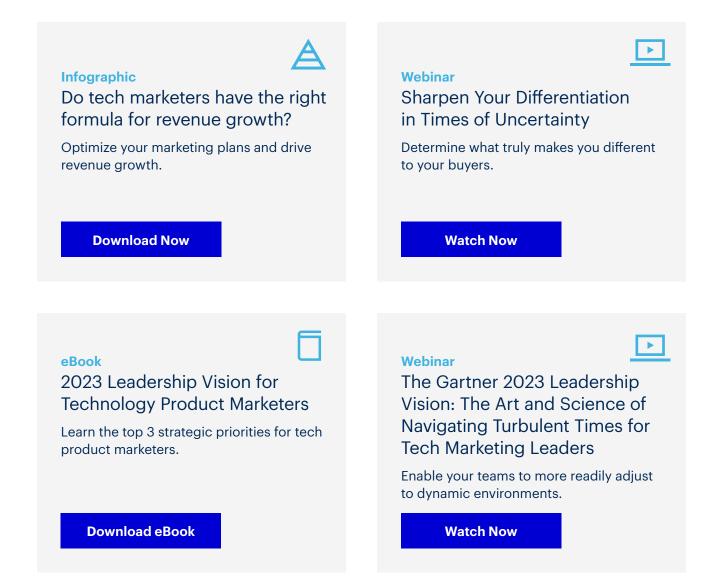
Related Priorities

Initiative Name	Description
Go-to-Market Strategy	This initiative covers advice on go-to-market strategy, understanding the market landscape, ideal customer profiles and segmentation, clarifying an understanding of the buyer journey and personas.
Messaging and Differentiation	This initiative provides guidance and best practices for creating differentiated positioning, messaging and storylines for a variety of offerings — products, services or any combination therein.
Marketing Impact	This initiative covers marketing's collaboration with customer-facing teams to lead programs that drive engagement, adoption, value realization and a better CX throughout the buying and owning cycles.
Marketing Planning and Performance	This initiative covers best practices for planning, managing and adapting a high-impact marketing function within technology and service providers to succeed in dynamic market conditions.

Actionable, objective insight

Explore these additional complimentary resources and
tools for tech product marketers:

Infographic

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Webinar

The Gartner 2023 Leadership Vision: The Art and Science of Navigating Turbulent Times for Tech Marketing Leaders

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