

THE MANUFACTURING DIGITAL MARKETING PLAYBOOK

DRIVING GROWTH WITH
ANALYTICS & REPORTING



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Leveraging data is no longer optional—it's critical for aligning marketing and sales teams around shared goals.

As marketers shift more investment toward digital channels, which offer better tracking and targeting than traditional offline methods, the economic challenges facing manufacturing companies make this transition more complex. With tightened budgets, marketers are expected to deliver more with fewer resources. A strong analytics foundation empowers B2B sales-driven businesses to engage their target audiences more effectively, improve reporting for data-driven decision-making, and optimize marketing spend to fuel growth.

In today's highly connected and competitive landscape, marketers in manufacturing must prioritize building a robust analytics and reporting framework to demonstrate how marketing directly supports company objectives and the bottom line. By implementing this analytics playbook, manufacturers can track the full customer journey, closing the feedback loop between marketing and sales to drive results more efficiently.

By implementing this analytics and reporting playbook, manufacturers can track the entire customer journey and close the feedback loop between marketing and sales.



MARKET OVERVIEW FOR MANUFACTURERS

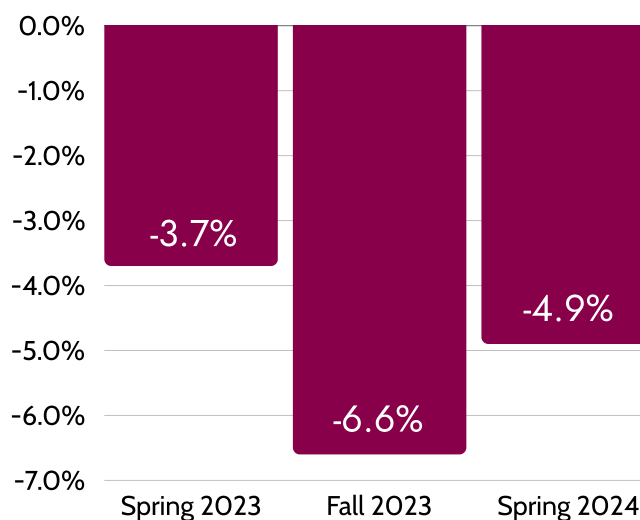
The manufacturing industry continues to perform well in many aspects, fueled by a combination of technological advancements, globalization, and the increased demand for manufacturing in various sectors such as construction, agriculture, and energy. Despite the overall positive trajectory, industry players are grappling with challenges such as inflationary pressure, intense competition, and the need to adapt to quickly changing macroeconomic conditions and the world of AI.

In this landscape, digital marketing has emerged as a critical factor in shaping the success of manufacturing companies. Leading businesses in the sector are recognizing the importance of adopting analytics and reporting strategies to make more informed marketing decisions, as well as experimenting with strategies to understand the impact of marketing actions on customers. Several trends are emerging that reinforce the need for marketers to do more with less.

Marketing Teams Continue To Shrink

Marketing teams in manufacturing companies are being asked to do more with fewer people. According to the [Spring 2024 CMO Survey](#), manufacturing marketing teams continued to shrink by 4.9% (though at a slower rate from 2023), after shrinking by 6.6% in Fall 2023. In fact, 70.4% of manufacturing companies are planning on using channel partners.

MARKETING TEAM HEADCOUNT TRENDS

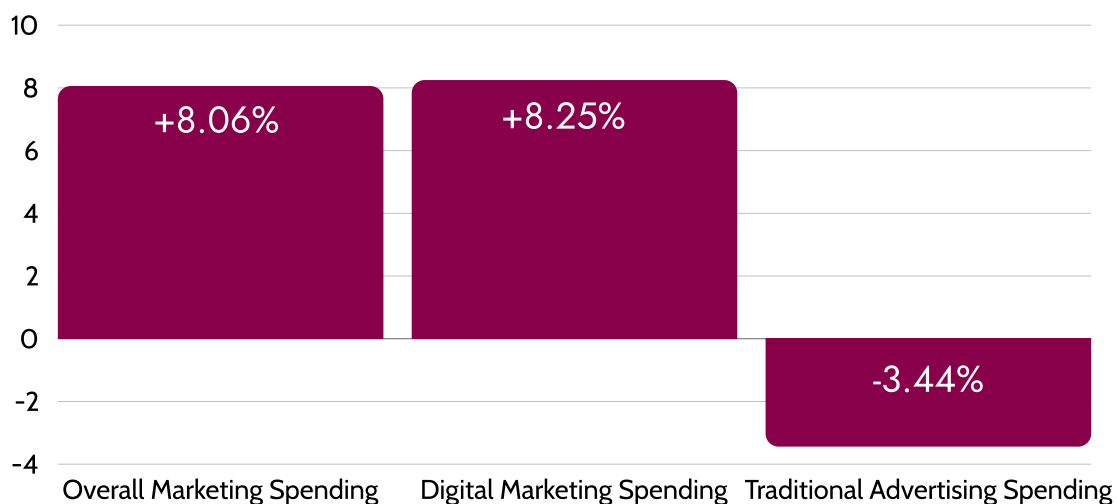


Source: The CMO Survey

Digital Marketing Budgets Are Increasing, While Traditional Budgets Are Decreasing

Over the past 12 months, digital marketing budgets in the manufacturing industry have increased by 8.89%, now accounting for 7.85% of total budgets. Compared to the previous 12 months, overall marketing spend in manufacturing is expected to grow by 8.06%. Traditional marketing spend is projected to decrease by 3.44%, a significant drop from the +0.33% seen in Fall 2023, while digital marketing spend is expected to rise by 8.25%.

EXPECTED CHANGE IN SPEND DURING THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

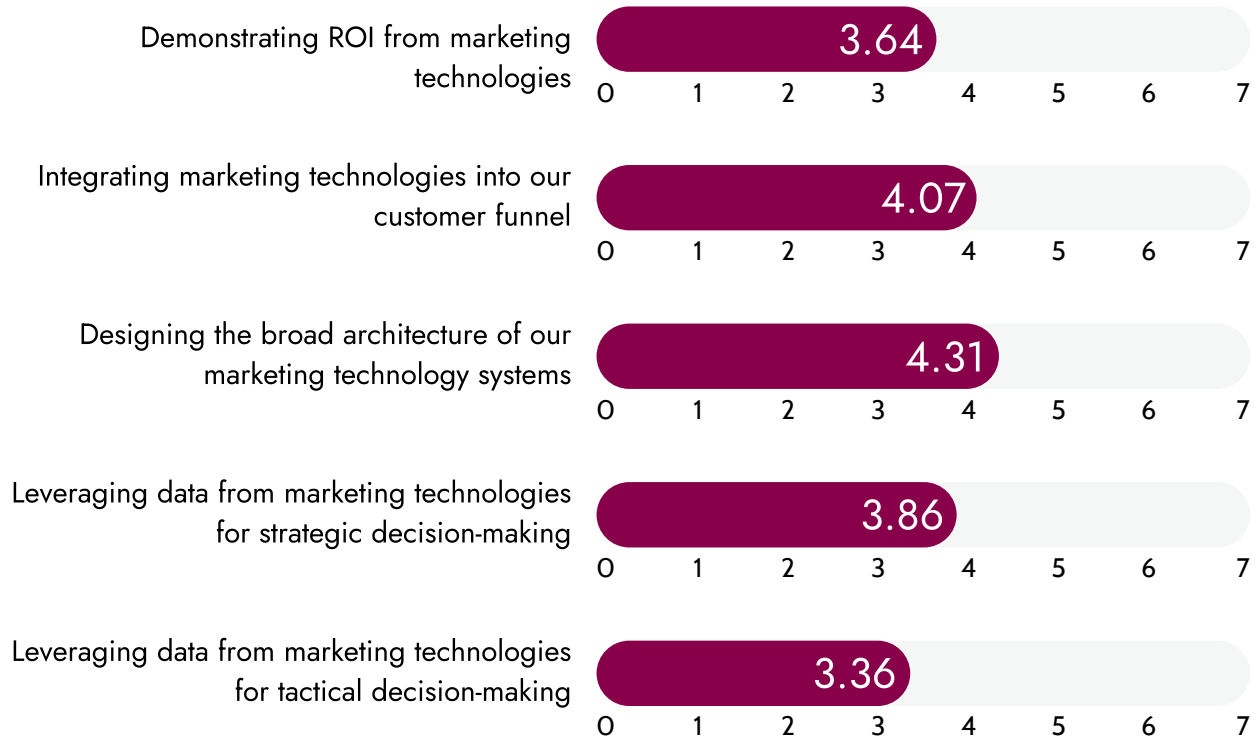


Source: The CMO Survey

Proving Marketing ROI Remains a Challenge

Most marketers in manufacturing companies regularly find it challenging to demonstrate the impact of marketing actions on financial incomes. Fewer marketers can track the metrics that matter to a company's bottom line: lead conversion, campaign efficiency (ROI), and customer lifetime value (LTV). Why? Because data from marketing, sales, and CRM sources are often siloed and not integrated into a "closed loop system" where customers can be tracked from an initial marketing touchpoint to an eventual transaction, to repeat orders.

MANUFACTURING CMOs THAT FIND VARIOUS MARKETING LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES CHALLENGING ON A SCALE OF 1-7



Source: *The CMO Survey*

KPIS FOR MARKETING AND SALES ALIGNMENT

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are the metrics that matter most to your business and are most often mapped to significant milestones in the customer journey. Aligning around a common set of goals ensures that both teams are working toward the same objectives and can measure their progress accordingly.

Measuring ROI and Performance

Marketing and sales teams can achieve greater success through a collaborative approach to data sharing. By holding each other accountable for ROI goals, both teams can enhance performance and drive business growth. Effective data measurement and sharing strategies allow for goal alignment, process streamlining, and more informed decision-making.

Lead volume refers to the total number of prospects generated through marketing efforts within a specific period, serving as a key indicator of how well campaigns are attracting interest from the

target audience. MQLs (Marketing Qualified Leads) are leads identified by the marketing team as having a higher likelihood of conversion, based on their engagement, demographics, or behavior. While these leads have shown interest, they may not yet be ready for a sales conversation.

Although companies and CRM systems may vary in their use of acronyms and definitions, the goal remains the same: to ensure a seamless handoff from marketing to sales, increasing visibility and fostering accountability for shared objectives.

Here are the most common KPIs shared between marketing and sales teams:

Sales Qualified Leads (SQLs)	Leads that have been evaluated by the sales team as potential customers, based on their level of interest, need, and readiness to buy. These leads have met specific criteria and have gone through a qualification process, making them suitable for direct sales engagement.
Close Rate	Also known as the win rate, it is the percentage of sales opportunities that result in a successful sale or conversion. It is calculated by dividing the number of deals closed by the total number of sales opportunities within a given time period.
Average Order Value (AOV)	The average amount of revenue generated per sale or transaction. It is calculated by dividing the total revenue by the number of orders placed within a specific time frame.
Return on Investment (ROI)	A performance metric that measures the efficiency and profitability of a marketing campaign or investment. It is calculated by dividing the net profit generated from the campaign by the total cost of the campaign and is usually expressed as a percentage.
Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)	A prediction of the total net profit a company can expect to generate from a customer over the entire duration of their relationship. It takes into account factors such as average order value, purchase frequency, and customer retention rate to estimate the long-term value of a customer to the business.

These KPIs can be mapped to the customer journey and are often visualized as a funnel.

COMMON MARKETING AND SALES KPIS MAPPED TO THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY



Marketing teams can utilize data to generate high-quality leads and share this information with sales teams with CRM integrations and data enrichment. With access to rich data on leads, sales teams can prioritize their efforts on the most promising prospects. This collaboration ultimately leads to higher conversion rates and a more efficient use of resources.

**THE
PLAY**

Develop shared KPIs and goals for marketing and sales teams. Work together to find overlaps and common definitions.

OPTIMIZATION STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

Once KPIs and goals are aligned across departments, it's much easier to understand the outcomes by optimizing strategies and tactics based on real data. Here are a few ways that sharing data can help manufacturers improve their overall marketing and sales performance.

Personalized Messaging to Prospects

Shared data empowers marketing and sales teams to craft personalized messaging and campaigns that truly resonate with their target audience. By combining insights from both teams, they gain a deeper understanding of customer needs, preferences, and pain points, enabling them to deliver more relevant and impactful communications. This collaborative approach ensures that marketing efforts are aligned with sales strategies, ultimately driving better engagement and conversions.

Target Audience Identification

By pooling resources and insights, marketing and sales teams can develop a more comprehensive Ideal Customer Profile (ICP) and refine their approach to targeting. Based on sales goals, industry specifics, and customer characteristics, target audiences can be crafted using a blend of demographic data, psychographic profiles, customer engagement patterns, purchase histories, and insights into competitive product usage. These enriched audience profiles can then be strategically tested and measured across paid media channels, content marketing efforts, and conversion optimization strategies, driving more precise and effective campaigns.

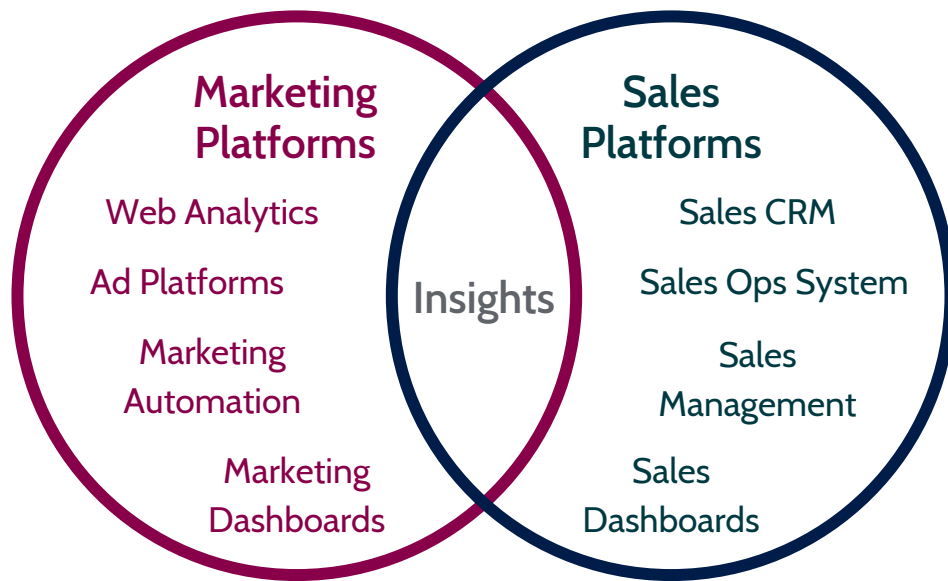
Automated Lead Scoring

Capturing marketing and sales data in one place (usually a CRM) provides a more comprehensive view of prospects' behavior, interests, and readiness to buy. This collaboration enables both teams to develop a unified lead scoring model that accurately reflects the qualities of a high-value lead. As a result, sales teams can prioritize their efforts on the most promising prospects, while marketing teams can tailor their campaigns to nurture leads effectively.

Integrating Analytics and Reporting Platforms

We often see marketing and sales teams using different analytics tools to measure performance and report on results. Problems can arise when the tools don't integrate, or worse, show conflicting results. Insights exist at the intersection of marketing and sales platforms.

With the right CRM tools, leads can be scored automatically and in real-time to reduce the manual inputs required and speed up response times.



Getting everybody on the same page with unified data and reporting is a surefire way to create better overall results and clarity about what is working and what is not.

Closing The Feedback Loop with a “Single Source of Truth”

Sales teams can provide valuable feedback to marketing teams based on their interactions with customers and prospects. This information, combined with marketing data, allows marketing teams to refine their campaigns and strategies for improved effectiveness. This feedback loop results in better-qualified leads and increased sales conversions.

There’s no single platform that meets all the unique needs of marketing and sales teams, but it is possible to connect multiple data sources to create a “single source of truth.” Most often in manufacturing companies, the sales CRM becomes the single source of truth when marketing campaign data is added to a lead or opportunity record. You may need support from your marketing team, CRM administrator, and potentially a developer to integrate across multiple platforms using APIs.

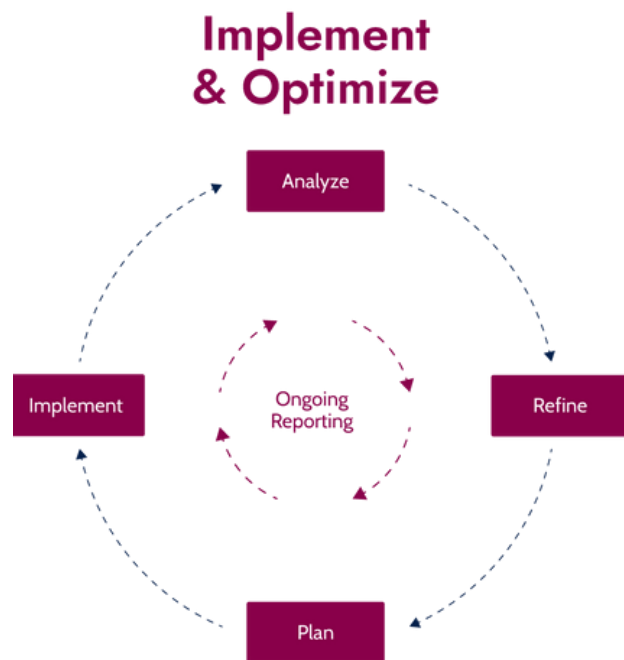


Don’t have a developer? You can still integrate marketing platforms, analytics tools, and popular CRMs using a tool like Zapier to push data between systems or Funnel to aggregate data from multiple sources into one place.

Performance Measurement and Optimization

With marketing and sales data centralized, both teams can more effectively measure the success of their efforts and pinpoint areas for improvement. A continuous feedback loop allows marketers to test different campaign elements—such as messaging, offers, and creative—and gain insights from sales outcomes. By consistently analyzing sales CRM data and refining their campaigns, marketers can optimize strategies for maximum impact.

Beyond performance improvements, this feedback loop fosters stronger communication and collaboration between marketing and sales. By sharing insights and working together, both teams contribute to driving growth and boosting the company's bottom line.



Dashboards for All Stakeholders

Customized reporting dashboards for each stakeholder in a manufacturing company provide tailored insights that cater to each department's unique needs and priorities. For example, a VP of Sales needs to monitor different KPIs than a Marketing Manager. Too often, we see dashboards with every conceivable KPI crammed into a single document. This results in information overload and doesn't help with decision-making. In the worst-case scenario, the all-inclusive dashboards are ignored because they can be overwhelming or confusing.

The best dashboards are simple and straightforward. A well-designed report will help each stakeholder understand what matters most to his or her team without the extra “noise” from other departments. When done right, customized dashboards help stakeholders make informed decisions, optimize performance, and enhance collaboration.

**THE
PLAY**

Develop a robust analytics and reporting system to measure campaign performance, optimize strategies, and make data-driven decisions.

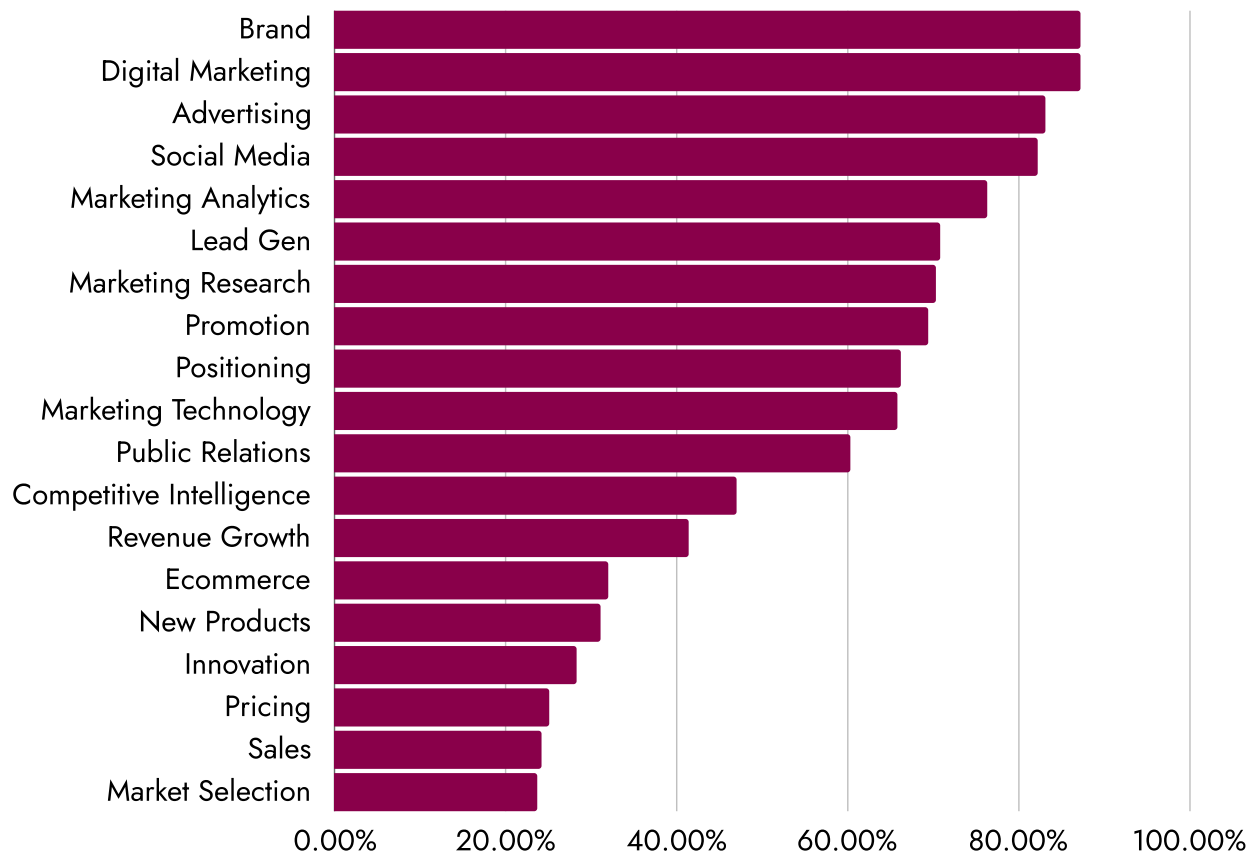
A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR MARKETERS IN MANUFACTURING COMPANIES

The evolving digital landscape, coupled with the increasing adoption of advanced technologies, presents numerous opportunities for growth and innovation. Fluctuations in the economy and interest rates may create short-term instability for manufacturers, but marketers have several reasons to be optimistic about the future of digital marketing in their industry.

Marketers' Responsibilities are Broadening

No longer confined to the back office, marketing teams are integrating more deeply across their organizations to drive growth. According to The CMO Survey from Spring 2024, marketers are increasingly involved in assisting other departments with non-marketing functions such as pricing strategies, innovation, and new product development.

WHAT IS MARKETING PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR IN YOUR COMPANY?



Source: The CMO Survey

This expansion of responsibilities helps marketers build relationships across the organization and gain visibility to inform future strategies.

THE PLAY

Stay informed about the latest digital marketing best practices to ensure your marketing efforts are aligned with industry standards and customer expectations.

AI and Machine Learning: Game-Changers for Marketers

AI tools have the power to transform marketing for manufacturing companies by offering advanced insights, automating key processes, and unlocking new growth opportunities. Forward-thinking B2B marketers are already integrating AI to enhance their marketing strategies and capitalize on emerging possibilities:

Data Analysis & Insights

AI-powered tools excel at analyzing vast amounts of marketing and customer data, uncovering patterns and insights that would be too complex or time-consuming for humans to detect. This empowers manufacturing marketers to make data-driven decisions, optimize their strategies, and better understand their target audience. Examples include Google Analytics 4's automated insights and Google Ads Performance Max campaigns, which use AI to drive more precise targeting and strategy improvements.

Personalization

AI-driven personalization tools allow marketers to deliver highly tailored content, offers, and experiences. By analyzing user behavior and preferences, AI can create customized website experiences, email campaigns, and product recommendations that resonate with individual prospects, enhancing engagement and increasing conversion rates. This level of personalization drives meaningful connections with customers and improves overall marketing effectiveness.

Predictive Analytics

AI tools analyze historical data to predict future outcomes, such as customer behavior, market trends, and product demand. For manufacturing marketers, this means anticipating customer needs, optimizing inventory levels, and planning more effective marketing campaigns. By leveraging predictive analytics, companies can proactively adapt to changing market conditions and improve decision-making.

Chatbots and Conversational AI

AI-powered chatbots engage with customers and prospects in real time, providing instant support, answering questions, and guiding users through the sales process. These chatbots not only enhance the customer experience but also free up resources for sales teams and help qualify leads more efficiently, enabling faster response times and better lead nurturing.

Marketing Automation

AI automates repetitive tasks such as email marketing, social media posting, and ad campaign management, freeing marketers to focus on strategic and creative work. With AI handling the heavy lifting, marketing teams can increase efficiency and drive better results by optimizing campaign management and automating workflows at scale.

Content Generation

AI-powered tools can assist in creating high-quality content quickly and efficiently. Marketers are using AI to speed up the production of blog posts, social media updates, product descriptions, and more. However, the "garbage in, garbage out" principle applies—marketers must fact-check and ensure AI-generated content aligns with ethical standards, compliance rules, copyright protections, and brand voice to maintain quality and credibility.

The Bottom Line for AI Tools

Is AI coming for our jobs? No. However, B2B marketers who integrate AI to enhance their workflows will gain a competitive edge over those slower to adopt these technologies. AI enables smarter, more efficient marketing, and those who leverage it will be better positioned to succeed in a rapidly evolving landscape.

**THE
PLAY**

Leverage AI-powered tools to enhance personalization, automate processes, and uncover new growth opportunities.

CASE STUDY: 2,400% ROI FOR AN INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING COMPANY WITH A CLOSED LOOP DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

Our client sells large, industrial-scale cooling equipment to nuclear facilities, data warehouses, and factories. These multi-million dollar purchases often take months to close and are notoriously hard to track back to the original marketing channel.

In other words, the long sales cycle and multiple touch points create an analytics and reporting challenge.

Customer Challenge

- Develop a targeted PPC strategy to reach niche B2B audiences in the industrial sector
- Create an effective system to track and optimize lead quality and sales pipeline performance



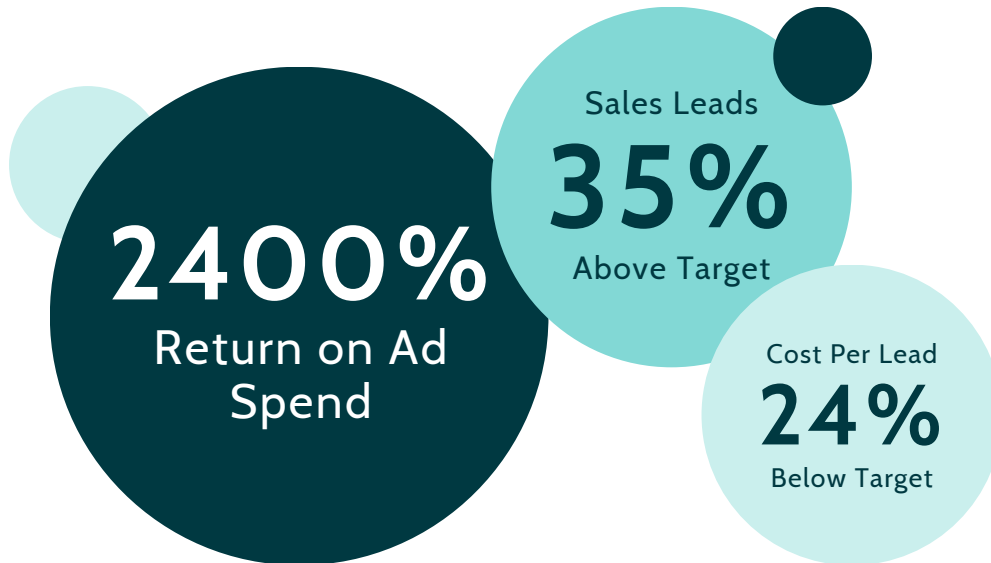
Our Award-Winning Custom Solution

- Developed and implemented a CRM integration between Google Ads and the client's Salesforce platform to track when leads are generated from campaigns, when they move into an opportunity or closed deal, and the associated value for each lead.
- Assisted in setting up field mapping at each step so that unique Google Click IDs persist with each contact all the way through the sales pipeline.
- Fed data on closed deals into Google's algorithms to optimize for conversion value bidding, where Google will prioritize driving leads of higher value.
- Built a customized dashboard to report on the KPIs at each step of the customer journey for the client's sales and marketing teams.



The Results: Exceeding Expectations & Creating Happy Clients

The results far surpassed the client's expectations. We exceeded our lead volume target by 35% with a Cost Per Lead 24% below goal, earning us a coveted Search Engine Land Award for "Best B2B Search Marketing Initiative" for 2022.



By implementing a highly targeted approach, we successfully reached the client's niche B2B audience across multiple platforms, including Google, Bing, and LinkedIn.

The custom CRM integration we developed provided unprecedented visibility into the entire sales pipeline, from initial click to closed deal. This allowed for data-driven optimization of campaigns, ensuring that marketing efforts were focused on the most valuable prospects.

The automated feedback loop we created between Google Ads and Salesforce not only improved campaign performance but also aligned marketing efforts more closely with sales outcomes.

This comprehensive approach not only exceeded the client's goals but also provided them with a sophisticated, data-driven marketing system tailored to their unique B2B sales process.

WE HAD THE BEST LEADS WE'VE EVER HAD LAST MONTH AND OF HIGH QUALITY. YOU MUST BE DOING SOMETHING RIGHT! LOVE THAT OUR PERCENTAGES ARE WILDLY SKEWED BY LARGE DEALS.

- NATE B., MARKETING MANAGER



RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

To thrive in this dynamic environment, marketers in manufacturing companies should consider taking these next steps:

- 1 Accelerate Your Digital Transformation**
Embrace change by adopting cutting-edge technologies that streamline operations, enhance marketing effectiveness, and position your company for future growth.
- 2 Align Sales and Marketing**
Foster collaboration between marketing and sales teams by sharing data to create a unified strategy. This alignment will improve lead management, drive conversions, and create a cohesive customer experience.
- 3 Invest in Analytics and Reporting**
Build a robust analytics and reporting system to track campaign performance, optimize strategies, and make data-driven decisions. This foundation will allow for continuous improvement and more precise targeting.
- 4 Experiment with AI Tools**
Explore AI-powered tools to enhance personalization, automate routine processes, and uncover new growth opportunities. Implementing AI can provide a significant competitive advantage and increase efficiency.
- 5 Stay Informed and Up-to-Date**
Continuously educate yourself on marketing best practices to ensure your strategies align with industry standards and evolving customer expectations. Staying current will help you remain competitive in a rapidly changing market.



Digital Marketing Platforms That Manufacturing Companies Should Consider:

LinkedIn

Why It's Good

LinkedIn is a top platform for B2B marketing, making it ideal for manufacturing companies targeting decision-makers, procurement teams, and industry professionals. The platform allows for highly targeted ads based on job titles, industries, company sizes, and more.

Use Case

Thought leadership, brand awareness, lead generation, and account-based marketing (ABM) campaigns.

Google Ads (Search and Display)

Why It's Good

Google Search Ads help manufacturers reach potential customers actively searching for products, services, or solutions. The Google Display Network increases visibility by showcasing ads across relevant websites.

Use Case

Driving traffic to product pages, targeting high-intent keywords, and increasing visibility through display ads in niche industrial publications.

YouTube

Why It's Good

YouTube is a great platform for manufacturing companies to showcase product demos, training videos, and case studies, providing a visual medium for explaining complex products.

Use Case

Video marketing, brand awareness, and thought leadership through educational and product-focused content.

Trade-Specific Industry Platforms and Directories (e.g., Thomasnet)

Why It's Good

Industry-specific platforms like Thomasnet or IndustryNet connect manufacturers with buyers, suppliers, and partners searching for specialized solutions.

Use Case

Generating qualified leads, building relationships, and increasing visibility in industry-specific searches.

Account-Based Marketing (ABM) Tools (e.g., Terminus, Demandbase, 6sense)

Why It's Good	ABM platforms are highly effective for manufacturers targeting specific high-value accounts, offering personalized campaigns tailored to key decision-makers.
Use Case	Relationship-building with targeted accounts, personalized marketing efforts, and long sales cycles typical in manufacturing.

Programmatic Advertising

Why It's Good	Programmatic platforms automate the purchasing of digital ads, ensuring highly targeted and cost-effective placements across a variety of websites.
Use Case	Targeting niche audiences with display ads, retargeting, and improving ad efficiency through automation.

SEO and Content Marketing Tools (e.g., Semrush, ahrefs, Google Search Console)

Why It's Good	Search engine optimization is vital for manufacturing companies seeking to rank for industry-specific keywords, while content marketing builds authority and attracts buyers through educational content.
Use Case	Creating and optimizing technical content, improving organic search rankings, and building long-term inbound marketing strategies.

Email Marketing (e.g., HubSpot, Marketo)

Why It's Good	Email remains a powerful tool for lead nurturing and maintaining client communication. Automation platforms allow personalized drip campaigns and customer behavior tracking.
Use Case	Lead nurturing, sales follow-up, and personalized email campaigns targeting manufacturing decision-makers.



CONTACT

3308 W Clay Street
Richmond, VA 23230

(804) 303-2883

EMPOWERED BY DATA, **DRIVEN BY HEART**

Workshop Digital is a digital marketing agency headquartered in Richmond, VA.

We believe that passionate people create powerful results.

Our search engine optimization (SEO), paid media/pay per click advertising (PPC), and website analytics experts **help businesses like yours get found online.**

As our name implies, we take a customized approach to digital marketing. Rather than cranking out automated results, we take the time to personalize marketing strategies around your business objectives and goals and operate like an extension of your in-house marketing team. While technology and data inform our work, we're driven by real relationships and transparent communication.

www.workshopdigital.com
hello@workshopdigital.com

