

Are You Sabotaging the Magic of Marketing Automation?

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Thus, once these software programs are configured correctly for an organization, they take care of all the repetitive tasks, and essentially become a marketing machine.

It's easy to sabotage the success of these miraculous marketing machines. The word "automation" lures marketers into a false sense of security. They think that the software can do everything for them and they don't have to lift a finger.

Not so!

A machine needs raw materials in order to produce an end product. And the raw material that marketing automation machines hunger for is content. Not just any

content. Content that will act as a magnetic force to attract visitors and create awareness. Content that will answer your target audience's burning questions, position the company as a thought leader, and transform visitors into prospects. And content that nurtures leads and helps to convert them into clients.

This is where marketing automation often fails. There either isn't enough content, or it's not the right content. The problem is that content creation is not a repetitive task. It requires creativity and thought leadership—something that cannot be delegated to a machine.

But while it's not automatic, you can make it easier. Like anything else in business, the first step is to create a process for content creation. This means whether you offer super-duper widgets or complex consulting services, you now also have to start thinking like a publisher.

A publisher researches their audience, understands them inside out, and discovers the kind of content they savor. They then create an editorial plan that covers their readers' needs, and assign writers to cover the topics. That's exactly what you need to do to create content that will keep your marketing machine humming along, producing leads and prospects.

The 4-Step Content Creation Plan

1. Create Personas

By immersing yourself in your buyer's thinking you can create a persona that gives you the edge over your competition. You learn what motivates and frustrates them, and often discover the unexpected. The key is to understand what triggers your client to start looking for a solution to the problem your product or service solves, how they go about the buying-decision, the questions they ask along the way, and the impact they want your product to have on their business.

2. Content Plan

Once you understand your buyer, you can create a plan for content tailored to attract, engage, nurture, and convert your buyer. This plan will likely include blog posts, white papers, e-books, webinars, videos, Web content and more.

3.

Content Audit

You may be a little overwhelmed by all the content that you need to create. Here's a secret from the publishing world: You don't have to start from scratch. You can repurpose existing content. So do an audit of all your content. Find out what you have, bump it up against what you need, and you have a gap analysis—what you need to create.

4. Create It

You now know what content you need. You can use your in-house content creation team or assign content creation to experts on the selected topics. Don't expect the experts to be writers though—someone may have to edit their content to make it engaging and easy to digest. And if you don't have the right resources on hand, outsource the task to a company that focuses on content creation.

When you fuel your marketing automation system with content, you accelerate the success of your business-to-business lead generation initiatives. For help with content creation learn about our Marketing-Automation-Made-Easy Packages.

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