
THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO NURTURING LEADS WITH EMAIL MARKETING

REVITAL
AGENCY

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Introduction

When it comes to effective lead nurturing, there are several methods one could use to be successful, such as social media and retargeting ads. The multi-channel approach is the best way to reach your customers and engage with them from the beginning to the end of their journey.

In this guide, our focus is helping those who are having difficulty getting their lead nurturing off the ground using standard methods - effective emailing and automation. We've outlined how to create the right emails, with the right content at the right time to help you develop a strong lead nurturing campaign and increase sales.

We'll also cover how to segment your email lists for more effective messaging and conversions.

Finally, we'll show you how creating a lead nurturing strategy will move people down the sales funnel and break up the inevitable log jams that prohibit sales.

If you're going to spend the time creating valuable email content you want to make sure you're adhering to all of the key components of a successful email marketing campaign. Otherwise, you're wasting time on content that's not connected. You need all pieces including the targeted content, distribution channels, timing, nurturing, personalization, paid retargeting, social media, and more to work together in harmony for the best sales conversions. This book will show you how to do that in a way that's easy to understand and implement.

A hand holding a smartphone displaying the Google logo, with a laptop in the background showing an email inbox. The entire image has a red overlay.

**“Email has an ability many channels don’t:
Creating valuable, personal touches - at scale.”
- David Newman**



“Companies that excel at lead nurturing generate 50% more sales ready leads at a 33% lower cost.”
- Forrester Research



Why Is Lead Nurturing Healthy for Your Business?

WHAT IS LEAD NURTURING?

Lead nurturing is the process of developing relationships with buyers at every stage of the sales funnel, and through every step of the buyer's journey. It focuses marketing and communication efforts on listening to the needs of prospects, and providing the information and answers they need.

Effective Lead Nurturing

For lead nurturing to be effective, you must listen to your clients and understand their needs. Your content should focus on them, not your business. It should concentrate on addressing their problems and providing reliable solutions that meet their needs.

Producing trustworthy and reliable content focused on your customers' problems helps build loyalty with your audience and keeps your brand top-of-mind.

It's important to understand that not every lead is ready to buy - at first. Being too pushy or coming on too strong can turn them off. You'll need to take a look at your sales funnel and be strategic. It's all about timing.

Creating a series of automated emails allows you to stay in constant, consistent contact with your audience - influencing them to choose a solution.

WHY DO YOU NEED LEAD NURTURING?

MarketingSherpa estimates that **79% of leads never convert to sales**. If you could decrease that number by (even) half, you would have a huge uptick in revenue. Part of the reason for that large number is that many businesses simply pitch and forget. If they do follow up, it's in an intrusive way asking if the potential customer has come to a decision and it's usually done over a pushy call or email. There's nothing persuasive about this tactic.

It's important to note that most potential buyers who are lost in the sales funnel don't care if it's your end of quarter. Those at the bottom of your funnel might if it means a discount, but those who are at the top or mid funnel aren't ready to commit. Trying to get them to do so with several phone calls and messages isn't going to be successful. You need something that helps them to feel comfortable with the decision and provides them with the resources they need to make an informed one. We'll discuss more about the funnel later.

So why does lead nurturing work? Imagine being in the buying process on something you're not ready to completely commit to. Let's say you're considering putting a pool in your backyard. You've never had one. You've heard there's a lot of maintenance involved and you're worried your electric bill will go through the roof. Your first choice is whether you'll put a pool in at all but secondly, you're trying to decide whether you want a concrete pool or a fiberglass one.

A salesperson calling you every day asking you if you've made up your mind will only irritate you but emails delivered to your inbox once a week on pertinent topics such as:

- How to afford the pool of your dreams
- Concrete pools vs. fiberglass styles, which one works for you
- 10 ways to cut your electric bill while keeping your pool comfy
- You know you need a pool if...

Will help calm your concerns and give you the knowledge you need to make an informed decision.



EMAIL

Compose Mail

Inbox

Sent Mail

Draft

Spam

Alex

Santoso

Michael

Branch Manager

Alex

Branch Manager

Business & Development

Finance

Online Shopping

Diagram

Next Meeting

Our Project This Year

Find a good restaurant!

... up to 75%



No business should want its customers to make impulsive decisions because of a pushy call. Years ago that was how business got done. But today, if someone feels pressured and has a bad experience with your company, you can be assured it will show up on your reviews and in social media.

Don't pressure your customers. Educate them. After all, education builds loyalty and increases your positive word of mouth.

MARKETING AUTOMATION CAN TURN A LOT OF WORK INTO A LITTLE

In the example above we showed how providing people with the resources they need can help them make a decision. You nurture, or lead, them into the bottom of the sales funnel where they are more likely to buy. You can do this by manually sending out the resources that will assist in conversion or you can employ an automated drip marketing system.

Which is best for you and your business depends on the scale in which you're marketing. Do you have a couple leads a week or a couple thousand? A couple means you might not mind manually queuing up your emails, although you certainly could be using your time more wisely. However, if you have a couple thousand leads you simply can't create personalized emails manually in any effective manner. The other benefit to marketing automation is that clicks on email content can trigger side campaigns based on the potential customer's interests. This type of targeting can make them much more effective.

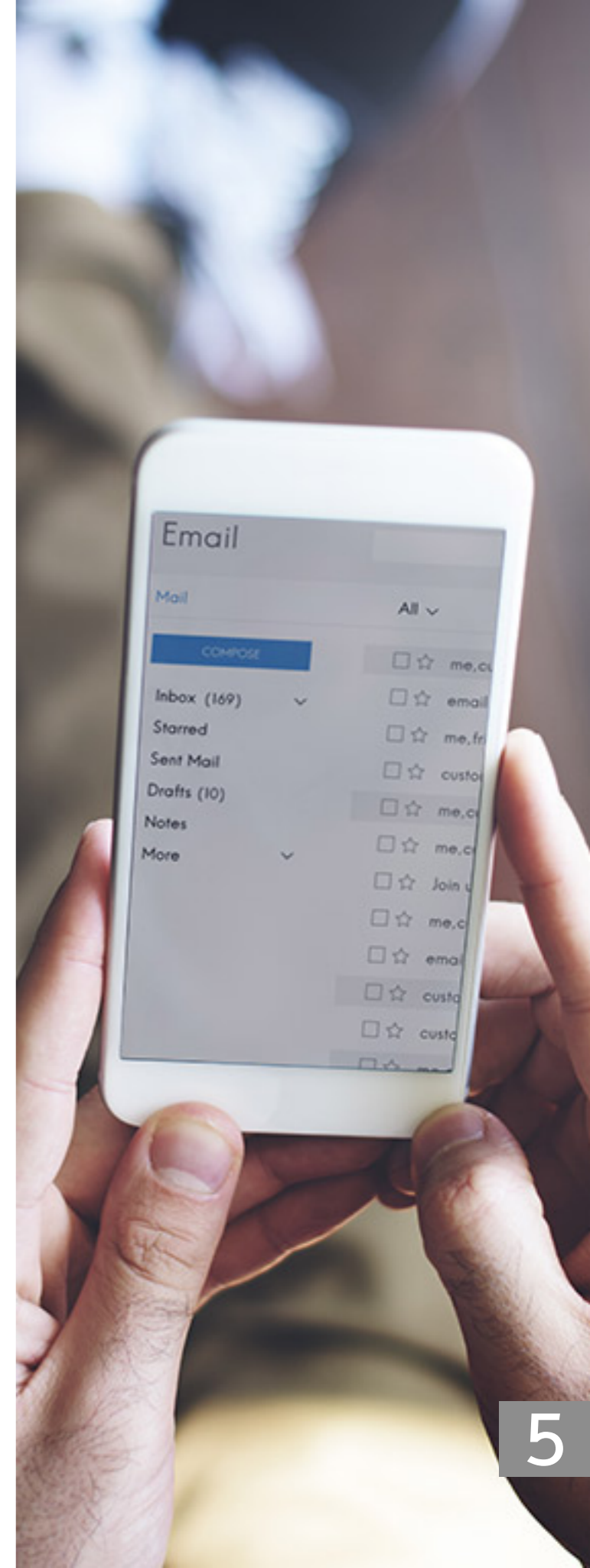
For instance, in our pool buying scenario from the previous section, if you noticed your customer clicked on the cost-savings topic in your newsletter or email, you know this is an issue in the purchasing decision. Providing content that talks about money-saving options and making things more affordable will resonate with this recipient.

If you are running a manual campaign, you can still see that this email was opened and clicked on and you will then need to create additional content and send it out. With an automated system, the click could be part of an "if, then" scenario that would automatically key up similar content without your intervention (aside from setting up the queue in the beginning).

Finally, lead nurturing often means larger purchases. According to the Annuitas Group, nurtured leads make **47% larger purchases than non-nurtured leads.**

If you want to stop your sales funnel from leaking leads, gain more loyalty, better reviews and word-of-mouth marketing, have more informed customers who make larger purchases, you need to examine how to make lead nurturing work for you and your business.

Coming up we'll show you how to get started.





Getting Started

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

There's more to creating an email than some copy, some stunning visuals, and a catchy subject line. For your nurturing emails to be effective, you need to know your audience. Doing your research and creating buyer personas is your first step.

What is A Buyer Persona?

According to HubSpot, **“a buyer persona is a semi-fictional representation of your ideal customer based on market research and real data about your existing clients.”**

You'll need to research your clients and understand what makes them tick. Understanding their challenges, goals and what types of content appeal to them is an important first step in getting your lead nurturing off the ground.

Where to Start

You'll need to dive in and get to know the people who are attracted to your products/services. As you gather information, you'll begin to have a better understanding of your customers. Your research will allow you to better market to their needs and wants.

Here's what you should consider when building your buyer personas.

- **Look for trends in customer behavior.**

Find out their likes - and dislikes. What type of content do they seem to like? What kind of content turns them away?

- **Get your sales team involved.**

Teamwork makes the dream work, folks. Your sales team should be able to provide insight on your customer base, and what types of content appeal to them.

- **Don't go bananas.**

Start off with one buyer persona and work your way up. There's not a one size fits all. There's going to be different personality types you're catering to and you'll need a clear picture of each - but don't push it. Get comfortable with the research and gathering process.

- **You'll need to interview your customers.**

Yes, make the time. Try to also incorporate surveys on a consistent basis with customers who've recently purchased. Interviews will also help you build your buyer personas.





WHAT DOES A BUYER PERSONA LOOK LIKE?

When creating a buyer persona, you'll need to know the **Who**, **What**, **Why**, and **How** to really understand your audience and cater to their needs.

The Who

- Persona Name
- Background (job/career, family, etc.)
- Demographics (income, location, gender, age, etc.)
- Identifiers (communication preferences, demeanor, etc.)

The What

- Goals (primary and secondary)
- Challenges (primary and secondary)
- What Can You Do (to help them overcome their challenges and achieve their goal)

The Why

- Real Quotes (regarding challenges and goals)
- Common Objections (Why wouldn't they buy your product or service?)

The How

- Marketing Messaging (How should you describe your solution?)
- Elevator Pitch (sell the solution)

UNDERSTAND THE BUYER'S JOURNEY

Your customers are visiting your site for a reason - they need something. But are you giving them what they're looking for? To answer this question, you'll need to understand the buyer's journey.

What is a Buyer's Journey?

When customers need something, they do their research. A buyer's journey is the research process a prospect (potential client) engages in before they make their final decision. It's your job to guide them through their journey by providing them quality, useful content they need when they need it.

Buyer's Journey Stages

There are 3 stages to the buyer's journey based on a prospect's behavior

1. Awareness
2. Consideration
3. Decision



The Awareness Stage

The first step in the customer's research is the Awareness Stage. Here, they know they have a problem and are trying to find information to help them identify exactly what it is and how to fix it.

Your job is to provide the assistance they need with quality, informative content, such as,

- eBooks
- Whitepapers
- Research Reports
- Educational Content

The Consideration Stage

The second step in the buyer's journey is the Consideration Stage. If they've made it to this stage, it's because you were able to lead them here by identifying their problem and providing a solution. Now they're excited and want to find all the possible solutions to solve their problem.

Your job is to provide expert advice without focusing on you. The information you provide should be informative, educational and reliable.

Here are some ways to provide that information:

- Webinars
- Podcasts
- YouTube Videos
- Expert Guides

The Decision Stage

The last step in the buyer's journey is The Decision Stage. Now they know what they want to do to solve their problem and it's your job to convince them to take action.

This is your time to shine. Prospects in this stage will be looking for endorsements (reviews & testimonials) data and other documents to convince them you're the right choice.

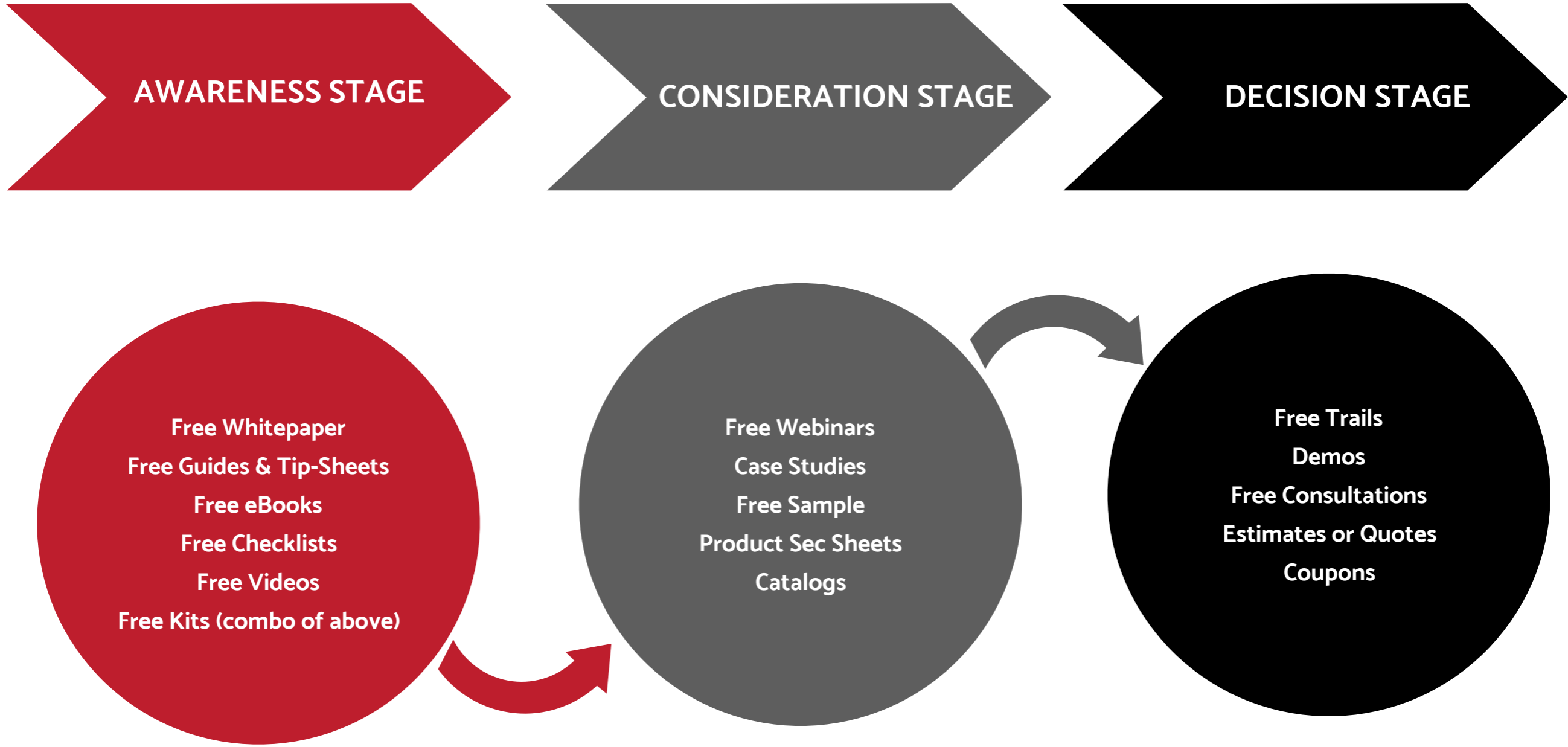
You can provide this information in the following ways:

- Case Studies
- Live Demos
- Trial Offers
- Comparisons (Vendors, products, etc.)

Nurtured leads produce, on average, a 20% increase in sales opportunities versus non-nurtured leads.

- DemandGen Report

The Buyer's Journey





MARKETING AUTOMATION AND THE BUYER'S JOURNEY

Throughout the buyer's journey, it's your job to identify the needs of the customer and provide touch points to guide them to take action. Marketing automation allows you to personalize these touch points with timed content focused on the stage of their journey.

An added advantage of marketing automation is its ability to allow you to differentiate between a solid lead and someone who's just not that interested in you. When using a system like Hubspot, you can monitor and analyze behaviors and customize your approach for efficiency and optimal conversion.

A basic marketing automation setup starts with an offer. To promote your offer, you'll need the following:

- A landing page with a form
- A thank you page (for signing up/downloading)
- A thank you email (personalized)
- Follow up (timed and personalized)

When anyone signs up for an offer, you should create segmented lists to which they'll be added. From there, you'll be able to create additional content geared to their needs and interests to move them through your sales funnel.

Consider how people will find your landing page. Will you promote it on your website with a popup? Maybe with a paid search ad? Whatever your approach, be sure you're offering CTA's throughout your site so your audience is aware of your campaign.

Also keep in mind you'll need to understand and establish your sales funnel to properly setup your automation workflows. Sales and marketing will continually need to work together to fine-tune the process.

ESTABLISH YOUR SALES FUNNEL

What is a sales funnel?

Your sales funnel, or marketing funnel as it's also known, is a series of steps your customers go through before a sale. The number of steps vary. Some funnels have as few as three steps whereas others have as many as seven. But most have five steps. They're as follows:

Awareness - This is the widest part of your funnel. This refers to leads you haven't spoken with, yet become aware of your solution.

Interest - In this step, your leads become prospects. And they're not only aware of your solution, they have an understanding of what you offer and express interest in learning more. At this point, you've had a conversation with them, and you've mutually agreed to move to the next step.

Evaluation - Now this is where you qualify your prospect. In turn, they're doing the same thing, but to a higher degree. They're looking at how your solution compares to your competition. As they near the decision stage, they want to be certain that they've looked at every possible option.

Decision - The prospect is ready to commit. They've looked at all of their options and decided to go with your solution. This is when negotiations may begin. Your prospect is armed with all of the information they've collected through all of their research.

Purchase - The tip of the funnel. Of course, it's also the narrowest. Now the transaction is completed, and your prospect is now a customer.



The Sales Funnel

TOP OF THE FUNNEL

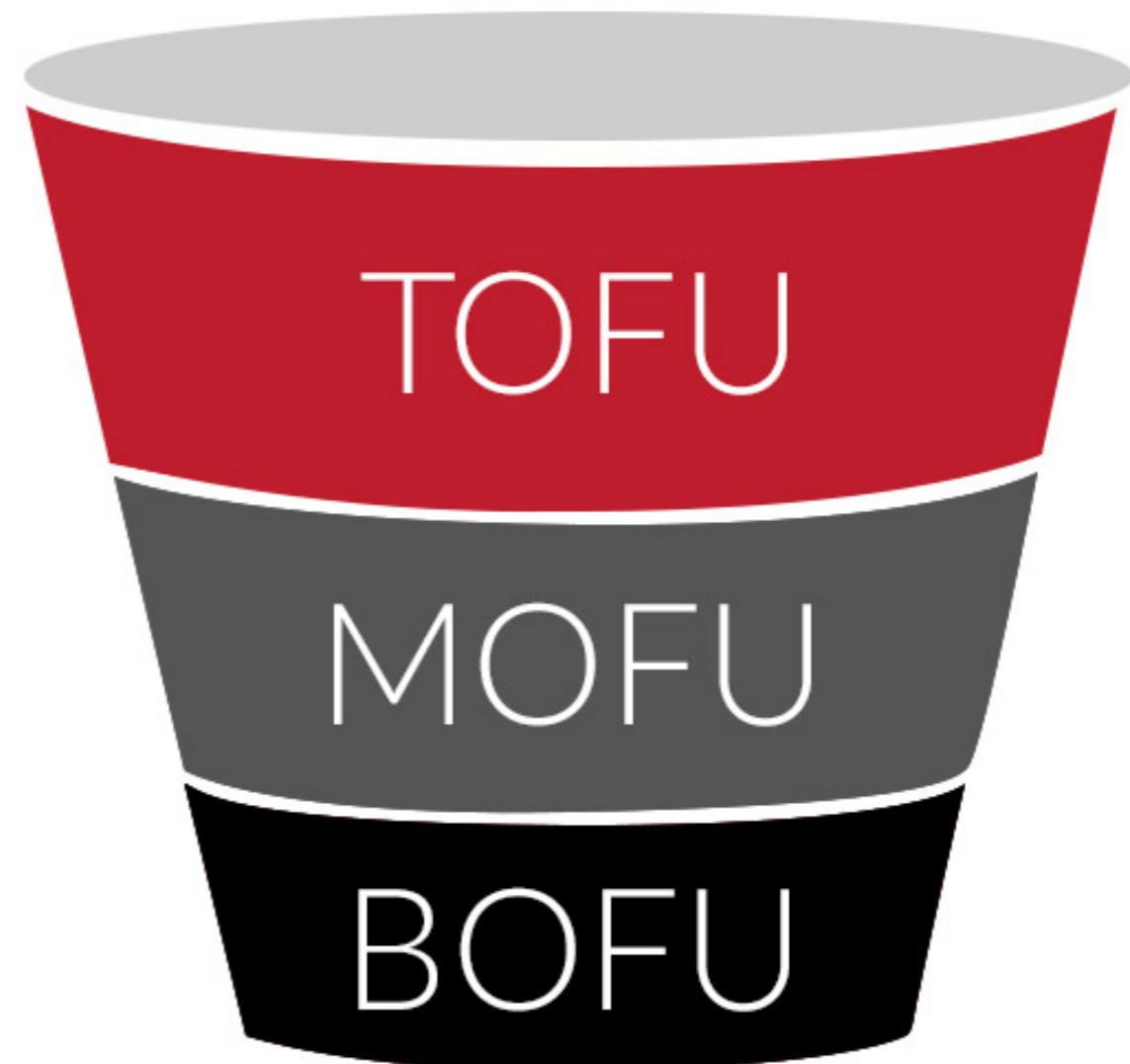
- Local Ads (Google Places & Location Ads)
- SEO (Search Engine Optimization)
- Content (Social Media & Blogs)
- PPC (Pay-per-Click Advertising)
- Email Lists & Blasts
- Data & Analytics
- Landing Pages
- Calls-to-Action

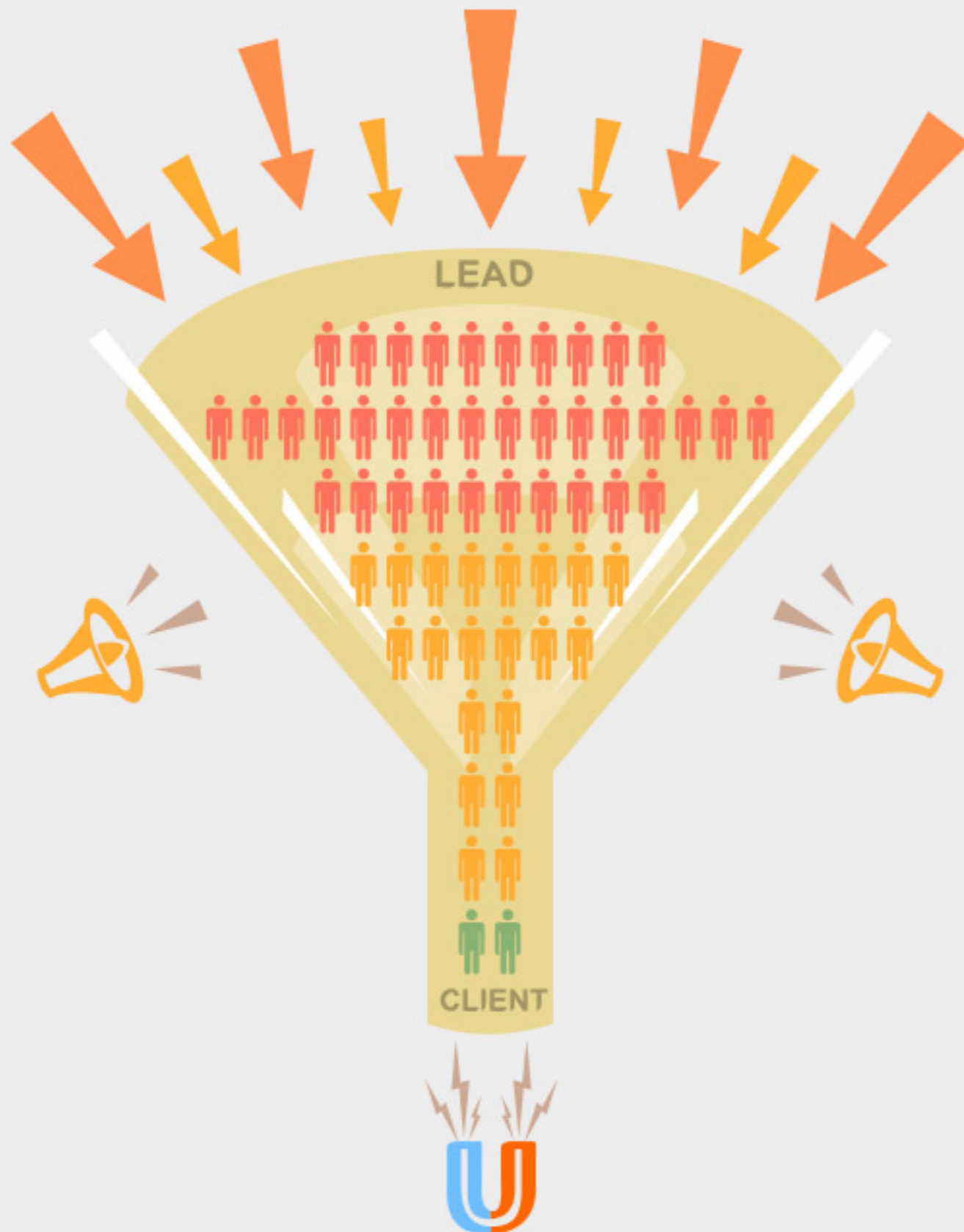
MIDDLE OF THE FUNNEL

- Content Offers (Newsletters, Ebooks & Whitepapers)
- Lead Nurturing Automation Software
- Webinars and Live Events
- Promotional Giveaways
- Drip Email Campaigns

BOTTOM OF THE FUNNEL

- Coupons, Discounts and Sales Events
- Case Studies, Testimonials and/or Reviews
- Free Consultation, Trial and/or Reviews
- Product/Service Demo Video
- Loyalty Programs
- CRM Software





Understanding and mapping your sales funnel is important. Is your sale process a long one as may be the case with a pool installation company or is it relatively short like what you might find in a company selling a new type of nutritional supplement? Generally, although not always, the larger the financial outlay, cost or investment, the longer sales cycle. That's why it's important to understand yours.

By knowing the average decision-making process that your ideal customers go through to purchase from you, you'll have a better idea of what people go through in making a decision. Remember a sales decision is not always you or your competitor. Sometimes a sales decision is doing nothing at all at that time.

What Makes a Good Lead Nurturing Email

To create a good lead nurturing email, you must first go back to the basics.

Your emails should include,

- A catchy subject line
- Professional “sender” email address
- Your branding & logo
- Personalization
- Engaging, quality content
- Call-to-Action (CTA)
- Social sharing
- Social media follow buttons
- Unsubscribe option

And most importantly, each email should have a **goal**. Determine what action you want your prospect to take and if it’s inline with their stage of the buyer’s journey.

Now it’s time to create informative, helpful content to help your lead with their problem and convince them to take action.



WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN CREATING LEAD NURTURING EMAILS

Content is key when creating your lead nurturing emails. You'll need to do your research and understand what problems your leads are experiencing. Each email should provide content that addresses their specific concerns and provides reliable solutions that take them further down the buyer's journey.

Questions to Address When Building Out Your Lead Nurturing Content

When creating your lead nurturing emails, it's important to ask these questions.

- Does my email educate the customer?
- Is the content engaging and helping the prospect with their problem?
- Am I providing offers that correspond with the customer's stage in the buyer's journey?
- Do my emails offer options for prospects to connect on other channels, such as our blog or social media?
- Is the goal of each email clearly defined?

If you're able to answer yes to each of these questions, you're on the right path to lead nurturing success.

You'll also need to consider the length of your sales cycle and the timing of your automation emails.

Timing Your Emails

No lead nurturing campaign is complete without automation. It allows you to send a series of drip emails with targeted content focused on the needs of your lead and the stage of their journey.

You'll want to make sure you're providing immediate follow-up, along with a series of emails addressing their concerns and possible solutions. Keeping consistent contact with credible, informative content after a website conversion increases the odds of converting a lead into a sales opportunity.

Consider the length of your sales cycle when determining the timing of your emails. And remember, lead nurturing takes time. Not everyone who visits your website or fills out a form is ready to buy.

You'll also need to track how your leads respond to your content. Creating segmented lists allows you to optimize your automation process and deliver the right content at the right time.



“Leads nurtured with targeted content produce an increase in sales opportunities of more than 20%”
- HubSpot



“The odds of a lead entering the sales process, or becoming qualified, are 21 times greater when contacted within five minutes versus 30 minutes after an inbound lead converts on your website.”
- HubSpot



What Is List Segmentation?

You have your sexy mobile optimized website, your attractive calls-to-action attached to your compelling content to capture leads. But what do you do with all the email addresses, the contacts that you're collecting?

You separate them into separate, smaller lists based information that you've collected.

The information can be as simple as the name and industry or more in depth with psychographics and demographics. The combinations are endless as long as you can get the information from your leads.

For instance, when a lead fills out a form on your website, at a minimum you collect the name and email address. Let's say you have a basic top of the funnel offer, like a blog or newsletter subscription. And in this list, you have 1000 contacts. You want to segment your list by the people who have opened your email and those who haven't. You simply separate them by this behavior and break them up into two lists. That's list segmentation in the most basic sense.

What Can You Do with Segmented Lists?

To get the most out of your email marketing, you need to send timely, personalized content that speaks directly to your audience. List segmentation allows you to separate your contacts into buckets based on specific parameters and send them content at the right time.

Let's say one of your contacts starts checking your pricing page. This is a good indicator that they're ready to buy. Based on this action, you could separate this person into a list and send them a personalized email to schedule an appointment. Or let's say you don't have automation set up yet, you could still look at all your contacts to see if they've viewed your pricing page, and separate them into a list to email or call them directly.

You can add contacts to list based on any data you've collected. For example, industry, business size, persona interests, sex, income—you name it. However you want to segment is up to you as long as you have the info in your database.



Where Can You Use List Segmentation?

In short, anywhere you have marketing functions based on contact lists. This includes emails and lead nurturing workflows, delivered with marketing automation.

A common best practice is to setup your lists based on your buyer's journey. Starting with the top of your marketing funnel down to the bottom. As the lead reviews specific content, you can move them through the funnel, adding them to separate lists to receive timely content that moves them through to scheduling an appointment or purchasing from you.

You can also take a multi-channel approach. By integrating other channels you can enhance your lead nurturing. For instance, offers on your blog can map to certain segments so that new readers see an offer to download an ebook, while others who are further along your buyer's journey see a CTA for a demo. Taking it one step further, you can also monitor the same leads by using social media tools to help you segment contacts based on specific tweets and hashtags where you can engage contacts one-on-one.

Granted, you'll need a sophisticated marketing platform such as Hubspot to do most of this. But to harness the power of marketing automation, you'll need to make the investment.

Keep in mind, the purpose of list segmentation is to generate customers, not leads. You have lists, you just need to nurture them.

So get started by segmenting your lists, sending pertinent content to the right people at the right time.

What Is Multi-Channel Lead Nurturing

Once you've become comfortable with setting up marketing automation for lead nurturing and creating engaging content & emails, you'll want to start finding other ways of promoting your offers.

Think about it. If you're seeing results with just sending emails, consider what would happen when you promote and nurture using social media and/or paid search?

Be bold. Get your content out in front of as many people as possible to increase conversions and brand awareness - that's referred to as Multi-Channel Lead Nurturing.

OPTIMAL NURTURING CHANNELS

Marketing automation = check. Now what? Here are other nurturing channels you can utilize to promote your offers.

- Paid Retargeting (Adwords, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)
- Social Media (Engage and monitor)
- Your Sales Reps (Get them involved)

Paid Retargeting

Usually when people see "paid" they become apprehensive. Why pay big bucks when you can promote for free? The fact of the matter is, to make money you have to spend money. If you understand your audience and provide content addressing their needs, you will see a return on investment.



“45% of marketers say < 4% of their email contacts convert into marketing qualified leads”
- HubSpot

Often marketers turn to the following sources for retargeting,

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Adwords/Adwords

However, more and more social platforms are offering paid ads, such as Instagram and Pinterest. Determine which are best to reach your audience and build out a strategy to target them and their needs.

Social Media

You've got to be on your social media "A-game" when nurturing leads. You'll need to,

- Continually engage with your audience. Likes, favorites, comments, etc. Give them attention!
- Address questions promptly and provide resources, if possible.
- Monitor mentions and respond.

When retargeting with social media, it's all about paying attention to your customers and providing reliable, trustworthy resources they can use to troubleshoot and solve problems. Listen to what they want and it will help you and your team build your campaigns.

Involving Sales Reps

To make sure your leads get a quick response, it's important your sales team is notified of conversions. For example, if a lead becomes a sales qualified lead because they signed up for a demo or requested more information, setup your marketing automation workflow to notify your sales team when that conversion takes place.

Take a look at your sales funnel and your marketing automation workflow and determine where your sales team should be notified. It will help your conversion rates and sales.



Creating Your Lead Nurturing Campaign

Now that we've outlined how to nurture your leads, it's time to roll up your sleeves and get to work.

You can also check out any of [our resources page](#) for more guidelines, best practices and how to's.



SOURCES

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/OB1loYZHExAgieWVIMWM2aVJBNDg>

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LET'S TALK

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