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EXPANDING THE PRODUCT ENGAGEMENT TOOLBOX

The golden rules of effective
product marketing and content

BRINGING YOUR PRODUCTS TO LIFE

Getting products in front of potential buyers to prove their capabilities is critical to the selling process and a fundamental aspect of customer engagement for most B2B brands.

Of course we have showrooms and demo suites, the option to invite prospects to customer reference sites and live events like roadshows, open houses and trade shows. But, as the coronavirus crisis has shown, we can no longer take some of these platforms for granted.

Businesses need to think creatively about how to engage customers with new and established products in less traditional ways but with maximum impact, and to amplify the reach of product content by taking advantage of the full range of channels at the B2B marketer's disposal.

Meeting the customer's need

If your product messaging is on point you already know how your product addresses your customers' pain points.

But when thinking about how to bring your product to life, it helps to consider what a customer really wants from a B2B product demo. We can summarise it with a few points:



To **experience** the features and operation of the product first-hand



To **see** the product's performance for themselves



To **get past** the hype and see 'under the bonnet'



To **hear** a detailed, expert explanation of the product



To **evaluate** the product's suitability for their own needs



To **ask** detailed questions and get immediate answers

So if you can't physically bring the customer to the technology, how can you cover these needs? There's no real substitute for 'touch and try' and for face-to-face interaction with a product expert. But there are many channels available for communication with prospects, and a variety of ways to drive engagement with your product beyond the standard product brochure and data sheet.

Your choice of formats and channels will ultimately come down to what you know about your customers: where they are, which channels they interact with, how they prefer to consume content, and whether you have an established relationship or are dealing with a cold prospect.



The golden rules

Any product-led content you create for a B2B audience will only be effective if it meets two fundamental criteria: **impact** and **credibility**.

IMPACT

For your content to have impact it must stand out, be visually arresting and deliver compelling messages that are easy to understand and digest.

Here are some options to consider:

Product videos



Produce a teaser video to create a 'buzz' before launch, build a product positioning video that explains the USPs of the technology or interview your product experts on camera to talk 'tech'.

Simulive (simulated live) demos



Pre-record a product demo and broadcast it live or make it available on demand to give the human touch of a live demo.

Animations



Use motion graphics, infographics or typography to tell your story; or think about white board or flipbook animation styles. The key is to make the story and visuals work together so that one reinforces the other.

Infographics



Create static infographics to succinctly convey key product messages and data-led proof points, such as market research results, proven cost or energy savings, speed or productivity claims, customer satisfaction data and so on.

Interactive presentations



Use virtual events or live presentations containing interactive engagement elements, such as polls, to bring the audience into the conversation so they feel part of the action.

CREDIBILITY

Your content needs to clearly demonstrate your technology expertise and, where possible, communicate independent endorsement.

You can achieve this in a number of ways:

Under the bonnet videos



For tech-savvy prospects who really want to understand the nuts and bolts, film the product in action with an expert operator who can explain what's happening in depth, or use animation to illustrate the detail of how your product works.

Technical webinars or Q&As



Use your own expert spokespeople to show subject matter knowledge. Stream them hosting a live Q&A or host a webinar that can be accessed live or downloaded on demand.

Designed technology guides



Bring together the supporting market context and customer needs with competitive comparisons and a detailed explanation of your technology in a guide or 'white paper'. This can be printed and mailed or downloaded as part of an online customer journey.

Customer endorsement content



Find customers who will back up your own claims for your product with stories of its impact on their business. Written and filmed case studies provide powerful online content and achieve great engagement when shared digitally on social channels or in direct marketing to customers.

MAXIMISING RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Of course you're also interested in the return on investment from any assets you create, so it's important to think about how you can maximise value. This means thinking holistically about how to use content across multiple channels, maybe in an adapted or edited form and ideally before you begin to create anything.

Collectively, a considered range of product assets from the choices we've described will give your sales teams and channel partners a rich and effective mix of sales enablement content. They can share these materials directly with prospects in person, via email or in conversations on social platforms.

You can extend the reach of any video content by using it on your own website, embedding it into sales presentations, publishing it on YouTube, sharing it proactively through your e-marketing, creating shorter social 'teaser' edits for channels like LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram, and even adapting it for screening at live events or on video walls.

Other visual elements of content can be transformed into attention-grabbing social posts or eye-catching visual email signatures with embedded links to online content. Webinar or Q&A content can be adapted for e-marketing or web content such as articles or blog posts, and used to develop thought-leadership material for activation with influential trade media. Technology guides can be used in lead generation activity, promoted via email, social, print and online advertising, and used as the basis of authored articles.

With careful content planning and mapping across all available channels, you can create closely integrated campaigns that deliver your messages consistently and effectively - regardless of where your customer is - to really bring your product story to life.

To explore how we can help, get in touch:

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or call Helen Tolino on **+44 (0)1372 464470**

Further guides are available to download from the AD Info Hub at:

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