The key elements of a successful B2B lead generation process

> **B2B marketers who have successfully implemented lead generation techniques have seen a 67% increase in lead quality.**

The Content Marketing Institute

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About this white paper

In this white paper, we will guide you through the key elements of a successful lead-generation process, providing you with practical tips and strategies that you can use to generate more leads for your business.

We will take you all the way from developing a detailed lead-generation strategy and defining your target audience to implementing a lead-scoring system and measuring the success rate of your strategy.

This white paper is divided into several sections. Each of these focuses on a different aspect of the lead generation process. We begin with the basics by explaining what leads are and the difference between B2C and B2B leads. In this white paper, we will focus on the latter.

Introduction

The goal of every profitable business is to have a steady stream of paying customers. However, finding the right leads and turning them into loyal customers is a challenge. Especially if your business exists within a crowded industry.

On top of the competition within the market, grabbing the attention of prospects has become much more difficult as well. With an endless amount of content at our fingertips, customers have become much more selective with their attention and what type of content they pay it to.

This is where a well-structured lead-generation process can help.

What is a lead generation process?

First, let's discuss what a lead is. A lead is someone who has expressed an active interest in your products or services. Usually, they indicate their interest by giving you their personal information, such as their name, email address, and phone number in exchange for educational information like a free trial or eBook.

"Companies that excel at lead nurturing generate 50% more sales leads at 33% lower cost per lead"
(HubSpot)

By submitting their information they show organic interest in your company and allow you to open a conversation. Now, instead of picking up the phone and **doing a cold call**, your sales team can reach out to someone who is aware, and interested, in your product or service. This increases response rates and makes conversations feel much more natural.

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According to 85% of B2B companies, lead generation is the most important marketing goal **"**

The goal of a lead generation strategy is to nurture these leads, build a relationship with them, and ultimately convert them into paying customers. This is an essential part of every successful B2B business strategy.

Here are some common ways to generate leads:

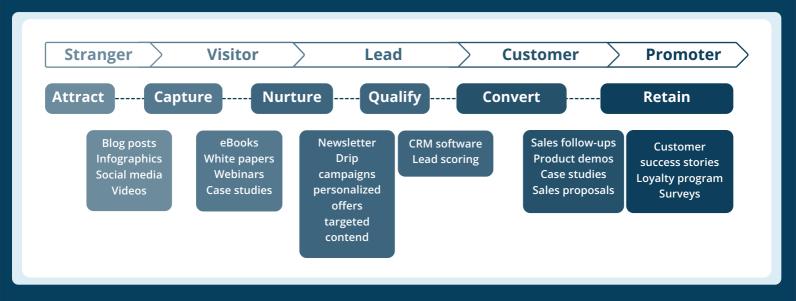- Email marketing
- Social media posts
- Content marketing
- Webinars and online events
- SEO (Search Engine Optimization)
- LinkedIn lead generation services (such as **The Linq Group**)

Why a lead generation process is important for your business

So, how do you find the leads who will help you hit your sales targets and increase marketing ROI? By grabbing their attention through strategically coordinated marketing practices that will give you a competitive advantage.

These can include tactics like **high-quality content,** a well-defined social media presence, and fine-tuning your website.

Stranger	Visitor	Lead	Customer	Promoter

Attract	Capture	Nurture	Qualify	Convert	Retain
Blog posts Infographics Social media Videos	eBooks White papers Webinars Case studies	Newsletter Drip campaigns personalized offers targeted contend	CRM software Lead scoring	Sales follow-ups Product demos Case studies Sales proposals	Customer success stories Loyalty program Surveys

Resources that are needed to encourage prospects to move down the sales funnel.

> **"95% of B2B buyers are not in the market for your products"** *(Ehrenberg-Bass Institute)*

Fact is, the majority of B2B clients aren't in the market to make a purchase. Yet. But a well-defined lead generation process can put you ahead of your competition. By focusing on long-term strategies like SEO practices, content marketing, and lead nurture pathways you will stay top of mind with prospects, position yourself as a credible resource, and build trustworthiness.

Below we lay out the most important aspects of a successful lead-generation process. However, there is no rigid template to follow or a one-size-fits-all approach.

Use the information that is applicable to your business and goals and apply it to your strategy.

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Apart from just converting leads into prospects, The Linq Group really thinks along with you. They are there for you from A to Z.

Free a Girl

[Read our case study here](#) and see how we helped Free a Girl book 11+ meetings with decision makers, build their network, and deliver an average 7.2% conversion rate.

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Let's discuss how we can help your business grow!

Lead qualification

We already covered the basics of what makes someone a lead. Now, before you want to jump into the process of creating your lead generation strategy, you have to **define who qualifies as a lead for your business.**

Why lead qualification is important:

1 Resource Efficiency:
Lead qualification ensures that sales and marketing teams focus their efforts on the most promising prospects, saving time and resources.

2 Higher Conversion Rates:
By targeting high-quality leads, businesses can achieve better conversion rates, resulting in increased sales and revenue.

3 Improved Customer Relationships:
Qualifying leads allows businesses to engage with the right audience, fostering stronger connections and long-term customer loyalty.

Getting to know your target audience

Identify your ideal customer profile (ICP)

An Ideal Customer Profile is a detailed description of the type of company that would benefit most from your product or service and is **most likely to become a loyal, long-term customer.** It serves as a guide for sales and marketing teams to focus their efforts on prospects that align with your business's offerings and goals.

Compared to your target customer, an ICP specifies the most valuable prospects or companies that are also more likely to become a customer.

Here are some of the elements to include in your ICP:

1 **Industry**: Identify the industries that are most likely to benefit from your product or service. For example, if you offer software for accounting firms, your ideal customer profile might be professional services firms.

2 **Company size**: Determine the company size that would be a good fit for your business. This can be based on revenue, number of employees, or other factors.

3 **Geographic location**: Consider adding the geographic of your ideal customers. This could include specific regions, countries, or even global markets.

4 **Budget:** Determine the budget range that your ideal customers are willing to spend on your product or service. This can help you tailor your pricing and marketing strategies accordingly.

5 **Pain points**: Identify the specific pain points or challenges that your ideal customers are facing. This can help you create messaging and content that resonates with their needs.

6 **Decision-making process**: Determine the decision-making process within the companies you want to target. This could include identifying the key decision-makers, understanding the approval process, and identifying potential roadblocks.

7 **Buying behavior**: Understand the buying behavior of your ideal customers. This could include identifying the factors that influence their purchasing decisions, such as brand reputation, customer reviews, or competitive pricing.

Developing a buyer persona

In B2B companies, the Ideal Customer Profile (ICP) describes the characteristics of the ideal target company. **The buyer persona**, on the other hand, focuses on the individuals within these companies detailing their roles, communication style, pain points, and goals.

When creating your buyer persona, consider the following

1. **Demographics**: Their job title, department, seniority, and years of experience.

2. **Psychographics**: Define what challenges they have, their goals, pain points, motivations, and values.

3. **Company Information:** Include job title, department, seniority, education, and years of experience.

4. **Decision-Making Process**: Outline the persona's decision-making authority, the stakeholders involved, and the factors that influence their purchasing decisions.

5. **Communication Preferences:** Understand their preferred channels of communication, such as email, phone, or social media, as well as communication style and frequency.

6. **Content Consumption:** Determine the types of content they consume and the platforms where they get their information from.

7. **Potential Objections:** Find out the common concerns or hesitations the persona may have about your product or service. This way you can be well-prepared when they come up during conversations.

Some of this data is easier to acquire than others. Most likely you will need to have multiple conversations with different people in different departments within your company. Your sales and customer support teams will have much of the information about goals, challenges, and concerns ready. **Make sure to keep the conversation flow running between these teams.**

Talking to customers directly is also a very effective way to capture information through one-on-one meetings, questionnaires, or surveys.

By defining a buyer persona, you can tailor your marketing and sales strategies to address the specific needs and concerns of your ideal customer, ultimately improving your chances of conversion and customer satisfaction.

How to qualify leads

Qualifying leads means capturing the right data for your sales team. This information will help them **evaluate if someone is a good fit to do business with**.

After someone has shown an active interest in a product or service, companies will use the gathered data to determine how closely a new lead matches their ideal customer.
If the prospect passes the screening process, they will be qualified as a potential new client. Then, the sales team will reach out over the phone or via email to get a better understanding of the prospect's intentions and needs.

Sales teams will use these follow-up conversations as a secondary lead qualification phase. This way, they can collect more data to decide whether a lead is worth investing more time in.

The BANT qualification framework

To make sure you collect the right type of information to assess a lead's readiness and sustainability, you can use a lead qualification framework such as **BANT.**

BANT is an acronym for – *Budget, authority, need,* and *timeline.*

1. **Budget**: Determine the lead's budget to ensure your offering is within their financial capacity.

2. **Authority**: Verify if the lead has adequate decision-making power to sign off a contract or can influence decision-makers in their organization.

3. **Need**: Identify the lead's specific needs, challenges, and goals to better understand how your product or service can provide a solution.

4. **Timeline**: Establish the lead's purchasing timeline to identify how soon they are looking to make a decision.

By gathering this information, you can better assess the quality of your leads and prioritize those with the highest potential for conversion.

Lead generation strategies

Lead capture forms

First, you need to set up a way to capture the right data of leads, so they don't come and go from your website unnoticed.

To get the necessary information, you first need to grab the attention of the right leads. Present them with a compelling offer for which they are willing to exchange their personal data. To do that you need to utilize multiple channels to get prospects to a lead capture form.

A lead capture form is a contact form you have set up that allows you to collect all the important data that you want from your leads.

This can include:

Name: Having the full name of prospects helps you personalize future communication or find them on social media.

Email address: Collect a valid email address to establish a line of connection and to deliver the content.

Job title: Helps you to determine their decision-making authority and role within the company.

Company name: If you have the company's name, you can visit their website to get a better understanding of their product or service and the industry they operate in.

Company size: Get an idea of the prospect's company size (number of employees or annual revenue) to determine suitability for your products or services.

Phone number: Gather phone numbers for direct contact or sales follow-ups, but be cautious as it may reduce form submission rates.

How did you hear about us? This point is very important to monitor the performance of your marketing efforts and which platforms and channels attract the most leads.

Custom questions (optional): Add specific questions relevant to your products or services to gather more insights.

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Keep in mind that shorter forms may have higher submission rates. Make sure to only include essential fields and consider progressive profiling to gather additional information over time.

Ensure your forms are GDPR-compliant and protect users' data privacy.

Optimize your website and landing pages

Your website is most likely the central touchpoint where you want to guide prospects to. Once a visitor lands on the web page you want to make sure they spend some time there to either read your content, learn about your company, reach out to you, or fill out a lead capture form.

In order for prospects to do any of these things, you need to **structure your website carefully.** Make sure potential customers can find what they are looking for easily. If someone needs to spend even just a few seconds thinking about where they have to click next, they will exit your website quicker.

Creating compelling landing pages

Besides making your website user-friendly, also **think about the landing pages you want to drive your website traffic to.** Don't just focus on your homepage. If you post a blog article on social media, link directly to the post instead of your blog page. You can always hyperlink other resources in the copy.

On social media, think carefully about what the audience on the specific platform is looking for. For example, if your Instagram is focused on your company culture, link to your careers page. If you use LinkedIn to promote your product, guide them to a product demo. Or, use the Twitter link to help prospects find the FAQ section.

Always think about where you want your audience to go next.

The content you offer on your website

*"Generating quality leads is the priority goal for **79%** of businesses. In addition, over half of the agencies surveyed say that their biggest content marketing challenge is creating content for this purpose."*
(Semrush)

Lead magnets

Lead magnets are one of the most common and effective ways to attract leads and capture their data. A lead magnet is gated content that provides value to prospects who are willing (and happy) to exchange their data for. By providing value upfront you build trust and establish yourself as a credible source of industry-specific information.

Examples of popular lead magnets are:

- **eBooks**
- **Webinars**
- **White papers**
- **Email newsletters**
- **Product demo**
- **Case studies**
- **Free trials**

Lead magnets are a very effective way to, well, magnetize leads. The goal of this tool isn't just to generate as many leads as possible but to **attract the *right* leads.**

People download gated content to either solve a problem or educate themselves. You want to make sure that your lead magnet is designed to attract prospects who are interested in your product or service. To do this, you have to find out first what they are looking for. (So, now is a good time to go back to your ICP and buyer persona.)

For example;

Let's say your company offers email management software; Research what potential customers are saying about email communication. Can you help them sound more confident in their emails? Do they need templates for an email newsletter? *Use these topics for your lead magnets.*

Get people to download your lead magnets by using CTA buttons like this one:

A CTA button should be strategically placed and intriguing enough that it makes leads *want to click it.*

Essential elements your CTA button should include:

- **An attention-grabbing color** that makes the button stand out on your website.

- **Short and clear copy** that lets your audience know what they should do next:

  - *Download now*
  - *Learn more*
  - *Sign-up*
  - *Join*

- A **short text close to the button that tells your visitor what will happen next** when they click the button.

- **Mobile-optimized design** to make sure people can easily see it when browsing on their phone.

- **Proper placement**, so it won't be drowned out by other elements. The best placement is "above the fold" meaning it is visible as soon as someone lands on your page without having to scroll up or down.
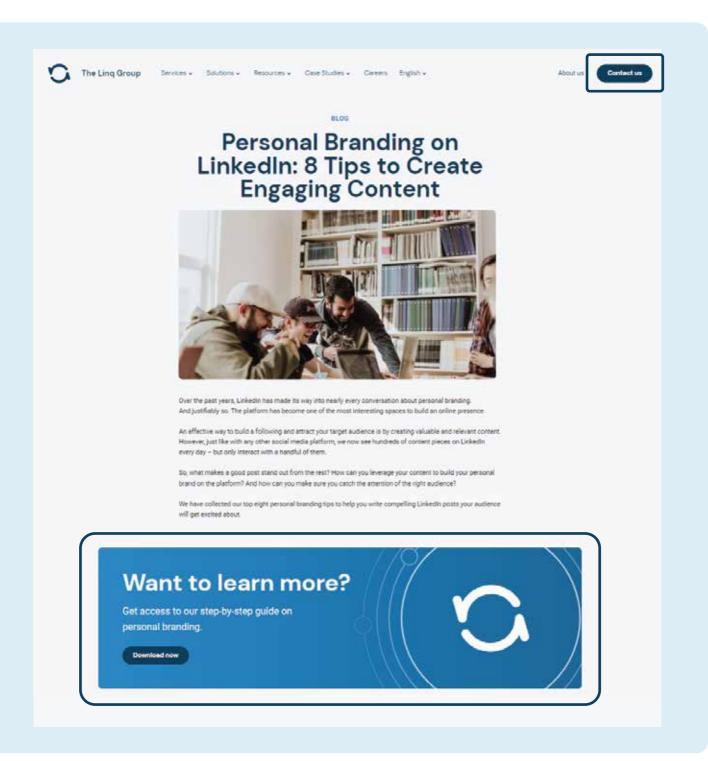
Blog content

Free content that you offer on your blog is another great way to attract leads. Lead magnets are gated content, meaning they are only available to prospects who fill out lead capture forms. Other, free resources like blog posts are easily accessible information that requires no commitment. Not every piece of content should be tied to a lead capture form, you want to allow prospects to learn about your company and expertise without asking for anything in return.

Creating valuable blog posts is an excellent strategy to build trust and credibility. When prospects can see that you know your facts and trust you they are more willing to exchange their data for your information.

Offering marketing materials for free doesn't mean you aren't allowed to promote other, gated content or your service or product. **Include call-to-action (CTA) buttons in your text.**

Examples of CTA buttons in your blog posts:

Social media

Establishing a strong online presence will help you get more traffic to your website, **build trusting relationships**, and learn more about your ideal customer. Analytical tools can provide valuable insights into your audience's behavior, their content preferences, and pain points. These insights will also help you adapt our marketing strategy on other channels as well.

Social media is also cost-effective. Though the majority of platforms offer paid ad options, most marketing tactics can be implemented with minimal or no cost.
However, the important thing is – **you need to know where your target audience is active.**

Before you start building your online presence, find out what social media platform(s) your target audience is using and which ones are most likely to help you generate more leads.
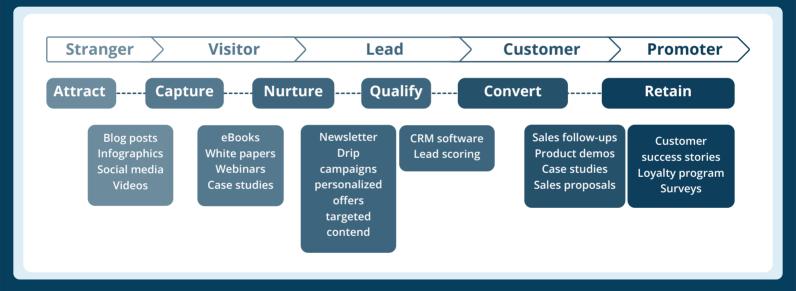
Lead nurturing

Once a prospect has shown an active interest, they don't automatically become a paying customer. Before making a buying decision, they have to go through **different stages of the sales funnel** from awareness to intent and finally making a decision.

In each stage, they need different types of information and take active steps to move to the next stage. You also want to make sure to engage them through relevant content and stay top of mind by maintaining a consistent content schedule.

Stranger	Visitor	Lead	Customer	Promoter
Attract	**Capture**	**Nurture**	**Qualify**	**Convert**	**Retain**
Blog posts Infographics Social media Videos	eBooks White papers Webinars Case studies	Newsletter Drip campaigns personalized offers targeted contend	CRM software Lead scoring	Sales follow-ups Product demos Case studies Sales proposals	Customer success stories Loyalty program Surveys

Resources that are needed to encourage prospects move down the sales funnel.

A few tips to nurture your leads:

- Follow up with leads directly
- Update your content regularly
- Continuously track, analyze, and improve your strategy
- Offer relevant marketing materials for different stages of the sales process
- Align marketing and sales efforts
- Engage leads on social media

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SKF about The Linq Group

Innovative service to bring sales teams to a professional level of social presence and interaction, and key to enhance lead generation and support business „

Read our case study here and see how we helped SKF book 50+ meetings with decision-makers, build their network with 100+ first degree connections per month, and deliver an average 5.4% conversion rate.

Book a call

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Let's discuss how we can help you generate more qualified leads!

Setting up your lead generation campaign step-by-step

By now, you are equipped with all the necessary knowledge to set up your first lead-generation campaign.

Short recap:
Putting all these elements together creates the lead journey:

1. Optimize your website and landing pages to navigate website traffic to the most important pages.
2. Offer valuable content that is relevant to your target audience.
3. A compelling lead magnet grabs a prospects attention.
4. They click a strategically placed call-to-action button.
5. The button takes them to the lead capture form where they enter their data.
6. They become a lead.

Setting up your campaign in 10 steps

1 **Define your goals**

2 **Identify your target audience**

3 **Develop a content strategy based on your ICP and buyer persona**

4 **Implement a content calendar**

5 **Create lead magnets**

6 **Optimize your website**

7 **Identify the right social media channels and create a strategy**

8 **Monitor and analyze your results**

9 **Refine and iterate your strategy**

10 **Consider working with lead generation experts**

Lead generation experts can help you hit your sales targets

A well-defined lead generation strategy can help you **stay top-of-mind with prospects, build trust, and drive higher conversion rates.** However, building, implementing, and executing such a campaign is very time-intensive. Especially for teams with limited time and resources.

You might want to consider hiring a lead generation service that will take the work off your hands.

How lead generation experts can help you meet your targets and drive growth

Finding prospects and transforming them into leads: Lead generation agencies have the expertise and right resources to identify and reach potential prospects who may not actively search for your product or service yet. Through communication strategies and lead capture methods, they can **grab the attention of these prospects and convert them into qualified leads**. This widens your reach and creates opportunities to expand your customer base.

Creating a network of qualified B2B leads: Lead gen experts have extensive experience in identifying and targeting the right audience. Besides attracting high-quality leads, they can also **build a valuable network with 1st degree connections** for you. Even if these connections aren't ready to make buying decision yet, you will stay top of mind when they are ready to make a purchase. The Linq Group, for example, also takes network nurturing off your hands to make sure you build sustainable, long-term relationships.

Booking meetings with key decision-makers: Sales teams often spend a lot of time prospecting and end up in meetings with people who have low to no decision-making power. Lead generation specialists know how to identify DMUs and target them with a communication strategy that **significantly increases your success rate of booking meetings with the right stakeholders**.

Growing your sales pipeline: Experts understand the importance of a well-defined sales pipeline. They can help you implement effective lead generation strategies, lead scoring methods, and implement nurturing processes to **guide leads through the various stages of your sales funnel.** This streamlines your sales efforts, ensures proper lead qualification, and increases the efficiency of your sales team.

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In addition to these benefits, working with lead generation experts can provide you with valuable insights, industry best practices, and the latest trends in the field of lead generation. They can help you optimize your marketing efforts, track and analyze data, and make data-driven decisions to continually improve your strategy.

Partnering with knowledgeable agencies also allows you to leverage their expertise and resources,. This saves you time and effort while maximizing your results. By collaborating with professionals who understand the intricacies of B2B lead generation, you can enhance your sales efforts and achieve your growth targets.

Want to learn more about how The Linq Group can become your new LinkedIn sales buddy and deliver qualified leads directly to your sales team?

Get in touch with our experts and schedule a meeting!

Give us a call

+31 20 209 13 09

Or email us:
hello@linq.group

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free resources?

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Download here

Building a personal brand is difficult. But is doesn't have to be! Get a step-by-step guide to create a memorable personal brand on LinkedIn.

Download here

Want to optimize your sales funnel. Get expert advice on how you can get started!

Download here

Or visit our blog! We write about everything from generating leads to building sustainable relationships and social selling.

Start reading

Final thoughts

Establishing a well structured lead generation strategy will help you focus your sales efforts on reaching and attracting high-quality leads, nurturing them throughout the sales process, and building lasting relationships.

Approaching lead generation with a well thought out strategy will help you hit the ground running and ensure that you don't waste your time with fruitless efforts.

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Contact us

Call us

Phone support is open from 9 to 5.

Feel free to give us a call anytime.

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