

# HOW TO... Leverage integrated marketing to boost your returns

What has worked for marketers for many years may still bring in results tomorrow, but are there new ways to uncover leads and nurture relationships that may increase ROI? **Charlotte Holden**, marketing manager at **McDonald Butler** explores



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**W**e should never become complacent in the marketing world, and that includes when designing our marketing programmes.

Each programme has new objectives and therefore needs to be tailor-made to address that. What has worked for many years may still bring in results, but is it with optimum success or are there new ways to uncover leads and nurture those relationships that increase ROI?

It's time to be strategic – and creative. What do I need out of my programme and what does my audience need? How will I reach the target audience that I haven't yet been able to convince? What can I do to stand out from the crowd?

## 1. Do the prep

Ensure that the correct foundational work is done at the very start of the campaign. Marketing programmes should be driven by business objectives and hence, each programme should be built on clear processes and proven methodologies.

Prior to the initial kick-off meeting, do the research. What is going on in the marketplace? What are the competitors doing – and if they are winning, why? Your initial meeting should delve into the objectives, focus and core messaging to ensure that your marketing campaign is in line with any currently running. Ask questions and get it right – it will save a lot of inevitable to-ing and fro-ing with your messaging plan later on.

## 2. Avoid ad hoc marketing activity

In designing the marketing programme, avoid siloed activity; even if the key objective is for quick wins. Ad hoc activity is hard to measure and does not focus on the relationship-building element of the target market, which is essential for maximum success. If you are planning strategic lead generation, make sure you 'warm' the market up with some online newsletters, followed perhaps by a webinar or face-to-face event. By this stage you have touched the marketplace, made yourself known and created a solid basis in which to make the sales calls. Using lead generation as a 'wrap around' activity, will therefore ensure optimum impact.



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## 3. Do something different

Whatever industry or walk of life, we are forever being sold too – whether that be a door-to-door salesman or a call from a utility company, it is often an annoyance. This is where the relationship aspect of marketing is so important. Designing a programme with several (although not too many) touch points, ensures potential leads are carefully nurtured and confidence is built between you and your audience.

This evokes a much warmer response than the cold sales approach.

You also need to think of new ways to reach the target audience. By getting an insight into the business ecosystems of your target market, you learn to understand their wants and needs – and speak their language.

Search, research, analyse and plot out what is going on in the marketplace. Who is influencing who? How can you hear what is being said about you in order to respond within your marketing programme efficiently and effectively? Go to the social media sites and answer these questions right at the start of the programme.

## 4. Measure your success

Design your marketing programme to have maximum reach, impact and return. Measure every stage of the buying lifecycle. By recording who has clicked through on an online newsletter – and who has opened it – instantly gives you a list of potentially interested and valuable leads. From this list, you can further validate this interest through a lead generation sales call or an invitation to an executive event.

Through continual recording, you can follow these leads right through to a sale, assign a sales figure to each and therefore carefully and clearly record the ROI.

## 5. Stay focused

Once your programme is complete, any additional budget put towards add-on activity must continue the good work you have already done. So, again avoid ad hoc activity. Make sure whatever continuation work you do, is for a reason and with purpose. That way you won't fail.

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