

The 6 Principles of Measured Marketing:

Delivering true ROI back into the Business



McDonald Butler
CONNECTING MARKETING & SALES

Alan Sugar once said,

“I’ve written books on marketing - cheque books!” -

a sentiment shared by many CEOs the world over. The problem with marketing in many organisations is that everyone recognises it as necessary, but as soon as budgets tighten or results aren’t clear, they start to lose faith and question what value marketing is actually delivering to the business. This means the marketing professional is under continual pressure to demonstrate the value of their role and output.

We’ve all heard the old adage “half my marketing budget is delivering amazing results; I just don’t know which half”. Measuring the on-going performance and ultimate success of your sales process is easily done – typically following a clearly defined process, leads are tracked through the sales pipeline with business ultimately lost or closed. But lead generation from marketing is almost always considered an area of ambiguity.

How many of us actually know the true value our company’s marketing activity really contributes to the business? Can you determine at any point in time how well your marketing programme is performing against objectives? Are your marketing and sales teams working to the same objectives? Do you even have clear objectives defined?

If you can’t answer these questions easily, then adopting a measured approach to marketing is something you should consider. Without it, you’re effectively operating in the dark, with no way of knowing how much – or little - marketing has contributed to your company’s sales performance.



So what is measured marketing?

Quite simply, 'measured marketing' is marketing activity which has clearly defined and agreed measurements that support your business objectives. Most importantly it's about making sure your marketing activities have a tangible impact on your bottom line. Developed at McDonald Butler, an independent B2B technology marketing agency. We have developed this highly repeatable approach that has proved successful time and time again.

Whilst measurement lies at the heart of the approach, it is not this in isolation that generates results – it's how you develop and manage the actual marketing activity that makes the real difference. After all, it's still possible to measure a 'bad' marketing programme!

What injects success into a measured marketing programme is the emphasis on a full understanding of:

- who the target audience, or community, is
- what are the business issues that drive them and challenge them
- what you have to offer in terms of addressing the needs of your target audience

The community is built by firstly defining a profile of the target prospects – which industries, what size companies, which job roles/titles etc. This is done by establishing your objectives and value proposition to the market. Based on this knowledge, the next part quite simply involves a lot of research and sheer hard work on the telephone to identify named individuals. It is this community of individuals which becomes the focus of measurement throughout the rest of the marketing programme.

You can then engage with the community through a series of relevant marketing activities. These include workshops, thought leadership events, and targeted communications, such as newsletters and thought pieces, delivered to the community, in an integrated fashion, over a number of months. The purpose of these activities is not only to create awareness, but also to position you as a thought leader in your space and to further validate your credibility within the target community and their industry, encouraging that community to engage with you and open a dialogue with them.

The level and quality of responses from the individuals in the community is tracked throughout the programme, enabling you to know the status of any individual in the buying process at any point in time. This exchange of information doesn't just stop with marketing – you should work closely with your sales team to ensure the close integration of the marketing activities with the on-going sales process.



So how does it really work?

Any company can adopt this approach to marketing. There's no secret as to how it works – no magic, no trickery. All you need to do is follow a results-driven process that incorporates metrics that can be clearly measured and reviewed at every step of the way. That, and of course commitment, passion, creativity and dedicated resources to carry out the programme consistently and effectively based on the true demands and drivers of the market.

The measured marketing approach is based strongly on the belief that if activity is measured it will get done. Sound simple? It is! What makes it work is following a clearly defined process.

There are six elements to creating a 'measured marketing' plan. Here we present a brief overview of each element in the process.

I. Lay the foundations

This is the most important part. By clearly defining what your objectives are, you can then build a marketing programme that is focused 100% on achieving those aims.

This part of the process addresses four key areas:

- **The Community:** Be clear from the outset who it is you want to target. This should include the key influencers and decision makers that will ultimately become leads for the sales organisation. Be as specific as possible so that your marketing team can target named individuals that fit the profile (e.g. industry, type of company, size, geography, job role, job title etc). Work closely with sales on this – do marketing and sales share the same view of what a sales lead actually is?
- **Messaging:** Once you have defined your audience you then need to better understand their world. To this end, the messaging part of the exercise is about clearly understanding and defining the market environment for your product or service. What are the current needs and drivers in the marketplace and within your target audience? What level of demand exists and what are the critical business issues that your product or service addresses?
- **Positioning:** The positioning part of the exercise asks that you clearly define the value proposition that your company offers in light of your now current understanding of what is driving the market today. By combining your value proposition with messaging that will resonate with, and appeal to, the marketplace, you can then go on to build a fully validated marketing programme that is more likely to guarantee you results.
- **Metrics:** Defining measurable performance criteria is key to understanding how well the marketing programme has performed against objectives. What these metrics are will depend on what your overall business objectives are. However, examples might include the number of qualified leads that respond to a marketing-generated message, e.g. attend an event or take part in a survey, or the number of leads that are suitably qualified to be taken on by the sales organisation.

2. Create the community

Creating the community quite simply means creating a database of named individuals from the target audience based on an agreed profile. This database forms the basis for all communication with the target audience and acts as the 'system of record' for all activities. Most importantly it is this database that will be used to track the metrics defined in the earlier stage, so it is important that the database be structured in such a way that it will incorporate the required metrics and that it is kept up to date so that progress can be reviewed at any point in time. This is arguably one of the most labour-intensive parts of the process, but the effort that is put in is fundamental to, and is reflected in, the success of the whole measured marketing programme.

3. Build the community

Simply building a list of names isn't the be-all and end-all of the community database. It is what you do with it and how you develop the community that's the key. This can be done primarily through a coordinated programme of activities that aim to engage and move an identified member of the target community from not only being aware of your product or service, but also being interested in it, indicating a desire for it, and ultimately carrying out an identifiable action, the definition of which you will have set out in your initial objectives of the measured marketing programme. Remember, measuring isn't just about quantity; it's about the quality of the relationships you are building.

4. Map the community

Mapping and tracking your progress is key. This will enable you to check where you are against your objectives at any time and assess how the relationships you are building with your target community are developing. Crucially it will also help you if changes need to be made to the marketing programme, changes such as speeding up the process (add more resources, focus on priorities), altering the marketing mix, or responding to updates in messaging and positioning as you get on-going feedback from the marketplace. Remember, adapting or changing the plan is not a failure. Although recognising that changes need to be made but then not making those changes is a failure.

5. Align the business

The success of a measured marketing programme is never down to the marketing team alone. It relies heavily on the support and input from across the business, most notably of course from sales, the other half of the sales and marketing 'double act'. Aligning not only activities with the sales team, but also messaging and objectives, ensures that there is consistency in how your company presents itself to market, and also ensures that when marketing activities do create a qualified lead, it is exactly the type of lead that sales wants, and that they are primed and ready to take it on and keep it moving through the sales process. The challenge of integrating objectives and activities across the business should never be underestimated, and it can often require an on-going programme of internal communication to ensure that all parties 'keep the faith' to maintain a unified focus on the objectives.

6. Measure the results

Last but by no means least, review the metrics you have been collecting. Doing so gives you the basis to form a strong ROI report for the work you've been doing, and it also acts as an invaluable bedrock for future measured marketing programmes.

The measured approach to marketing is designed to ensure that your marketing activities contribute positively to the success of your business and that the efforts are recognised for the results they generate.

Marketing isn't a fluffy 'nice to have' activity that works in isolation from the rest of your business. In today's competitive environment it's a 'must have' which needs to be integrated closely with your wider sales process. Measured marketing puts you in control and enables you to demonstrate the value that marketing is contributing to your company's success.

To find out more about how a Measured Marketing approach could work in your organisation please contact Maeve or Charlotte at McDonald Butler Associates on +44 (0) 20 8875 2000 or email

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About McDonald Butler Associates

McDonald Butler is an award winning B2B technology marketing agency. We develop highly-targeted and integrated marketing and lead generation programmes which deliver real business opportunities and help build our clients' market position and market share. We specialise in the technology and IT sector and our clients include Motorola, Microsoft, SAP, Capgemini, Cisco and Avaya.

Our programmes focus on creating and nurturing a community of warm prospects and moving them through the buying cycle, from awareness and education, to interest, desire (need) and action (demand/in sales engagement). Their position within the buying cycle can be clearly measured at specific points throughout the marketing programme so you can see exactly what marketing is delivering to the business every step of the way. We agree upfront with our clients the key deliverables of the programme and ensure these are aligned and measured so that targets are hit.

We believe in a 'value-based' marketing model rather than a 'volume-based' model. Our focus is on generating prospect relationships with specified and qualified targets and drawing them into the community in order to turn interest into opportunity and continually nurture the opportunity over time, ultimately delivering a clear ROI for our clients. Our integrated marketing programmes are driven by your business objectives. Each programme is built on clear processes and proven methodologies for lead generation and brand awareness.