



FLAUNTDIGITAL

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO ONLINE LEAD GENERATION

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Intro

Most marketers will agree that one of the toughest challenges is keeping up with all the latest trends and updates in the ever-changing industry that is digital marketing. Particularly in the sphere of [lead generation](#), if you don't keep up with the latest techniques then your competitors could very quickly find a cutting edge which allows them to take a larger share of the market.

Traditionally, lead generation was something that was left mainly to the sales team. But with sales and marketing departments becoming more aligned with one another, this now falls under the job description for most marketers too. When you hear 'lead generation', you may automatically think of unwarranted telesales calls. But with the ever-evolving landscape of the internet, this is far from the case anymore.

In this exclusive whitepaper, 'The Ultimate Guide To Online Lead Generation', we'll be sharing some of the different online lead generation channels that you can be making use of. We'll then be taking a more in-depth look at some of the specific social media channels that you can use to boost leads, with a whole load of actionable tips and insights along the way.

Online Lead Generation Channels

PAY PER CLICK (PPC)

Pay per click, also known as PPC, is a brilliant way of harnessing the immense potential offered by the internet. Irrespective of which industry you operate in, there is a very good chance that a large number of your prospective customers are online, and PPC allows you to target them according to what they search. Join the bidding process for various key phrases which are searched for on Google and, should you choose to pay what is asked for, your PPC ads will accompany the search results for your chosen phrases. You will only pay each time a searcher visits your site, hence the 'pay-per-click' name. And if you are willing to invest time in a process of trial and error in order to fine-tune your chosen key phrases, you will be able to appear in front of more of the people you want, rather than those who are irrelevant. This can be a great investment for drawing in highly targeted leads.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION (SEO)

While PPC is high on the list of B2B lead generation best practices, it is a paid marketing technique. Search engine optimisation, or SEO, at a basic level can be conducted entirely

naturally by a number of means. It has the potential to give your website a prominent placing on Google's organic listings, offering a direct route to generate leads. For a start, you can make sure the basics of your website are fully optimised for SEO, including keywords, titles and page structure; this will give Google the pointers it is looking for to rank you highly for certain keywords. Then you can pack your site full of engaging content which is continually updated - this can help channel traffic to your address; another sure-fire way of boosting your position in the search rankings. Use blogs, video content and links to your site through your social media channels to heighten the impact.

CONTENT MARKETING

We have learned over the past few years that [content is key](#), but that won't be changing in the near future, in fact [it will only become more pertinent](#). If you are not captivating your audience with content which educates, informs, entertains or amuses then you could be missing out on valuable leads. In so many industries, the best lead generation techniques are now less about the 'hard-sell' and more about stimulating the minds of your audience then giving them clear routes to learn more or enquire. So you needn't worry if the content you are marketing isn't directly related to your product or service. So long as there is a way to link back to your brand, and the content is serving you well by raising publicity or strengthening your profile, it can be effective as a lead generation technique. One really useful tip to boost leads from content marketing is to sprinkle one or two CTA buttons across each of your blogs, offering exclusive content, an offer or discount, or even simply a nudge to get in touch with your team.

MARKETING AUTOMATION

Why sweat buckets in your lead generation process when marketing automation software can do the hard work for you? Software such as [HubSpot](#) can bring a huge variety of tasks together under one roof and make them easy to administer. That includes email marketing campaigns, blogging, social media output, control of your website, landing pages, and the leads themselves. With scheduling capabilities that allow you to keep on top of things during a typically busy working day, marketing automation software is a winner for lead generation. It allows you to get on with the more challenging creative and strategical elements, while administrative tasks are done while you work. You can also gain some fantastic insights through the analytics functionality of this software, allowing you to make improvements across the board.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Last but certainly not least, social media. Lead generation through social media is one of the most effective ways of finding new customers, and the greatest thing about it is the fact that it

is, more often than not, completely free. When we talk about social media 'leads', just to be totally clear, what we are referring to are potential customers who have shown some level of interest in either your product or your service.

They are the 'lead' and this engagement in what you are doing has been generated via whichever social media platform they found you on. With social lead generation, you can then follow up on your communications with the potential customer through your sales department or through a tailored marketing program to 'warm up' the lead and eventually turn them into an actual sale or conversion.

Generating Organic Leads With Social Media

It has been proven to work. [Hootsuite reports](#) that 76% of buyers are happy to have a conversation on social media, while 90% of high-level decision makers will never respond to a cold call. Rather than aggressively shoving your brand down their throat, you are accessing them in their own space, in their own spare time. However, you need to use these platforms effectively in order to be generating sales leads through social media. So, how do you use social media to generate more leads for your business?

GATED CONTENT

Firstly, gated content can be hugely valuable to you. This means putting information that you know will interest customers behind a kind of virtual firewall or gate. In order to access that information, they simply need to enter some basic contact information and you'll let them in. This could be their name and e-mail address, or their job profession and phone number. With GDPR recently coming into play, it could be wise to only ask for any information that will actually come in useful. It's also important that you make it easy for them to give consent to store your information. One way to do this can be adding a box that users can tick to confirm they give you consent, but you must ensure this box isn't pre-ticked.

All you need to do on your social media is share a link to this content and make it seem captivating enough for people to click-through using the headline and associated text. Some people may not share their contact details, and that's fine because they probably wouldn't turn into a lead anyway. But those interested will feel it is worth sharing their details, and they then instantly qualify themselves as being more than just a passer-by. It's vital that your content is worth their time though, otherwise you may lose them just as fast as you have gained them.

ENGAGEMENT

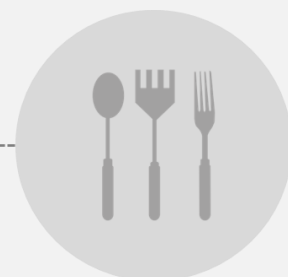
One of the great things about social media is the fact that it has opened up communication channels between brands and customers. You can now speak directly with your audience, without any teams or channels blocking the way for you to get a very clear sense of their feelings on your products or services. Engaging with relevant people who have engaged with you on a one-to-one level is invaluable for generating more leads for your business. You should always make sure you show gratitude for anyone who has taken the time to engage. This can reap many rewards including personal recommendations being made to their friends or family, posts being shared, trust and loyalty being built, and new custom coming your way when people remember the fact you engaged with them.

Generating Leads With Social Media Advertising

Social media advertising is also another way of generating sales leads through social media. Ads on social media platforms are often targeted towards specific individuals through a series of personalised criteria, which means you can use your understanding of your customer base to reach out to those who you feel would be more interested. These adverts are low-commitment, an easy way to begin advertising and can generate leads that go directly through to your website or newsletter. The trick is to ensure that your ads are concise and the call to action is obvious.

Facebook Advertising in particular is helping businesses around the world get their product or service in front of relevant audiences. We'd like to share some of our most effective techniques and strategies suited to driving your upper funnel, in-market leads.

To begin, start by identifying your key audience; who are they, where do they live? What's their interests and online behaviours? Use the customer data you already have to highlight trends and similarities. If you already have [a series of buyer personas](#), you can use these to better formulate your Facebook Ads audience.



By doing this, you can start forging ideas surrounding the types of interests your customers might have, identify certain demographic pools and pinpoint the types of industries they work in. This type of information is key in identifying highly-targeted groups for your Facebook lead generation campaigns.

For example, let's say that you're a kids' party planner looking for new business. From looking at your customer database, you can see that your key customers are generally men, aged 25 - 40, mainly city dwellers or living in affluent suburbs, working part time usually due to parenting commitments.

It's almost frowned upon these days to make assumptions about what types of interests a person might have based on their personal circumstances, habits and online & offline behaviours. But any strategy worth its salt has a solid hypothesis at its foundation.

So, based on what we already know, we can begin asking things like, "during what hours might our men, aged 25 - 40 be most active on social media?", "What type of brands might they like or follow?", and "what kind of TV content do they consume during their hours at home?".

Testing these different hypotheses can help fine tune your Facebook targeting and help you reach your key customers without wasting ad spend on irrelevant audiences.

Once you've rendered a basic persona for your focus group, we can then begin cross-referencing these user groups with popular categories and audience data using the Facebook 'Audience Insights' tab which will list top Facebook categories and pages that your key audience interacts with. There are other 3rd-party data vendors and data management platforms that can supercharge your targeting by unlocking rich customer insights based on your 1st-party data. However, this is more suited to advertisers who have substantial media budgets, so for now let's assume that we're using a fusion of common sense, any buyer personas you may have and the Facebook audience insights tool.

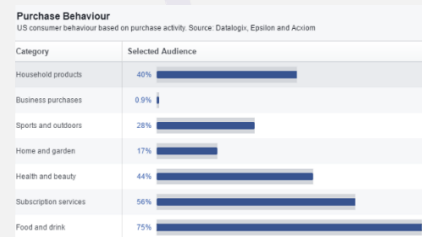
From using the Facebook Audience Insights tool, we can see that based on the information we've imputed, our part-time dad is likely to live in specific geographic locations, follows the NFL, is more active on mobile devices, and over-indexes the remaining internet population for consuming video content. This information gives us a great starting point to optimising ads for conversion. It might also influence the language and type of message used in your ads. Here's an example of the type of information generated by the tool:

Page Likes
Facebook Pages that are likely to be relevant to your audience based on Facebook Page Likes.

| Page | Relevance % | Audience | Facebook | Affinity % |
|--------------------|-------------|----------|----------|------------|
| Walmart | 1 | 23.7m | 23.7m | 1% |
| Wells | 2 | 21.5m | 21.5m | 1% |
| Amazon.com | 3 | 21.2m | 21.2m | 1% |
| Target | 4 | 18.2m | 18.2m | 1% |
| Facebook | 5 | 18.2m | 18.2m | 1% |
| Family Day | 6 | 16.2m | 16.2m | 1% |
| Disney | 7 | 15.8m | 15.8m | 1% |
| Samsung Mobile USA | 8 | 15.4m | 15.4m | 1% |
| Subway | 9 | 13.8m | 13.8m | 1% |
| UPVizcaya | 10 | 13.2m | 13.2m | 1% |

Top Categories

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 Retail and Consumer Merchandise | Walmart • Amazon.com • Target • Macy's • Kohl's |
| 2 Sport | Basketball |
| 3 Athlete | Michael Jordan |
| 4 Interest | Camping |
| 5 Arts/Humanities | Humans of New York |
| 6 Non-Profit Organization | ForHimself |
| 7 Church/Religious Organization | Joel Osteen Ministries |
| 8 TV Network | Food Network |
| 9 Games/Toys | Call of Duty |
| 10 Sports League | NFL |



Now you have this information in your ad insights arsenal it's time to put it to work and get cracking with building the ads. But first, it's important that we address the ad serving strategy and ensure your key audience is familiar with your product or service, and that your business is getting across exactly what it is you do, and why your service should be of interest.

So, how do we do this in a way that will allow your users to understand the key benefits of your business and get them to take action? We start by inspiring our users with visually rich and informational content, then depending on how our target audience responds we have the option to reconnect with them at a later date.

So, let's take our part-time dad, who could be (based on the information we have) in the market for child care. First, we push out a 30 second video explaining what we do, where we're based, with a button offering the option to visit the website and learn more. If the user decides to visit, we now have their information so that we can interact with them again at a later date and customise ads based on their onsite behaviours. And because Facebook doesn't use cookies in the traditional sense it's possible to reconnect with them across other devices too, so we never miss an opportunity to get in front of them.

Now, let's speculate that our user has watched the video, clicked through the website and browses 2-3 pages, but doesn't complete an action such as an enquiry form fill or call the phone number shown onsite. This type of behaviour indicates that the user is clearly interested in your service but isn't ready to commit to anything. We can put users who demonstrate similar behaviours to this in a defined audience bucket via Facebook and go back to them with either a more compelling offer or more information to help seal the deal.

Now that your user is familiar with your business, you're in a great position to follow up with them, this is of course if they haven't already contacted you. We're going to take a look at two of the main ad formats designed for this purpose.

FACEBOOK LEAD ADS

Facebook's indisputable improvements to usability, data accuracy and creative variety are key components driving its success, and more and more businesses are becoming familiar with social advertising technology and its place in their digital marketing strategy.

SO, WHAT ARE LEAD ADS?

In 2015 Facebook launched Facebook Lead Ads – an ad format enabling advertisers to promote their business in the Facebook feed using all the same targeting capabilities as standard ad formats, but what's different is an intuitive 3-step form that encourages prospects to enter their personal details using a series of pre-defined or custom questions aimed to provide rich lead information and removing a website visit from the equation. It's the perfect ad format for turning site visitors into qualified leads.

Completing a lead form couldn't be easier. [A study conducted by salesforce](#) in 2015 found that a new contact/lead can be created in as little as 6 unique touches. Even websites boasting unrivalled UX would struggle to achieve that!

The ad format comes with customisable call-to-action (CTA) buttons, default questionnaire fields and a thank you page confirming that user details have been received.

This ad format is perfect for targeting busy prospects on the go and is mobile first due to its intuitive native format – a huge advantage if your website landing page isn't optimised for mobile visitors.

Here's an example of a lead generation ad for a local photography studio:



WHO CAN I TARGET?

It's crucial that your targeting is built to attract your key audience. This will help avoid haemorrhaging budget on users who don't match your buyer persona. It's even possible to upload your CRM contacts to visually remind existing customers of new services and products or allow Facebook to find new prospects that have similar online behaviours and traits as your existing customers. As with all Facebook Adverts, you have some of the most advanced audience targeting features around.

WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?

The ad can appear in the Facebook news feed using a range of ad formats including image and video. Once the user's attention has been caught, clicking the call-to-action button will push users straight to the form.

The stages of the lead ad should follow these steps:

Step 1: Context Card (optional) - The context card is an optional stage that allows advertisers to give a quick breakdown of highlights and benefits of filling out of the form. This is a great chance to provide 4-5 short bullet points that sell your offer.

Step 2: Form - This section is made up of auto fill fields for basic personal information such as name & email address, aligned with optional multiple-choice questions and answers so that users can quickly describe things like intent, job role & business size. One important rule of thumb when deciding what to ask is to make sure the amount of information requested matches the value of the content or product on offer. For example, don't ask for every single piece of personal information if all you're offering in exchange is a one-page checklist download.

Step 3: End Card - This section is designed to notify users that their information has been submitted and gives an opportunity to thank them for their interest. It's also recommended that you include a link back to your website so they can read more about your products or services.

CRM INTEGRATIONS

As a B2B marketer or sales person, you'll know that a healthy, constantly updating CRM database is the lifeblood of your business, and it seems without the detailed personal information it produces, your sales team would have a hard time personalising their communications and fundamentally closing deals.

Having the correct social targeting in place could see your database brimming with fresh, in-market leads that are synced directly with your CRM database.

Forming a link between your Facebook lead campaigns and CRM is becoming a common technique used by many B2B marketers, but the level of sophistication is still growing. Hubspot recently rolled out their new and improved integration with Facebook, allowing marketers to create and publish lead ads straight from Hubspot creating a slick, automated lead generation cycle.

REPORTING

When it comes to reporting, it's straight forward to quantify results with marketing suites and tools such as Hubspot. Use your channel reporting to analyse the number of leads and customers generated through lead ads, and compare metrics such as interactions, submissions or download rates to other marketing activities. We're confident you'll be impressed with the results!

LINKEDIN LEAD GEN FORMS

LinkedIn's lead generation forms are one of the most interesting opportunities to arise in the last couple of years. Here, we're going to take a look at how you can use them to boost your ROI.

WHAT ARE LINKEDIN'S LEAD GEN FORMS?

The lead gen forms are designed to work alongside your LinkedIn sponsored content.

One of the major barriers to generating leads on LinkedIn came from mobile traffic: essentially, users didn't want to fill in clunky forms whilst on their phones.

LinkedIn's Lead Gen Forms remove this problem by filling in the form for users automatically: all they need to do is press submit.

You get the same useful information on your prospect without them having to lift a finger, with all the data coming from their own up-to-date LinkedIn profile.

HOW CAN THE LEAD GEN FORMS IMPROVE YOUR ROI?

There are a number of benefits to this feature. The first - as we've mentioned - is that it makes things much easier for users. It will require much less effort to input their data, and they'll be less likely to give up halfway through.

You can obtain more information this way

Because the form is filled automatically, you can actually ask for more data than you would do otherwise. When users are being asked to give the information themselves, it's risky to ask for much more than a name and e-mail address. With LinkedIn Lead Gen Forms, it takes no more effort to provide five bits of data than it does to provide one.

The forms are mobile friendly

Mobile traffic outweighs desktop. The Lead Gen Ads are optimised specifically to perform on mobiles, which is not the case with many other forms of traffic. Increase conversions on mobile, and your ROI will go up: it's that simple. (Plus, of course, the chances are you'll be ahead of the competition, many of whom will still be using the same tactics on both mobile and desktop.)

You can use them to generate additional traffic

You have the option of providing users with an additional link once they've filled in the form. Do you, for example, have a tested landing page that you know converts at a positive ROI? You can give users the opportunity to click through to it, essentially giving yourself two chances at conversion from one click.

The targeting options are excellent

The more targeted your campaigns, the more likely they are to achieve a positive ROI. Lead Gen Forms allow you to drill down into specific groups and then add them to your campaign to ensure your content gets shown to the right people. Once you've experimented with this and found an audience that generates a good ROI, you can continue to promote to them for as long as you wish, increasing or decreasing your desired budget along the way.

The ROI data is supplied

Needless to say, you'll need the data if you're going to calculate the ROI. LinkedIn's Lead Gen Forms and their sponsored content interface will give you access to all of the main metrics, so you can be sure of success. And therefore, if something's not working, you'll be able to work out exactly what the problem is.

So, there you have it; our Ultimate Guide To Online Lead Generation. By no means is this an easy task, but if you take the time to implement this correctly it will be more than worth your while. Whether you're a small business with little-to-no marketing budget or a global organisation with a multi-million-pound budget, these lead generation tactics will be suitable for you.

Gone are the days when you would hire a room of 30 people to make thousands of telesales calls every day. If you have this kind of budget then a fully-integrated lead generation strategy, using a combination of paid and organic lead gen techniques will be a far better option.

