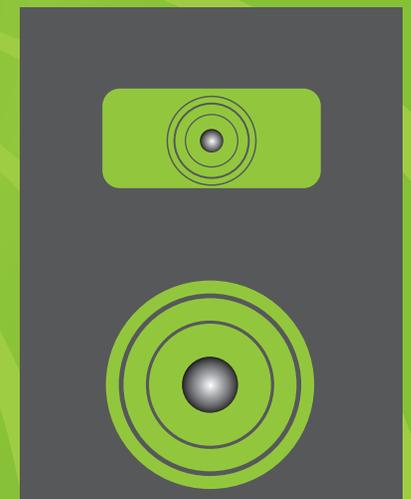


How Demand Spring Helped a Leading eTailer Take a New Approach to Marketing

What a Progressive Rock Song
Teaches Us About B2B Marketing
Transformation



I'm moving through some changes, I'll never be the same – Yes, "Changes"

What does a song released in 1983 have to do with B2B marketing? Good question. As the opening lyrics to "Changes" imply, B2B marketing is moving through some changes, and it too will never be the same.

Closely tied to today's unprecedented access to information and an abundance of independent reviews and evaluations, today's buyer is more in control of the buyer-vendor relationship than ever – a trend that shows no sign of slowing down.

This is the story of one B2B revenue marketing organization that achieved significant results by moving from a product-centric mindset to a buyer-centric framework.

Change changing places
Root yourself to the ground
Capitalize on this good fortune
One word can bring you 'round
Changes



The Client

One of Demand Spring's most compelling transformations can be found in the form of the business to business (B2B) division of a top 5 eTailer. With more than 250,000 product offerings, the company has nearly every product a business could possibly need in its inventory.

Just as buyers have changed purchasing behavior, the eTailer has dramatically transformed its revenue marketing strategy, along with the content and underlying technology that supports it.

The Challenge

Historically, the company relied on a large field sales organization, one that was meeting more and more resistance from prospects. As prospects increasingly began interacting with digital channels, it was up to the B2B marketing organization to find that "one word to bring them (and the buyer) 'round".

The B2B marketing team, like many others, was adapting to new expectations, expectations that required fresh lead generation and conversion to support required contributions to the company's top-line.

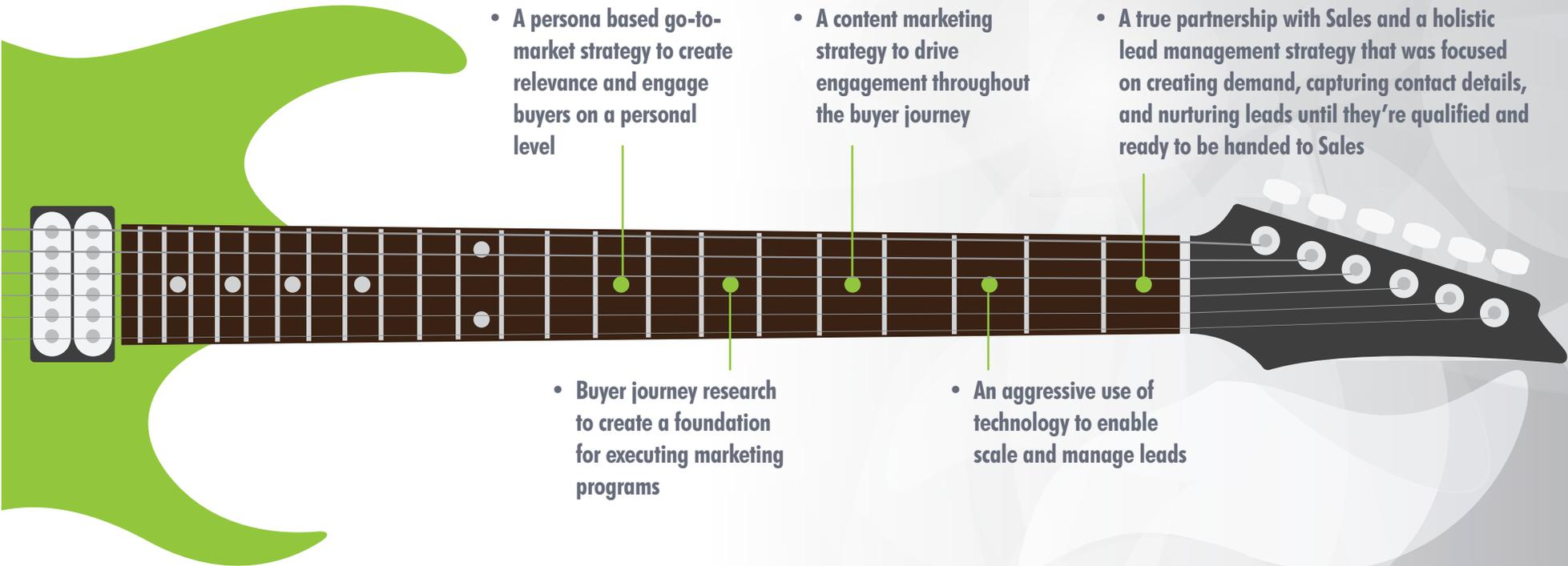
A positive trend in digital channel interaction was a good sign, though there was work to do to develop existing leads and to zero in on their go-to-market strategy. A better understanding of its buyer personas would help target the right audience, and the creation of supporting content would in turn help drive engagement. And last, but not least, a technology infrastructure – strategically deployed and managed – would properly support the goals of the business unit.



The Strategy

If forced to choose, the B2B unit at the eTailer in question would likely choose 'recognition' as the one word that brought them 'round. And that recognition came from the eTailer's Director of Online Marketing, who joined the team in 2014.

The Director quickly identified several key elements that would drive the kind of revenue marketing performance the unit needed.

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- A persona based go-to-market strategy to create relevance and engage buyers on a personal level
 - Buyer journey research to create a foundation for executing marketing programs
 - A content marketing strategy to drive engagement throughout the buyer journey
 - An aggressive use of technology to enable scale and manage leads
 - A true partnership with Sales and a holistic lead management strategy that was focused on creating demand, capturing contact details, and nurturing leads until they're qualified and ready to be handed to Sales

The Solution

With right strategy in place, the eTailer's transformation process was underway. Demand Spring helped the eTailer examine their **buyer journey**, going beyond the typical academic exercise of documenting demographic and firmographic information. Demand Spring's experienced team of consultants worked closely with the eTailer's B2B marketing team to develop a comprehensive blueprint, one that went beyond two dimensions, helping the eTailer **operationalize around their buyer personas**.

Through Demand Spring's buyer persona analysis services, a deep understanding of four different buyers was developed. This knowledge directly informed the strategies and tactics, and marketing technologies (MarTech) the eTailer would use to engage buyers in a much more personal, relevant manner across multiple channels, including email, website, and paid media.

It was the Director who recognized the importance of marketing automation, and its crucial position at the center of its technology stack. In 2014, the eTailer implemented Marketo, and partnered with Demand Spring in 2015 to optimize the platform. To address gaps in funnel performance, complementary marketing technology apps were added to the mix.



To validate, cleanse, and enrich its database, **Reachforce** was deployed, helping normalize firmographic data while noticeably improving personalized communications to known leads. Next came Marketo's Real-time Personalization (RTP), implemented first on the blog, and later across the eTailer's website. RTP allowed the company to start talking to prospects in a manner that reflected their deep knowledge they accumulated and analyzed during the buyer journey research phase of their transformation.

Since video was one of the key content types used to engage prospects, the eTailer made an investment in **Vidyard**. This leading video marketing platform fully integrated video into their marketing programs more by helping drive attribution, deepening their understanding of what resonates with buyers.

To strengthen customer relationships and turn customers into advocates, Demand Spring introduced **Influitive's AdvocateHub** to the mix – a critical priority for a company competing in a space loaded with worthy alternatives.

And now, at time of publication, the eTailer is starting to turn its Marketo integration focus to paid media, starting with a LinkedIn Lead Accelerator program to engage and target known personas.

A Modern, Digital Approach

Taking a modern, digital approach to demand generation required buy-in across the organization, and especially from Sales. By moving away from a quantitative view of leads and adopting new processes, buyers are streamlined through their journey, from initial engagement through to conversion.

One road to happiness. It's calling your name...

Actually, despite what Yes says, there are three steps to marketing transformation happiness:



1. **'Engage'** to create demand and capture essential buyer details and to help form the foundations of buyer personalization;



2. **'Nurture'** to foster a two-way dialogue, guiding the buyer through the sales cycle to develop the prospect into a qualified lead; and finally to



3. **'Convert'** prospective buyers, passing qualified leads seamlessly to sales for conversion into a customer.

A marketing transformation of this magnitude shifted the mindset across the eTailer's entire organization, impacting every department. Traditional divides between Marketing and Sales were bridged and specialized teams were established and assigned to specific buyer personas.

Changes!

Results

With help from Demand Spring, the Director's vision of a new approach to marketing came to fruition. Leads and closed won deals initiated by marketing are up substantially, year over year. The company has gone from a laggard in marketing best practices and technology implementation to a leader in a single year.



"The company had an excellent vision right from the start," Demand Spring President Mark Emond notes. "They brought us in to fulfill and execute upon that vision. We've been a partner with the company to deliver sales success and helped them become fully able to drive demand generation and customer conversion."

The Director agreed and elaborated: "Demand Spring has been like an extension of our team. They were an out-and-out excellent resource for us. In addition to being extremely knowledgeable, their prior experience was essential. Our company had complete confidence in their real-world experience with transformative, digital marketing."

Thanks to this engagement, the company now knows its buyer personas, and strategically leverages technologies to engage buyers across all channels in a customized, buyer-relevant manner.

Contact Us

For more information, visit www.demandspring.com

Call us at 613.831.0295

Or email us at info@demandspring.com

For help in growing your hair and strengthening your marketing muscles, check out our Spring Training workshops.

About Demand Spring

Demand Spring is a demand generation consultancy that helps marketing organizations improve their ability to build and progress sales pipeline.

Our extensive client-side experience with organizations like IBM, Yahoo!, Computer Associates, and Cognos provides unique insight into the challenges marketing executives face when building repeatable, scalable demand generation models.

At Demand Spring, we take a pragmatic approach – we won't try to boil the ocean in a day, nor will we take six months to deliver a cursory consulting document. Refreshingly, we strive to deliver meaningful results within 45 days of our initial engagement.

Our three integrated service lines – Strategy, Technology, and Content – help clients optimize all elements of demand generation.

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