

B2B Marketing Innovation eBook

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B2B
MARKETING FORUM

THIS IS NOT YOUR
FATHER'S B2B.



*The Future of B2B Marketing? **Innovation!***



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There's a common belief that it's tougher to come up with new ideas for B2B marketing than for consumer products. But most experienced marketers know that innovation exists within B2B as much or more as it does with B2C marketing – just in different ways.

With a better understanding of buyers through data, B2B marketers are now creating some of the most innovative and smart marketing seen since the Oldsmobile stopped being your dad's favorite car.

To help you escape the dullsville of old fashioned B2B marketing, we tapped some of the top B2B brands and thought leaders for their best tips on how to bring some modern innovation to the classic world of business to business marketing.

To get a head start on the future of B2B Marketing and the MarketingProfs B2B Forum, read on for 33 practical and useful insights that can rocket your business to the stars.

Lee Odden, CEO of TopRank® Online Marketing & Author of *Optimize*.



*Gosh, that's a
swell bunch of
marketing tips!*

33 *Ways to Innovate B2B Marketing*

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Ann Handley
Chief Content Officer,
B2B Badass & Author,
MarketingProfs
@marketingprofs

Ann Handley heads up all of the content at MarketingProfs. She's a 13-year veteran of creating and managing digital content to build relationships for organizations and individuals, and the co-author of *Content Rules*. Previously, Ann was the co-founder of ClickZ.com and spent 12 years as a business editor and writer for publications including the *Boston Globe*.

Customer = Hero

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

The key to B2B marketing innovation is focusing more on the stories of your customers, and less on your product... oops, I mean...your "solution." (God I hate that term.)

Many B2B "solutions" are boring -- something like technology isn't inherently interesting when you describe what it does. But it becomes far more interesting when you talk about what it means for your customers: How does it help people? How does it shoulder their burdens? Ease their pain? The main character in all of your marketing -- even when you are marketing a technology -- should be a person.

In other words:

Make your customer the hero of your brand's story.



Michael Brenner

Senior Director
Global Marketing &
Content Strategy,
SAP

@brennermichael

Michael Brenner is the author of B2B Marketing Insider and co-founder of Business 2 Community. He started his career at the Nielsen Company before taking on marketing leadership positions at software start-up FullTilt (later acquired by QAD software) and International Communications Research.

Engaging Content

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Almost everyday, I still hear things like “I serve the heavy manufacturing industry and those guys don’t use search engines or social media.” I think the opportunity is even greater in B2B because no one assumes consumers don’t use social media. But there are still hold outs in B2B. Business people in every industry are searching for answers and looking for help to their business problems.

Because B2B brands have been slower to respond, there is still tremendous opportunity for brands to start acting like publishers and delivering engaging content in the formats people are looking for and in the places where they search.

The brands that do this well in the near future or have been doing it already, have a huge advantage.



Joe Pulizzi

Founder & Author,
Content Marketing
Institute

@juntajoe

Accclaimed content evangelist, Joe Pulizzi, founded the annual Content Marketing World conference, and Chief Content Officer magazine. Joe is also CEO of SocialTract and co-author of the highly praised books *Get Content Get Customers* and *Managing Content Marketing: The Real-World Guide for Creating Passionate Subscribers to Your Brand*.

Stop Talking & Listen

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

I wish I could answer with something more profound, but I've always found the greatest ideas from simply talking to customers. My favorite question is "What keeps you up at night?" What we are trying to channel here is what the biggest pain point is.

Now, what if your marketing could solve, or at least comfort that pain point? What if we created marketing that was inherently useful to our customers?

1. Stop talking about your products and services so much.
2. Listen and list the biggest informational challenges your customers have.
3. Work to solve those challenges with helpful information that doesn't just gloss over, but really answers their questions.
4. Repeat.



Christopher Penn

Director Inbound
Marketing,
WhatCounts
@cspenn

Christopher S. Penn works for the email marketing company, WhatCounts. He also co-founded the PodCamp new media community conference, and currently co-hosts the Marketing Over Coffee podcast. In 2012, *Forbes Magazine* recognized him as one of the top 50 most influential people in social media and digital marketing.

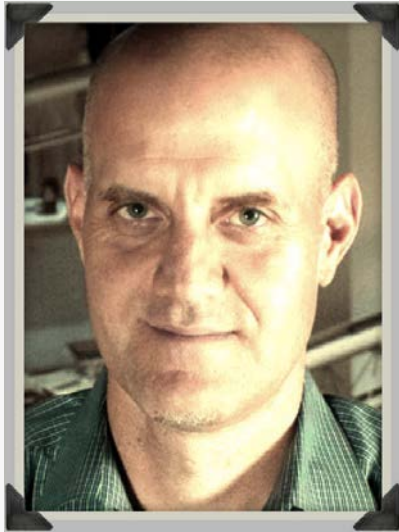
Study Deeply

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Your best insights for B2B innovation are not going to come from marketing books, webinars, or conferences. Find something to study deeply that's an art, be it painting, music, martial arts, dance, whatever.

Find a teacher who is a legitimate expert in the art, study with them, learn it, master it, and then pull the lessons you learn from it into your own businesses and marketing. There's an expression from my martial arts, from my teacher, Mark Davis, that goes like this - "on ko chi shin". That's Japanese for study something old to learn something new.

The best part is that you need very little encouragement or motivation to study something you already love. All you need do now is look for the lessons and move them from one part of your life to another.



Rob Yoegel
Content Marketing
Director,
Monetate
@robyoegel

Rob Yoegel oversees all content marketing initiatives for Monetate, driving sales, engagement, retention, leads, and positive customer behavior. Previously, he was vice president of e-media for North American Publishing Company (NAPCO), where he developed successful content, sales, and marketing initiatives online for more than a decade, as well as the editor and publisher of *PhillyTech Magazine*.

Be First & Fail

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Think of your entire organization as your marketing department.

Listen to your customers. And remember there's truly a difference between hearing and listening.

Make sure your prospects and customers know there's actually a person/people on the other end of the content that you publish.

Don't be afraid to take risks. It's OK to occasionally be first and fail.

Continue to learn from what others are doing and network, network, network.



Amber Naslund
Co-Founder & Author,
SideraWorks
@ambercadabra

Amber Naslund is a business strategist with a strong focus on social, communication and community initiatives. Her expertise spans professional fundraising, corporate communications, marketing, professional services, and social business strategy. Amber is the co-author of *The NOW Revolution*, and her blog has been recognized for excellence in social media and community related content.

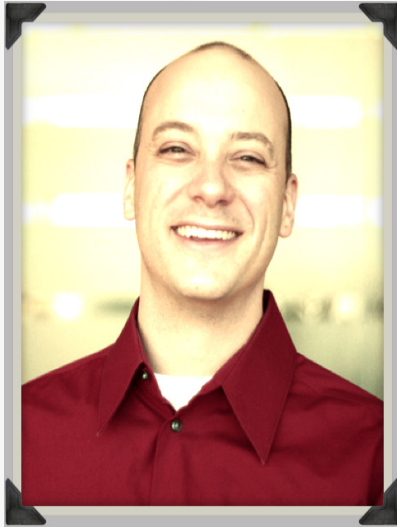
Actively Adapt

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Be more innovative by realizing that marketing is not an island, and shifting your focus as a result.

Social business - the result of actively adapting your organization to better collaborate and communicate with your peers, your customers, and your partners - should be part of your vision even if you're miles away.

Once you understand how and where marketing critically touches every part of an organization and how it has the potential to affect so many things -- for better and worse -- you'll find that your perspective gets much broader and your marketing will get much, much smarter and more strategic.



Alan Belniak

Global Director of
Social Media,
PTC

@abelniak

Alan Belniak focuses on product lifecycle management at PTC, a major Boston-based software company. He works in strategic and tactical fashions to find ways to use social media channels to better interact with customers, and to direct that feedback to marketing, R&D, sales, and other appropriate groups.

Remarkability

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Focus on three things: utility, share-ability and remarkability.

Is what you are providing useful to me? Are you breaking new news before others, providing an interactive cost calculator, or helping me compare large sets of complex data quickly?

If it's useful, I'll want to spend time with it. Once you've got me hooked, can I share it easily? Embed share buttons right into the thing itself.

Is it remarkable so others may comment on it, either in your feed or via email afterward, or even in the hallway? If you can achieve varying levels of these, then you're innovating.



C.C. Chapman
Consultant & Author,
@cc_chapman

C.C. Chapman is a writer, photographer, and explorer. His new book *Amazing Things Will Happen* hits shelves this winter and his first book, *Content Rules*—authored with MarketingProfs' Ann Handley—is a global best seller. C.C. is a passionate advocate for making the world a better place through creativity. He is the host of Passion Hit TV and Managing the Gray.

Do the Unexpected

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Do something unexpected so that you stand out from the rest. This doesn't mean you in any way should create something that is inappropriate, but look at what you and your competitors have been creating and sharing and then go in a different direction.

Brainstorm without rules so that all those wild and crazy ideas come out and then start thinking strategically about which one(s) might be able to be used for something truly unique.



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Roberta Rosenberg

Director Marketing &
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American Council of
Engineering Companies
@copywritermaven

Roberta Rosenberg has more than 25 years of experience in the direct response marketing field, including B2B clients in publishing, high-tech, scientific, financial, professional services, and ecommerce. An expert on landing page copy and design, she developed and wrote the popular Copywriting Maven Landing Page Makeovers series at Copyblogger.

Borrow Freely

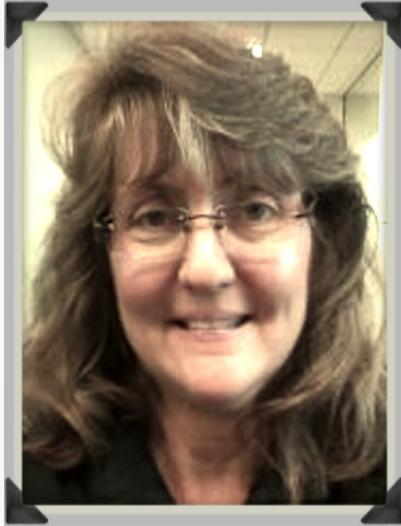
B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

B2B marketers tend to think that marketing to businesses is somehow a dry, bloodless exercise compared to B2C. They forget that they're still marketing to real-live people who happen to be purchasing for their companies rather than themselves.

My advice? Borrow freely from our B2C colleagues - deconstruct their campaigns to find the message magic within - and find a way to make it applicable and relevant to our B2B promotions.



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**Kathleen
Christoph**

E-Mail Marketing
Manager,
PerkinElmer, Inc

Kathleen Christoph is responsible for running marketing automation as part of PerkinElmer's lead generation efforts. Prior to PerkinElmer, Kathleen held various roles at Fidelity Investments, including email communications and ownership of the company's marketing automation platform.

Automation Tools

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Analyze, Analyze, Analyze!

Marketing automation and web analytics tools have a goldmine of information that can lead you to an idea for the next great piece of B2B content. Analyze the activities and target your writing to current interest areas. Publish your content and analyze again.



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Mack Collier

Social Media Strategist,
Trainer & Author
@mackcollier

Mack Collier specializes in helping companies better connect with their customers via social media. He helps clients create connections with customers and nurture relationships into bottom line results. Plus, he's the force behind #BlogChat, Twitter's largest organized chat.

Have Understanding

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

I always remember that great Wayne Gretsky quote about how he was a great hockey player because he didn't skate after the puck, he skated to where it was headed.

I think that's the heart of innovation, not to build the road that we will use today, but to understand where we want to go tomorrow, and build a road to get us there. The heart of innovation goes back to understanding your customers so well that you can spot trends and understand what they will want and need next.

With social media marketing, focus on understanding WHY the people are using the tools. If you understand what value people are deriving from each particular social media tool, it makes it easier for you to spot what the next 'big thing' will be.



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**Amanda
Maksymiw**
Content Marketing
Manager,
Lattice Engines
@amandamarks

Amanda works for Lattice Engines, a leader in B2B sales intelligence software helping companies achieve 6-14% sales productivity increases through Intelligent Targeting, Contextual Conversations, and Measurable Execution. She is responsible for setting and managing the company's content marketing strategy, including producing and publishing engaging content.

Buyers Are People Too

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Here's how companies can think of new ideas to excite, engage, and educate B2B buyers.

First, remember that the people you are selling to are, in fact, people. They are consumers too, so it isn't really necessary to treat them as an entirely different species.

To be truly innovative, it is important to look to many sources: consumer brands, TV, commercials, and social media for inspiration. I carry around a small notebook to jot down ideas I see that provoke creative thinking.

Next, use that inspiration to think about how the idea can apply to your business and how you can rejigger it for your audience.

Lastly, look to colleagues for a new perspective. Great ideas can come from outside of the marketing department!



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Ellen Valentine

Evangelist,
Silverpop
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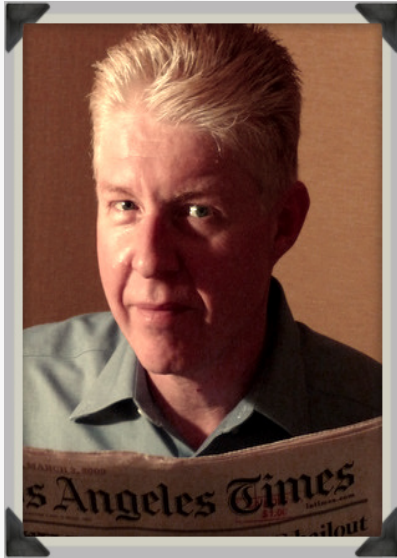
With more than 20 years of experience in senior leadership positions for technology companies, Ellen Valentine has deep expertise in launching new products, evaluating product and market positions, designing go-to-market strategies, and managing digital marketing initiatives. She's currently focused on coaching and mentoring Silverpop clients to adapt and thrive in marketing's changing landscape.

Steal Shamelessly

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

One of the best ways to get creative is to steal shamelessly! Keep an ideas folder (both electronic and hardcopy) of interesting things that you see other companies using. Keep snippets of event themes, ad titles, creative approaches. Don't steal from your competitors though, because surely you can do better. Look at interesting things that B2C companies are doing: messaging, creative, tactics and themes. The smallest idea could be expanded into an integrated marketing plan for your company.

By maintaining this file over time, a single concept clipped 6 months ago might be incredibly useful in a current project. Encourage your team to participate too. Schedule time to review your clips. You never know when you might be able to dust off something saved and put it to immediate use.



Paul Gillin

Social Media Trainer,
Consultant and Author,
Profitecture
@pgillin

Paul Gillin advises marketers and business executives on strategies to optimize their use of social media and online channels to reach buyers more cost-effectively. In addition, he is a senior research fellow at the Society for New Communications Research. Paul has authored three books on social media and content marketing, including the award-winning *The New Influencers*.

Create A Theme

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Create a theme that can be applied in different ways to different people in your organization to uncover interesting and remarkable information.

For example, "Did you know...?" can be the basis for an ongoing series of blog posts and tweets about interesting facts about your business or industry. Or "Five questions with..." can spotlight remarkable people in your company. Or perhaps your mascot can be photographed in different parts of the world as part of a "Where in the world is...?" theme. It could even be something as simple as "Question of the week," with answers provided by your experts, partners and customers.

Themes are powerful because they create anticipation and encourage innovation.



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Jeanne Hopkins
CMO/EVP
SmartBear Software
@jeannehopkins

Jeanne Hopkins works for SmartBear Software, which provides tools for software professionals to build, test, and monitor software applications and websites. Previously, she was vice president of marketing for Hubspot. The Sales Lead Management Association named Jeanne one of the Top 10 Influential People in Sales Lead Management in 2011. She's the co-author of *Go Mobile*.

Honest & Factual

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Many of the fundamentals of B2B marketing are grounded in B2C principles, however, it's really all about the decision-making process. Unlike B2C, when no one gets fired from their family for making an impulse purchase while in line at the grocery store, that is not the case with B2B, when those decisions involve a variety of influencers and/or approvers, plus a long, complex sales cycle.

B2B marketers need to work on providing their sales teams with:

1. Clear, concise information about the features and benefits of the offering and how it addresses the prospect's pains;
2. An honest, factual assessment of the competitive landscape, and therefore the prospect's alternatives;

3. Tools that can help speed the process of creating the business case or ROI calculation; and

4. Customer references, both written materials and customers willing to engage in a conversation with a prospect.

Overall, the creative spark for B2B is quite a bit simpler – and easier to execute - than that for B2C. Considering there is more data to create research; infographics; and content that can spark conversations with your audience via blogging and social sharing mean we do not need to reinvent the creative wheel each and every campaign. There is more valuable content in the heads of your engineers, developers, scientists, and support organizations than anywhere in a B2C organization. .

Honest & Factual

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

That reality can bode well for a content creator looking to establish a brand personality for their products and services.

The reality has to do more with the way your marketing program is engineered from a project workflow perspective. Doing things differently or making other smaller changes to marketing tactics requires an approach that includes communication. But, in the end, it is the consistency of the communication with your internal and external audiences that makes the difference in B2B.



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Adele Revella

President & Author,
Buyer Persona Institute
@buyerpersona

Adele Revella, founder of the Buyer Persona Institute, has more than two decades of experience as a B2B marketing executive, trainer, and consultant. For 10 years, she traveled the globe, presenting "Effective Product Marketing," a two-day seminar that showed more than 5,000 marketers how to deliver outstanding content and marketing programs. Adele authored *The Buyer Persona Manifesto*.

Uncover the Truth

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Two barriers prevent B2B marketers from being as innovative as B2C marketers:

- 1)** Consumer marketers have deep insights about their target audiences
- 2)** their B2C companies allow them more freedom because they believe that marketing is a source of competitive advantage.

Innovation thrives on insights. To create breakthrough ideas, B2B marketers first need to uncover the truth about how and why buyers make the decisions they want to influence. Marketers who are perceived as buyer experts have the foundation to claim their role as the company's strategic resource.

Understand "why"
they buy.





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Eric Granof

Chief Marketing Officer,
AIA Surety
@expertbail

As CMO for the largest bail bond surety company in the country, Eric Granof develops and executes marketing initiatives, and provides marketing guidance to AIA's family of agents. In his 17 years in marketing, he has worked with some of the world's leading brands, including Microsoft, Nissan, Kaiser Permanente, MARSH, HP, Apple, Caesars Palace, Bank of America, and Cabela's.

I'm Eric Granof

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

This will probably put me at odds with most people, but I think that people make too much of a distinction between B2B and B2C marketing. When I put my clothes on in the morning and go in to the office, I am not suddenly another person with a whole new set of values and beliefs.

I am still the same person I was just 7 minutes earlier when I left my house. I am still Eric Granof, the husband of Brandy the father of Scarlett and Sawyer and the preferred member of Marketing Profs.

My point is not that I think people can be extremely innovative and even more creative in B2B marketing than in B2C marketing if they just remember that business people are just regular people in suits.



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Chad Horenfeldt

Director Success

Consulting,

Eloqua

@chadhorenfeldt

A marketing automation veteran, Chad Horenfeldt is currently working at Eloqua. He has helped hundreds of Eloqua customers become marketing rock stars. To turn clients into stars, Chad relies on his 12 plus years of experience helping companies maximize technology to drive their businesses.

Use Web Data

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

I recommend that marketers should use the web data that they are collecting (or what we call the digital body language) and run various tests to spark innovative ideas. Here's a simple example: By changing the button text on our website from 'Launch Overview' to 'Product Overview' it resulted in a 109% increase in clicks and a 41% increase in conversions.



Image source: [Shutterstock](#)



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Susan Emerick

Social Business Program
Manager,
IBM

@sfemerick

Susan Emerick is dedicated to evolving marketing as a practice, articulating the benefits of integrating social influence programs to foster long-term, high value relationships. She leads many initiatives designed to empower employees worldwide to deliver business value through sharing their expertise across the social Web.

Customer Needs

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

When B2B Marketers focus on assessing the needs of their customers and focus on building relationships that provide value and business outcomes for their customers the opportunities for new marketing ideas are endless.

Social Media brings so many new ways to connect with and deliver results for B2B brands if they look no further than their most passionate assets, their employees who engage with customers everyday.



Image source: [Shutterstock](#)



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Matt T. Grant

Managing Editor,
MarketingProfs
@matttgrant

Matthew T. Grant's non-linear career has taken him from the ivory towers of academia and the grimy stages of rock sub-stardom to roles in corporate training, management consulting, and marketing communications. He's published articles on the new world of work, career management, and gangsta rap, and currently hosts MarketingProfs' popular Marketing Smarts podcast.

Talk To Customers

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

If marketers want to be more innovative, they really need to talk to their customers. Don't just leave this to the sales force and customer service reps. If you want a new fresh perspective on your products and how they are actually being used in the real world, you need to talk to the people who are actually using them in the real world!

Customers will tell you what they like, what they don't, what matters to them and what doesn't. With this information you can craft more effective messages, programs and products. Talk to them!



This is "Dr. B2B" and you're on the air. Let's talk.



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Lou Imbriano

President & CEO,
TrinityOne
@louimbriano

It's a long road from radio sports producer to the marketing chief of a football dynasty, but that's the path of Lou Imbriano's career. He's the former vice president and chief marketing officer of the New England Patriots. Today, he's president and CEO of TrinityOne, a marketing strategy and business advisory consultancy, and author of *Winning the Customer*.

Stick To Basics

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Everyone is looking for ways to become better B2B marketers, striving to be more innovative than their competitors in order to win the business. The problem is, to many, innovative also equals complex and that is counter to the basic principles of doing business. Just because we live in an age where technology changes every day, doesn't mean the philosophy of how to engage customers has to become more complicated.

My advice is stick to the basics, regardless of the technology and always apply the SCD test to all marketing efforts: **Simple, Creative and Dominating**. Let your competitors muck things up by innovating themselves out of business.



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Shelly Kramer
CEO,
V3 Integrated Marketing
[@shellykramer](#)

A 20+ year marketing veteran, V3 Integrated Marketing's Shelly Kramer is a strategist, brand storyteller, integrated marketing pro, content marketing expert, speaker, and corporate trainer. Recognized by Forbes as one of the Top 50 Social Media Influencers and widely considered one of the most influential women on Twitter, she's half marketer, half geek, with a propensity for numbers and producing results.

Serve Up Information

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

We work with clients in both the B2B and the B2C space and, in many cases, there's not that much difference, especially as it relates to your customers. Whether it's content marketing, social media marketing, lead gen, or other components of your integrated marketing strategy, in B2B marketing, the "B" is still your "C." You're still marketing to customers (consumers), but customers who happen to be consuming business-related products. But the basic tenants remain the same.

The keys to success--be human, treat them like people, serve up information/services/responses that solve their problems in an efficient, cost-effective, revenue-producing (for them) manner.



Mark Rice
Founder & CEO,
Webinar Resources
[@webinarresource](#)

Mark Rice helps companies improve results through demand generation, customer acquisition, and mobile programs. He has established applications and best practices for such technologies as Web conferencing and multi-media, and has designed and developed learning content. Previously, Mark launched the Xerox Webinar program as the company's technical marketing manager.

Innovation Day

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

We transitioned many of the features and functions from a consumer application over to support our B2B customer applications.

From one online children's story book application, we have perfected our ability to deliver innovative and personalized applications that are now powering corporate surveys, QR code applications, online registrations, websites, mobile applications and integrations with CRM, rich media and email marketing platforms.

If you don't have the solution you want, challenge your team to come with new applications, ideas and improvements for an Innovation Day. The effort will return new business and opportunities for your B2B customers and for you.



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Corey O'Loughlin
Marketing Manager,
MarketingProfs
[@coreyolo](#)

Corey O'Loughlin works at MarketingProfs and focuses on Basic Membership, Events, social media, and content marketing. Previously, Corey was a marketing analyst at OpenView Venture Partners, where she developed audio and video content and managed social media. She also worked on the Hill Holliday teams for Chili's and Bank of America.

White Paper Rut

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Many B2B companies get stuck in what I call a white paper rut –producing white papers, case studies, and maybe blog posts, but never pushing themselves outside their comfort zone. By exploring unexpected avenues B2B companies can really stand out from their competition and display their human side. Videos, photos, cartoons, contests, etc. are a great way to go from B2B boring to B2B badass!



Image source: [Shutterstock](#)



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Tom Fishburne

Founder & CEO,
Marketoonist
@tomfishburne

Tom Fishburne started cartooning on the backs of Harvard Business School cases. His cartoons have grown by word of mouth to reach 100,00 marketers every week and have been featured by *The Wall Street Journal*, *Fast Company*, and *The New York Times*. Tom is the founder of Marketoonist, a content marketing studio that creates cartoon-based campaigns.

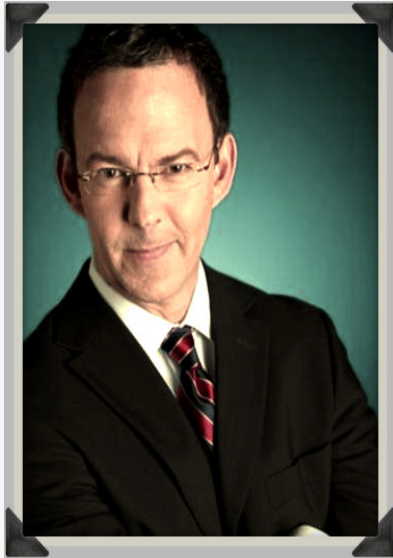
Awesome Audiences

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Whether B2C or B2B, the most important shift in marketing is that brand communication is no longer a one-way command-and-control megaphone. It's a conversation. Don Draper is no longer in charge of our brands. Our audiences are in charge. So the best inspiration for our marketing efforts comes from our audiences themselves. Our goal should be, not to market how awesome our products and services are, but figuring out how to make our audiences more awesome.



© marketoonist.com



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Tim Washer

Social Media Manager,
Cisco Systems
@timwasher

As a corporate storyteller, Tim Washer produces comedies, documentaries, and maybe someday an infomercial. Currently at Cisco Systems, he previously headed social media video production at IBM. Tim's work has appeared in *Advertising Age* and *The New York Times*, and his comedy credits include the Late Show with David Letterman and SNL.

Tell Stories

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Focus on telling the stories your customers and innovative ways they have solved problems and made the world a better place.

We produced a [short documentary](#) about how service providers, our customers, were pioneered the development of the telecom network. It received a lot of exposure on YouTube, and was broadcast on TV this summer. I don't think that would have ever happened if we focused on our company.



Image source: [Shutterstock](#)



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David B. Thomas

Director of Community
& Social Strategy,
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@davidbthomas

David B. Thomas leads efforts to learn from, inform, and engage with the Salesforce and Radian6 company communities. Previously, he was executive director at New marketing Labs and served as social media manager for SAS. He is co-author of *The Executives Guide to Enterprise Social Media Strategy*.

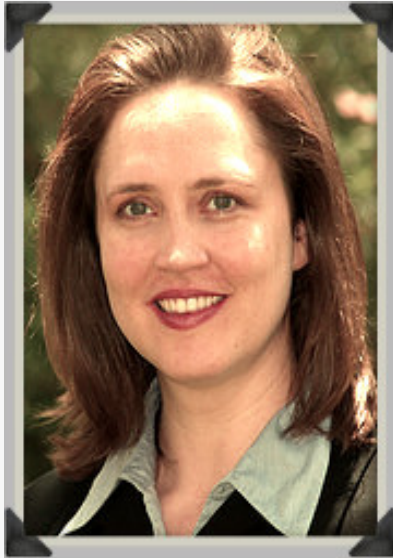
B's & C's Are People

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

The most important thing to remember, whether you're doing B2B marketing or B2C marketing, is that the B's and C's are all people, and people love a good story. They also love content that helps them do their jobs better, and they are consuming it in different ways than even a few years ago.

Lots of corporate marketers think about the format first. "It's time for a next monthly e-book." Think about the story, and giving timely information to your audience, and don't worry so much about the format. A three-minute video that imparts useful information may work better than a 15 page e-book.

Give yourself permission to try new things. Track the results and be flexible.



28

Kami Huyse
CEO & Founder,
Zoetica Media
[@kamichat](#)

Kami Watson Huyse is a national leader on the use of social media for public relations. Throughout her career she has collaborated with such corporate-side clients as Time Warner Cable, Google, PayPal, and Network Solutions, and with nonprofit organizations including American Red Cross and the National 4-H Council, among others.

Be Creative

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

The best B2B marketers focus on how to creatively use new technologies and avenues to build their brand.

One of the best ways to be innovative is to be creative. Look for ways to use the available tools to better connect with your customers in unexpected ways. Unlike B2C, you don't have to worry as much about reach, but instead you have the luxury of focusing on depth. Be everywhere your customer is, be helpful and be relevant, then they will turn to you when they are in the narrow buying window.

Be sure they remember your name when they are looking for solutions. Social media can help with that. It gives you the ability to connect with more people across multiple touch points.



29

Marti Konstant

Vice President of
Marketing,
Open Kernel Labs
@martikonstant

Marti Konstant is a tech-marketing enthusiast and growth hacker focused on kickstarting market demand for startups and B2B tech companies. At Open Kernel Labs, Marti helps define the mobile virtualization space and creates demand within the global mobile device market. Result: the company's software is now in 1.5 billion mobile handsets worldwide.

Flexible Content Plan

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

The most innovative aspect of marketing right now is the ability to respond in real-time to customer feedback and campaigns. Agile marketing practices enable marketers to be intentional about planning, yet do not focus on the extensive marketing plan, rather a shorter-term marketing plan that is implemented in 2-3 week sprints and leaves room for fine-tuning programs along with way. It is a flexible, rather than rigid platform for marketing management and encourages experimentation and creativity.



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Lee Odden

CEO & Author,
TopRank Online
Marketing
@leeodden

Lee Odden has consulted for B2B clients including McKesson, Marketo, PRWeb, and StrongMail for over 15 years. He's been cited by *The Economist* and *The Wall Street Journal* for his online marketing expertise, and is editor of MarketingBlog.com. Lee is also the author of *Optimize: How to Attract and Engage More Customers by Integrating SEO, Social Media and Content Marketing*.

Listen for Gold

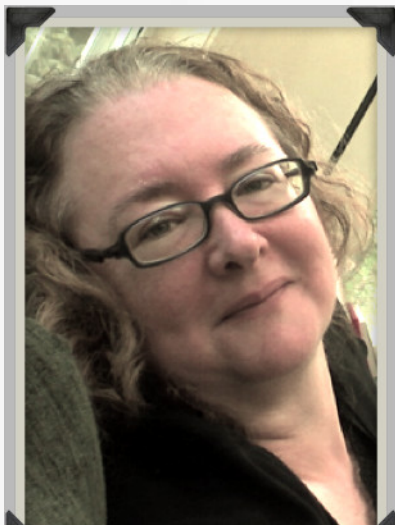
B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

It's difficult to listen if all you do is talk. And most B2B companies are doing a LOT of talking from Content to Social, to Advertising.

Repeating the same tactics expecting different results is a form of B2B Marketing insanity. Innovation is essential to stand out and the first step is simply to listen.

Dig into the goldmine of information that's available directly from buyers and from data. Web analytics, social media monitoring, surveys and marketing performance information can all reveal emerging trends, new ideas, and opportunities to optimize performance.

Create a cycle of continuous innovation and marketing performance optimization with data and customer insight. Then you'll really have something to talk about.



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Lynn O'Connell

Creative Director,
O'Connell Meier, LLC
@omdirect

TopRank B2B Innovation Blog Winner

Lynn O'Connell is the Creative Director of O'Connell Meier, a digital + direct marketing firm. Since founding O'Connell Meier in 1989, she's helped hundreds of trade and professional associations market membership, conferences, publications, and digital products. Today, she strategizes and manages integrated marketing programs designed to engage B2B professionals online and off.

Appeal to People

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

The most important thing is to always remember that B2B customers are people first, B2B buyers second. So many bad B2B promotions look like they were created for robotic buyers. No one -- no one -- is going to be inspired to buy by a laundry list of product features or a shot of the factory. Speak to their dreams, their plans and hopes, and even their fears.

Show them how your product or service will help their company, but also show them how it will make their job easier! It doesn't matter whether you're running a traditional campaign or using social media channels... the message has to appeal to real people and the actions you request need to be things real people do.



32

Scott Williamson
President,
Strategy Concepts
@scottwmarketing

TopRank B2B Innovation Blog Winner

Scott Williamson has over 17 years of marketing experience in agriculture, technology, industrial, non-profit, food industry and distribution. In his current position at Strategy Concepts Mark has a focus on branding and brand recognition, statistical market and data analysis, sales channel development, and social media marketing.

Poof of Quality

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

B2B Marketing has to be more innovative in the way direct selling is handled. The old "cold call" ways are putting companies that still do sales like this a step or 12 behind. It is the marketing departments job to arm their sales force with the ammunition. It cannot be, "better price" without proof of quality. Little things like emailing your lead an introductory video of your product with a few captions of the product in use can grab their attention.

By setting the stage before the sales rep arrives at his / her prospective account, the marketing department has already gave them a leg up. Now we have the option of showing the product in use and outlining how it can help the company you are meeting with prior to the meeting. If done right, the prospect will be talking about the product well before the meeting ever takes place.



33

Joe Yeager
Marketing Analyst,
Premier Dental Products

TopRank B2B Innovation Blog Winner

Joe has over 20 years experience in marketing in the B2B environment, as well as over 10 years teaching experience. As the Marketing Analyst for a leading manufacturer in the professional dental industry, Joe also serves as the social media administrator and has been working on creating a platform that is helpful to multiple types of social media users: employees, distributors and dental office staff.

Likes VS. Shares

B2B Marketing Innovation Tip:

Marketers need to stop focusing so much on getting Likes and start focusing more on getting people to "share" your posts. This is especially true for your own employees!

Shares of updates makes a bigger splash and is more likely to get noticed and hopefully, shared with even more people. Simple, but it can make a big difference!



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David Ogilvy
Author, *Confessions of an
Advertising Man*

*“The two most powerful words
you can use in a headline are
FREE and NEW.*

*You can seldom use FREE, but
you can always use NEW.”*

NEW & FREE

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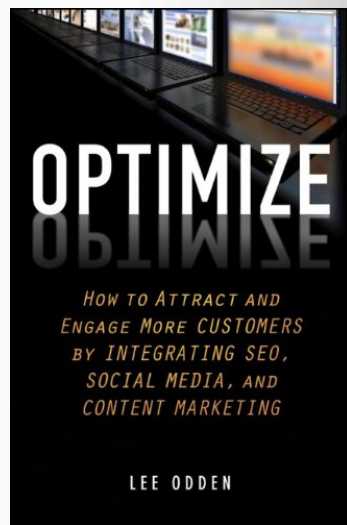
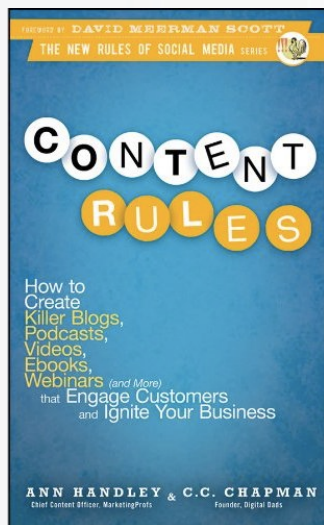
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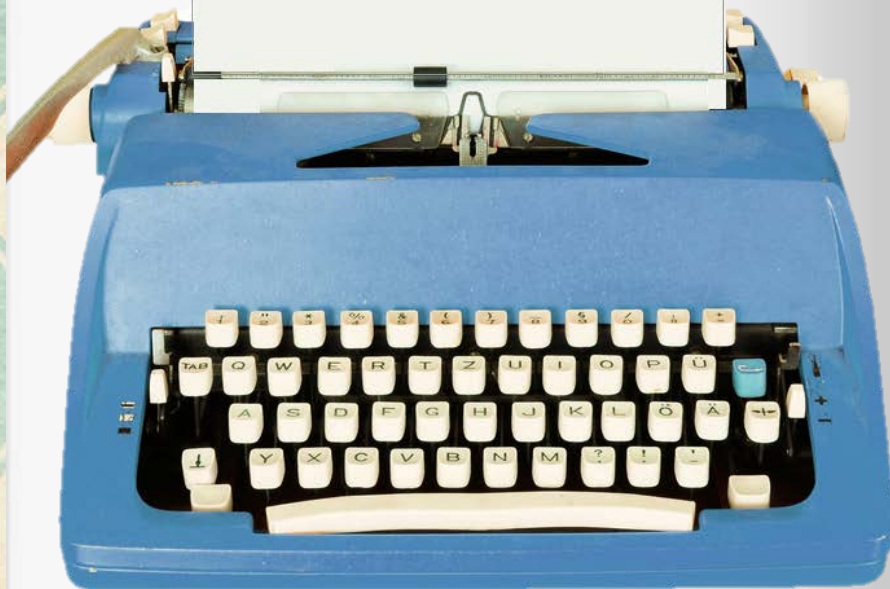


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Who is TopRank?

TopRank Online Marketing is a digital marketing agency that provides integrated marketing strategy and consulting services to B2B and B2C companies. With a customer centric approach, TopRank helps companies attract, engage and convert across the customer lifecycle.

TopRank works with B2B companies like Marketo, McKesson and Vocus providing services that include: content marketing, online PR, SEO, social media marketing, email marketing and analytics.

TopRank also publishes Online Marketing Blog, which has been rated one of the most influential blogs on marketing and PR.



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