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White Paper

Analyzing the Effectiveness of your Tech Marketing



While a marketer’s toolbox is largely universal regardless of industry, each industry presents unique tendencies, challenges, and opportunities. Peers and competitors may function similarly in what they do or how they do it. This common ground often leads to sameness in approach, troubles differentiating your products and services, or struggles attempting something new because there isn’t a familiar model. As leaders “look up” from the day-to-day work to evaluate their marketing performance, it can be a strain to determine what should be done differently or anew.

1 Identify all possible gaps and areas of improvement.

Sometimes the best thing to do is tackle the “low-hanging fruit”. Other times, it may be making a bold move and focusing your efforts and resources on substantial investments to take your organization forward. But before those decisions are made, map all possible choices. Create three lists:

1. You know what you want to do and know how to do it, but you may be looking for a more efficient or creative approach.
2. You know what you want to do but given your resources or circumstances, don’t know how or where to begin.
3. You wonder what a third party may recommend.

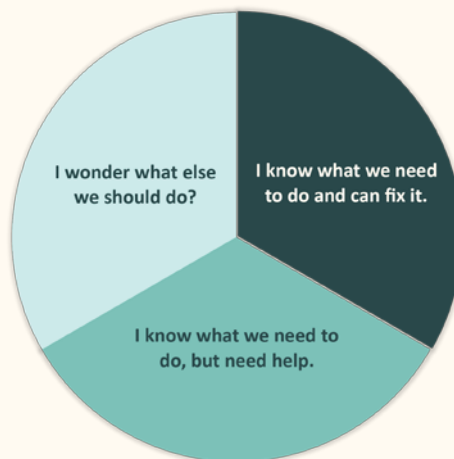


Figure 1: The results-driven leader’s circle of knowledge

2 Consider common pitfalls in tech marketing.

A brand stands out from its competition when it easily shows uniqueness. Especially in the technology industry, where there is pride and pressure to innovate, there are few examples of products that are so distinctive from their competitors that buying decisions are based on features alone. Often what sets your solution apart is discovered once a prospective buyer has been sold on you. That means, before you even have a chance to show off your creation, you must first gain their attention and intrigue.

Here are some common pitfalls that the biggest brands in the tech space grapple with. Do any of these sound familiar?

- 1. Everyone is an innovator.** While rightly proud of what you create, keep in mind that everyone is. Positioning yourself singularly as an innovator may hurt more than help, especially if your company cannot defend that positioning fully compared to competitors. Make this an “and” to your strategy and consider:
 - Do you have patents or IP that set you apart?
 - Do you have awards recognizing your innovations from a reputable third party?
 - Do you have customer testimonials declaring your innovation as key in their buying decision?
- 2. We're proud of the product and lead with it in our communications.** Besides knowing your company for what you do and sell, buyers want to know about you. Who are you? What is it like to do business with you? Ensure your website, social media, and company materials tell prospective buyers who you are. Companies are run by people and people make buying decisions.

Additionally, are you putting your customer in the spotlight? Do your communications put their needs first? Are you talking about their problems or opportunities or only about your technology?

- 3. The notion “if you build it, they will come”.** This only happens in movies. There are numerous examples of inferior products beating out technically superior alternatives. Your company’s ability to cut through the noise (especially digitally) is both an art and a science. Don’t presume prospects will see, find, and appreciate your product without the back-end marketing engineering and compelling messaging that makes it happen.
- 4. The belief “if we give it a cool name” it will be successful.** Launching a product is not a moment in time. And brands are built over years. This is just one illustration of the need for more robust new product introduction approaches and alignment within the company. A more optimal approach is to ensure that you’ve seeded the market well ahead of launch. Do people know your brand? Are you known for your expertise and what problems you solve? Is the new product or service understood? Does it even warrant a brand? Do we have the time and money to build and maintain the brand?
- 5. We get bored saying the same thing over and over and always want to mix it up.** Mixing it up can result in a lack of prospects knowing what you presume they know. E.g., one press release on a new product does not mean every customer has heard the news or cares. Repetition and consistency are key to brand-building and understanding.

6. We don't want to disappoint our customers by telling them we're discontinuing a product. Well, guess what? They're more disappointed by surprises! Managing end-of-life products can be a good customer experience if done well. Transitioning customers from one product to the next can be a great market opportunity and ultimately help you and your customers in the long run.

3 Consider internal and external factors when prioritizing your marketing decisions.

Marketing is mission-critical for tech companies. Despite being amongst some of the most innovative companies in the world, products and services rarely sell themselves. Attention spans are short. Your marketing systems, processes, and people need to be just as cutting-edge. Companies often face diverse challenges; here are a few.

1. Labor shortages have you competing for or compromising on industry experienced marketing talent.
2. Increasingly complex marketing skill sets (digital, operations, messaging and content creation, branding, account-based marketing, and more...) require a diversity of talent to manage your marketing needs.
3. Managing your reputation is increasingly complex as companies are combating misinformation about brands and products.
4. Communicating complex information in a way that is easy to understand is difficult.
5. Attitudes and regulation around data privacy and access to information is undergoing a renaissance. Things are changing fast on both sides of this topic (what information is expected to be shared or easily obtained and what information is meant to be kept confidential and secure).

4 Have a north star. Look to companies who have done things well.

Here, the idea isn't to mimic but learn, model where appropriate, and build an approach that is right for your audience and company. Here are a few examples of top tech brands demonstrating how using their technology makes their customers more capable, connected, or conscious.

Schneider Electric has been globally recognized for the brand-building launch of its sustainability initiative: “Green Yodha”. This mass climate initiative set ambitious goals aligned with the government of India for the company and its end-to-end supply chain. This collaboration increased their customer intimacy and boosted their reputation.

Intercom, a communications platform that simplifies the connection between businesses and customers, has found a unique way to understand and identify buyers. Instead of targeting buyer personas, Intercom targets the jobs it is being hired to fulfill. Its philosophy: Knowing the job or need helps find the audience and how to message and market to them. This strategy has produced increased conversion rates and tripled top-of-funnel traffic.

British satellite communications company **Inmarsat** looked to augmented and virtual reality to introduce their commercial airplane Wi-Fi solution, GX Aviation. Bringing a commercial airliner to every trade show wasn’t an option, so they created the ‘Connected Air’ exhibition to give customers an idea of the experience. Users were transported into a simulated flight and experienced how the journey is enriched by connectivity via tablet. The campaign also appeared on social media and in the press resulting in increased engagement, leads, positive customer reviews, and a surge in their stock valuation.

Slack produces an annual State of Work report to carve out a space as a thought leader. Within the report, they make a compelling case for streamlining office communications without being overt, but any reader will clearly conclude that Slack is the industry leader and innovator.

5 Find a catalyst to act. Here are a few simple questions to self-diagnose.

If you answer “no” to any of these questions, please give us a call. We’re here to help!

1. Do you feel good about your team’s expertise, ability to execute, show results, and demonstrate creativity?
2. Do you look, sound, and act differently from your competition?
3. Are you able to communicate complex information easily?
4. Are you confident that the market understands who you are and what you do?
5. Are your campaigns focused on your customer’s needs?
6. Aside from your products, do you create great experiences with your customers?
7. Are you confident your customer experiences leave a positively meaningful impression?



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