MARKETING

Managing Sales and Marketing Programs Using Fundamentals and Advanced Marketing Technology, Part 1

By Chad Root

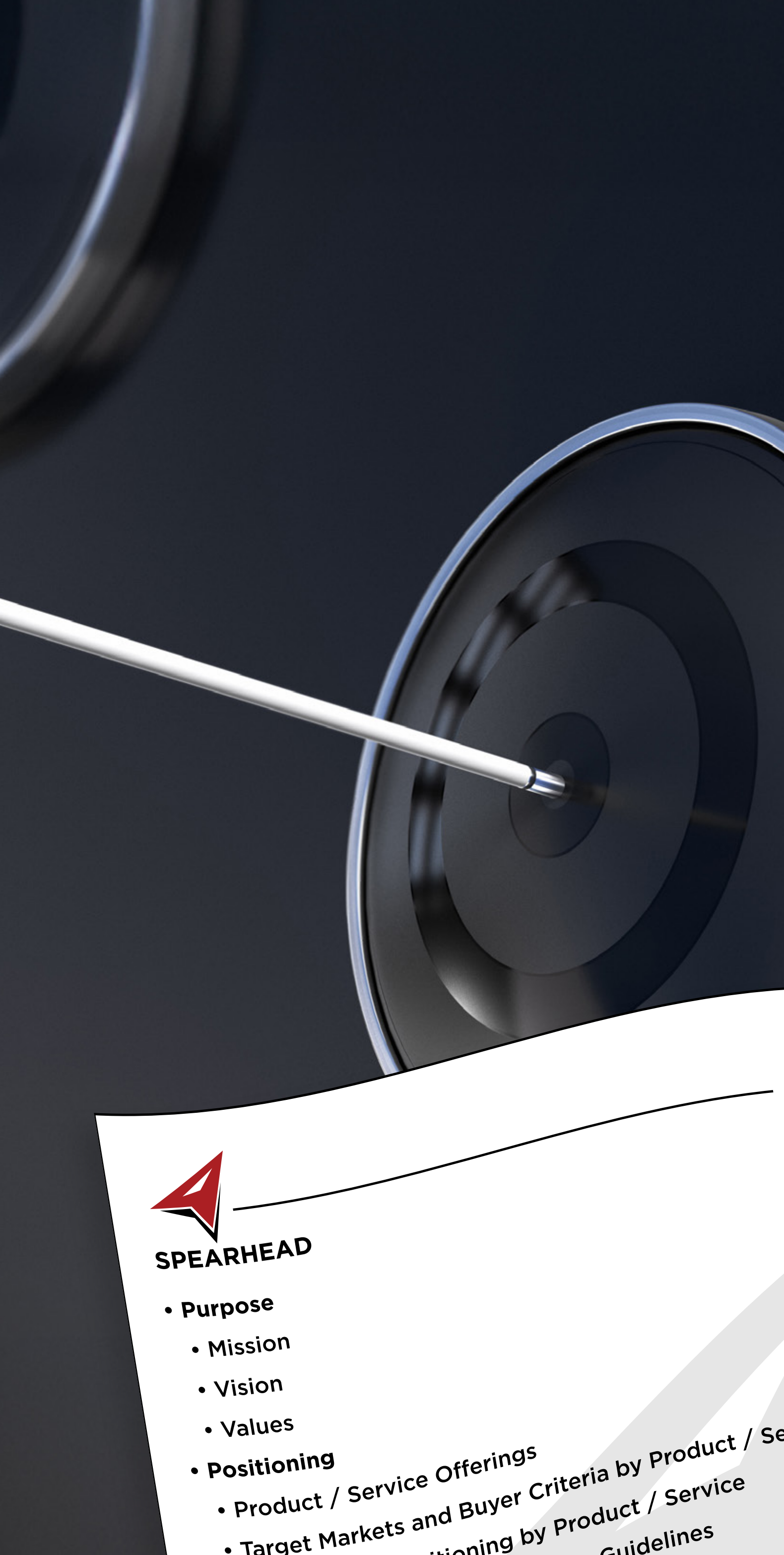
You may have heard the old saying, "Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is, I don't know which half." This quote is attributed to John Wanamaker, a retailer from over 200 years ago. While we recognize that modern digital marketing allows for precise tracking, the timeless challenge of growing a business is knowing where to apply pressure. There are many moving parts and more marketing tools and channels than ever before. This article presents part one of a three-part series exploring a management framework I've developed over 30 years of spearheading sales and marketing programs for manufacturers, including my own companies.

FAILURE TO PLAN IS PLANNING TO FAIL.

Success starts with a solid plan. Our strategic marketing plans include the following sections: Mission, Vision, Values, Products, and Services, Competitive Positioning Statements, Target Markets, Brand and Communication Guidelines, SMART Goals, Dashboard Key Performance Indicators, Marketing Calendar, and Budget.

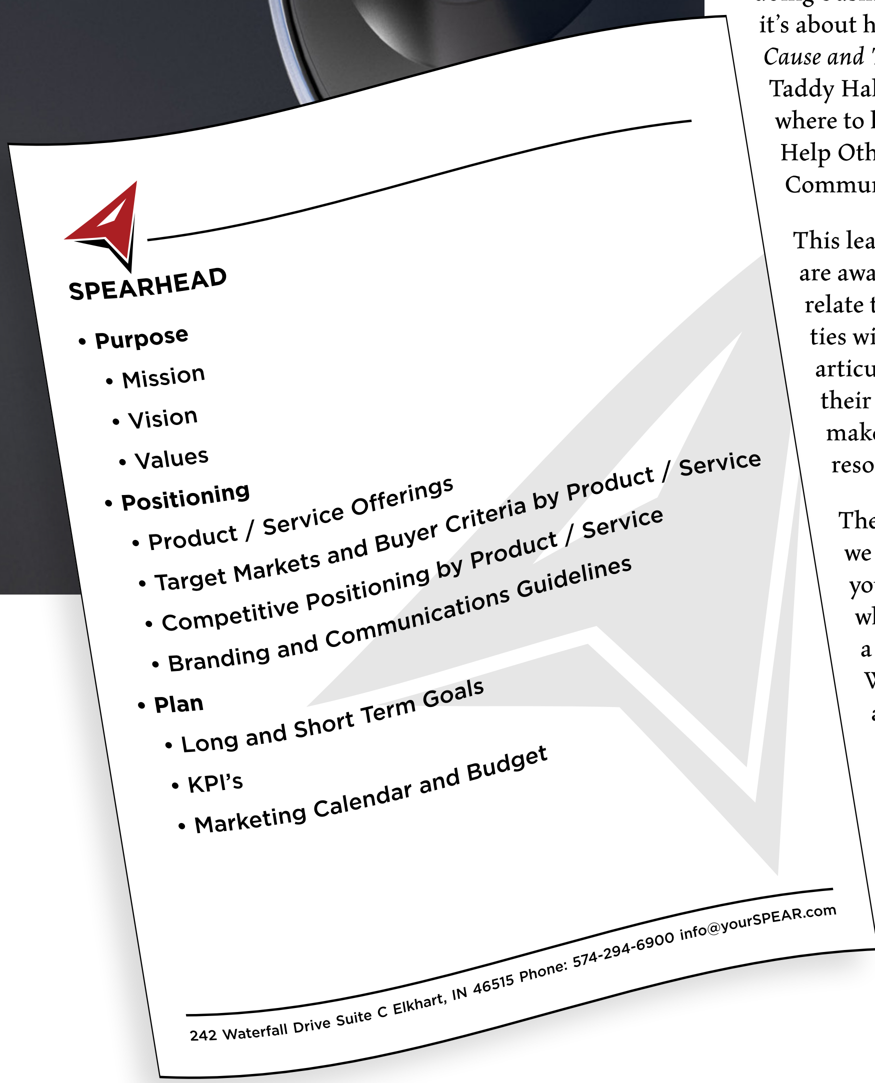
A Strategic Marketing Plan is the foundation of successful business development. How else can you confidently commit resources (time, talent, finances, assets, etc.)? Managing the process requires both data-driven analytics and intuitive experimentation. It's an art and a science. One of our clients routinely says,

> **“Don’t find customers for your products; find products for your customers.”**
>
> → **SETH GODIN**



“Experimentation is a better form of decision-making than analysis.” I believe there is some truth to that. I lean on a framework from the book *The Design of Business* by Roger Martin. He uses “Mystery-Model-Formula” to describe a circular process businesses continuously cycle through as they develop. Being in manufacturing for so long, perhaps continuous improvement is part of my wiring.

I’ve been neck-deep in product development for the last few years, working on next-generation solutions for controlling heaters in the injection molding industry. It’s a fascinating process that begins with knowing the customer’s needs without being trapped by convention. Henry Ford once said, “If I had asked my customers what they wanted, they would have said a faster horse.” Starting with the need at hand, what innovations would make a difference? One of my favorite recent books is *Loonshots: How to Nurture the Crazy Ideas That Win Wars, Cure Diseases, and Transform Industries* by Safi Bahcall. He describes two types of innovations: “P-Type” and “S-Type.” A P-Type is a product breakthrough, and an S-Type is a strategy breakthrough, a way of doing business or using existing products in new ways. Either way, it’s about helping people. The book *Marketing Malpractice: The Cause and The Cure* by Clayton M. Christensen, Scott Cook, and Taddy Hall offers the following underlying needs as hints for where to look further: Meet Commitments, Feel Important, Help Others, Prevent Mistakes, Manage Key Variables, Communicate, Manage Time, and Have Fun.



SPEARHEAD

- Purpose
  - Mission
  - Vision
  - Values
- Positioning
  - Product / Service Offerings
  - Target Markets and Buyer Criteria by Product / Service
  - Competitive Positioning by Product / Service
  - Branding and Communications Guidelines
- Plan
  - Long and Short Term Goals
  - KPI’s
  - Marketing Calendar and Budget

242 Waterfall Drive Suite C Elkhart, IN 46515 Phone: 574-294-6900 info@yourSPEAR.com

This leads to what marketers call “The Buyer Journey.” Buyers are aware of the challenges they face. It’s up to marketers to relate to these symptoms, triggers, problems, or opportunities with content that helps the buyer develop clarity and articulate their situation. From there, buyers can consider their next steps and find solutions. They are not ready to make a purchasing decision. They are looking for resources that help them weigh potential courses of action.

The example on page 28 is for an office makeover company we assisted. To relate to their audience, we asked, “Does your office need a makeover?” This resonates with anyone who has a shabby, outdated office. From there, we offered a free resource called “10 Tips for Best Office Layout.” We could have also provided a “Remodel or Build New?” article or countless other creative ways to help them at this phase. We didn’t ask for an order or push product features. We saved features, benefits, testimonials, credentials, and the “after our solution” magic for the final phase, where the buyer makes a purchasing decision. Too often, websites and sales collateral only focus on the decision phase while ignoring the early awareness and consideration phases.

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BRAND EXPERIENCE
BUYER'S JOURNEY CONTENT PLAN

AWARENESS	CONSIDERATION	DECISION
Relate to buyer's symptoms, triggers, problems, or opportunities.	Help buyer do their homework and get prepared.	Create emotional desire and provide rationale to justify it.
CATEGORY LEVEL CONTENT: Videos, eBooks, Getting Started Guides, or "How to Overcome/Achieve..."	**SOLUTION SET CTAs:** Planners, Idea Books, Before/After Stories, Pros/Cons, Do's/Dont's, What X Costs.	**UVP:** Sales Collateral, Featured Work/Testimony, ROI Calculators, Test Results.
"Does Your Office Need a Makeover?"	**"10 Tips For Best Office Layout"**	**"The XYZ Office Difference"**

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SALES AND MARKETING MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

We've all seen the classic "Sales Funnel." Years ago, I decided to do two things: 1) Align the many different terms used to describe the phases within sales funnels; 2) Turn it into actionable work. Most CRM packages have their terminology, but I needed to grow businesses, not just use a CRM. So, I flipped the funnel upside down and labeled each step of the new pyramid by the work needed.

1. Identify specific people.
2. Connect with them through inbound and outbound tactics, including advertising, trade shows, open houses, web marketing, social media, etc.
3. Nurture the relationship by staying in touch with personalized buyer-journey resources.
4. Convert opportunities to quotes and quotes to orders.
5. Expand by growing customers and working referrals.

We use this framework to assess where to apply pressure in a sales and marketing program and set SMART Goals and KPIs for Strategic Marketing Plans. It's important to remember that this is a continuous cycle. While it is helpful to stage contacts by terms like "suspect," "lead," "prospect," and "client" in your CRM, the buyer journey is fluid, meaning a person can be in more than one phase at a time for different projects or product needs.

This article is the first of a three-article series. We'll get you started with the "Identify" stage in this article, cover "Connect" and "Nurture" in article two, and then "Convert" and "Expand" in article three.

IDENTIFY

The first job that needs to be done is to identify specific people. I call them suspects until we connect with them. At this point, we call them leads. Once we quote something, we call them prospects and then clients. Returning to the Strategic Marketing Plan, start with the target markets and identify the particular companies, locations, titles, names, and contact information. Load these into a CRM. I like Ontraport (I've used Salesforce, Hubspot, ACT, Goldmine, and others) because it automatically logs email opens, clicks, web page views, form fills, and digital ad sources. It also allows me to score leads, route them to salespeople, and utilize many other helpful automation tools to connect, nurture, convert, and expand initiatives.

Here is a typical CRM structure we use for many companies:

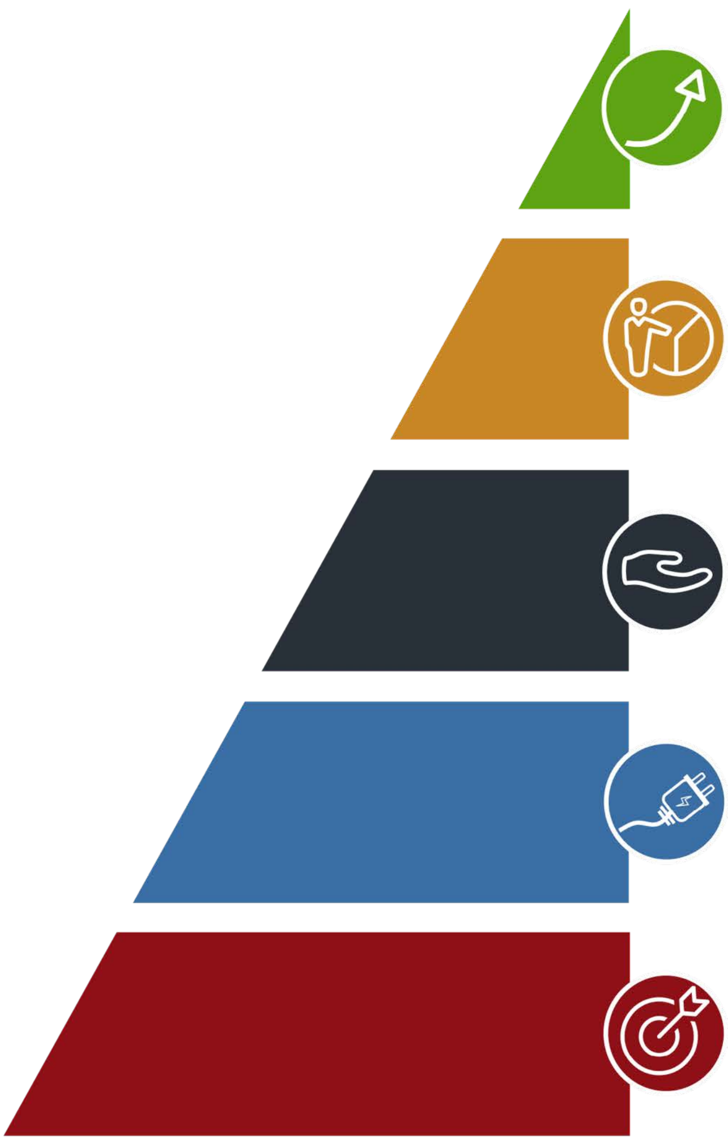
- **COMPANIES**
  - » **LOCATIONS** (tags for equipment used, markets served, and custom fields for helpful information like facility details, number of employees, sales rep, etc.)
    - › **CONTACTS** (fields for source, active/inactive, connected on LinkedIn, stage, or other pertinent information to your business processes)
- **PROJECTS** (links to companies, locations, contacts). This is where we view and manage sales pipelines if we don't already have an ERP system.

If you're not using CRM and marketing automation, consider these statistics about businesses that do. The key is fully adopting these tools within your company, consistently following procedures, and keeping everything current.

Consider these statistics ➔

SALES AND MARKETING FRAMEWORK

AWARENESS	ONTRAPORT	GARTNER	SPEARHEAD	YOUR JOB
Awareness (Attract)	Know	Explore	Permission	Identify
	Like		Responsive	Connect
Consideration (Convert)	Trust	Evaluate	Collaborative	Nurture
Decision (Close)	Try	Engage	Prospect	Convert
	Buy		Client	
Experience (Delight)	Repeat			Expand
	Refer		Referral	



EXPAND
- Surveys, Testimonials, and Referral Development
- Customer Advocacy Groups
- Social Media and Review Monitoring

CONVERT
- Sales Process Development (deal coaching, scenario plans, behavior training)
- CRM Utilization (reporting, tasks, automated next steps)
- Sales Tools (email templates, needs assessments, presentations)

NURTURE
- If This/Then That Automation (Digital Tracking)
- Scheduled Drip Marketing
- Follow-Up Sequences (email, mail, personal follow-up)
- Digital Ad Targeting

CONNECT
- Web Content, Calls-to-Action, Landing Pages, Forms
- Trade Shows, Print Campaigns, etc.
- Advertising and PR

FOUNDATION
- Branding
- Website Development and Optimization
- SEO (Search Engine Optimization)
- Local Listing and Google Business Profile Optimization
- CRM and Marketing Automation
- Social Media

- 86% more likely to exceed sales goals
- 21–30% increase in sales revenue
- 27% improved customer retention
- 300% boost in lead conversion — as high as 50% (eMarketer)
- 8–14% shorter sales cycles
- 15–20% decrease in marketing spending (McKinsey)
- Existing customers are 50% more likely to try new products and spend 30% more (Invesp)

Here are some ideas to get you thinking about marketing automation best practices using web forms to populate your CRM.

- Thank you pages tailored to specific web form responses
- Web forms for customer service and engineering forms so the contact record is updated
- Automatic double-opt-in confirmation emails for better email deliverability
- Text opt-in
- Triggered newsletter subscriptions, thank you emails, awareness, consideration, and decision emails, depending on form responses
- Automated notifications for particular individuals or groups
- Document ad sources, web page visits, and specific links clicked on your website
- Digital feedback integration with Facebook and Google to optimize your ad campaigns
- Merging of existing contact records
- Multi-step forms for configuring RFQs
- Auto pop-up on web page visits or exits
- Split testing of different form types and configurations to optimize conversions
- Deep funnel ad attribution tracking in software like Ontraport
- Personalized form fields for existing contacts

Spearhead was an early adopter of marketing automation. We began our journey with Ontraport in 2008, utilized Hubspot for several years as a partner, and set up Salesforce several times.

CHAD ROOT founded Spearhead Sales and Marketing in 2006 while serving as General Manager of Hot Runner Systems and Controls at Fast Heat. Before that, he was Director of Sales and Marketing for Freeman Company thermoform tooling and General Manager of Freeman's forged cutting die business from 1996–2003. From 1993–1996, he worked as a Sales Engineer for Fremont Die Cut Products, specializing in corrugated plastic returnable packaging. In addition to Spearhead, Chad is a managing partner of Fast Heat by Spark Industries, hot runner controls, and owner/operator of Root Industrial, a manufacturing representative for automation and unique industrial solutions. Spearhead provides strategic planning, branding, web marketing, digital advertising, and trade show support for many manufacturers.