



# **The B2B Revolution:** **A Guide to Customizing and** **Elevating B2C Digital Tactics**

**tenlo**

# Table of Contents

Going Beyond: How B2B Is Using B2C’s Digital Tactics — Just Better.....	3
Using B2C Tactics to Create an Engaging Digital Strategy.....	4
Using Paid Search and Paid Social for Maximum Impact.....	5
Mastering SEO for Maximum Awareness.....	6
Creating Content for Maximum Results.....	7
Bringing It All Together for More Relevance, Faster Sales.....	8

## **Going Beyond: How B2B Is Using B2C's Digital Tactics — Just Better**

B2B marketing and sales tactics used to revolve solely around relationships — success depended on the depth of a salesperson's Rolodex. But as the modern buyer's journey becomes increasingly digital, B2B marketers learned to adapt.

Your sales team is no longer the first place people go when looking for solutions — buyers do their own research online. Even traditional marketing channels such as trade shows, direct mail, print, and referrals have digital components. This gives B2B companies additional opportunities to connect with prospects where they spend the majority of their time: the virtual world.

Compared with B2C buying patterns, B2B purchasing decisions tend to carry longer sales cycles, more touchpoints, and many more decision makers. Those complicated factors made B2B marketers hesitant to use digital marketing tactics for some time, but the tide is turning.

Gone are the days when relational selling was the only option in the B2B space. By taking some notes from the B2C playbook, you can speak to prospects at every twist and turn of the marketing pipeline — dispelling any fear that you've fallen off their radar. You're always there with that kernel of advice or information that moves them that much closer to a purchase.

That is, of course, if you're clear on who you're targeting, what their roles are in the decision-making process, and where and when they'll be on the path to purchase.

# Using B2C Tactics to Create an **Engaging** Digital Strategy

Just like their B2C counterparts, smart B2B marketers create a one-on-one level of communication with prospects. At this level, you can better target your messaging using relevant awareness over a long and winding buyer's journey.

In the B2B space, purchases are more complex and require anywhere from six to eight people to decide whether a product or service is worth the investment. This requires digital solutions that can execute and deliver multiple messages to multiple targets within one purchase cycle — a process that can last several months.

Innovations allow B2B marketers to speak specifically to the various pain points of their customer bases. The ability to target segments, for example, has done more than just improve awareness; it has helped drive revenue and results.

By using newer digital mediums — even those originally conceived for the B2C space — B2B marketers can fully automate what used to be a manual and time-consuming process within the sales funnel. The result is an experience that's far more engaging for a target audience. In fact, developers are building tools specifically for B2B marketers rather than forcing them to retrofit B2C technology.

This, of course, doesn't mean B2B marketers haven't found creative ways to use traditionally B2C digital tools. Some of the most popular tactics include:

## **Machine Learning**

Machine learning enables B2B businesses to build smart chatbots, analyze customer behavior, and enhance the sales process by automating and accelerating interactions with both prospects and leads. AI dialogue systems have helped drive and optimize many customer service functions, providing personal assistance for basic questions and concerns.

## **Marketing Automation**

An increasing number of small businesses are taking advantage of marketing automation. These tools are effective for engaging prospects via email, mobile notifications, social media posts, etc. The wealth of available options has made many of these platforms more affordable — provided you're willing to go without all the bells and whistles.

## **Social Media**

B2B marketers once left social media to the B2C world, but that's changing. Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn (among other channels) are useful tools for B2B demand and lead generation; they're also great for building brand awareness. LinkedIn is particularly important in the B2B space because the channel was built for business networking.

Facebook-owned Instagram also has become a B2B tool, largely due to a new graph application programming interface, or API, that allows businesses to manage organic presence better. Even a photo-sharing platform understands that B2B has different needs — especially when it comes to reporting.

B2B companies understand that marketing, in all its digital forms, can help drive business success. The only remaining question is whether you're ready and willing to use them to their fullest capabilities.

## **Relevant Awareness — Right Messaging, Right Time, Right People**

**Once upon a time, B2B engagement meant catching the eye of an entire market — not exactly the most targeted of strategies. But by engaging the right customers with the right messages, you make every touchpoint along the customer journey more relevant to the individual. We call this relevant awareness.**

**Relevant awareness narrows your efforts to only those prospects with the highest propensity to buy. Instead of messaging everyone, you conduct rapid tests, analyze the results, and then refine your approach before testing again. It's one of the most effective methods of identifying high-value leads while arriving at a message that will resonate with a target audience.**

# Using Paid Search and Paid Social for **Maximum Impact**

Paid search is just as it sounds: You pay search engines to place your digital ads alongside relevant search results. Unlike traditional media placements in newspapers, magazines, etc., you don't pay until a user clicks on an ad — hence the moniker, pay-per-click, or PPC.

The real beauty of paid search is that it gets ads in front of consumers already searching for your products or services (i.e., high-value prospects) while also being extremely measurable and controllable. You can gather a bevy of information like total clicks, cost per click, number of leads, cost per lead, cost per sale, and so on. And once the costs reach a certain threshold, you can automatically end the campaign.

## **Key(words) to Success**

Paid search, however, isn't a tactic you should leave to chance. For one, you need to be just as strategic with your approach as with any other marketing efforts. Paid search calls for a deep understanding of the words and phrases buyers use to find products or services in your category.

For the same topic, there can be 100 times more volume of B2C-focused keywords than B2B-focused keywords. As a result, you'll need to leverage advanced targeting to ensure your B2B text ads don't receive low quality scores, high cost-per-click rates, or irrelevant traffic.

Our client Nestlé Professional has seen as many as 1 in 5 campaign leads come from its paid search channel in high-visibility Q1 2019 PPC campaigns. Meanwhile, Aquatherm has seen a double-digit increase in incremental contact completions since launching paid search in 2019.

Running a paid search campaign is often one of the easiest and most cost-efficient options to capitalize on prospective clients at the bottom of the sales funnel. It's just a matter of moving them to your funnel before a competitor does the same.

You must explore this channel and optimize your campaign as you go. You might need to adjust your targeted keywords or phrases to eliminate irrelevant clicks, which means someone on the team should be responsible for monitoring click volume versus conversions. It might also mean re-evaluating your landing page to ensure it speaks to the pain points of your target audience.

Once you hit your PPC stride, the majority of visitors will click for all the right reasons.

# Mastering SEO for **Maximum Awareness**

Search engine optimization, or SEO, is the practice of using keywords, key phrases, links, and content to improve the quality and quantity of website traffic as a result of ... well, organic search results.

In the B2B space, this can be a tricky endeavor. The terms and phrases used to search for B2B products and services are often more complex than in the B2C space because organizations are usually looking for an incredibly specific solution to an incredibly specific problem. In other words, you need to understand both your target audience and the intent of their search terms.

## **Going Beyond Google**

Understanding audience and intent isn't enough — at least when it comes to search engines crawling your website. There was a time when companies tried to game the system by stuffing as many keywords as possible into their sites. Search engines now give preference to businesses that show a certain level of expertise and authority in their respective verticals.

The ultimate goal of search engines is to provide users with the most relevant content to their search queries. That means one of your marketing efforts should focus on creating content that demonstrates your relevance. Build authority with each additional page by exploring topics that would most interest your target customers, speak to their pain points, and cater to their unique preferences.

When done correctly, SEO targeting can work through many channels and cover various stages of the marketing pipeline. For example, we've helped Aquatherm drive SEO results using both website copy and SEO-based advertising.

As in business, the only constant in SEO is change. Your SEO strategy shouldn't be a set-it-and-forget-it undertaking. You'll need to regularly adjust and update your content to meet the needs of not only your target audience but also those of search engine algorithms.

# Creating Content for **Maximum Results**

Content marketing is like any other marketing effort in that you want to provide consumers with messaging that's most relevant to them — with the hopes of driving sales. The only real difference is that this messaging comes in the form of blog posts, articles, infographics, etc.

B2B companies that put the informational needs of their target audiences before those of their brand messaging often perform better than companies that are focused on making a sale. Often, marketers can get the most relevant and important content ideas directly from their sales teams and on-site analytics.

## **Instilling Trust**

Content naturally ties back to SEO because it builds authority and expertise in your industry. It's also an opportunity to engage consumers on a different level. Instead of “selling” to them, you're providing content that makes their purchase decisions easier. If this content is informative enough, then consumers begin to trust you and choose your brand.

Let's say you're focusing on the top of the funnel. From trend reports and whitepapers to slide shares and webinars, each piece of content can aid in buyer research while growing your visibility and relevance.

In the middle of the funnel, you can use content to align with marketing automation — it's a great opportunity to apply customer personas and use A/B testing to optimize your messaging. Create gated content to capture prospects for continued nurturing or to spur action.

If you offer up information essential to a purchase, potential customers will provide the information you want (namely, an email address). Suddenly, you have a direct line to those companies with the highest propensity to buy. All it takes is some additional nudging and supplemental information to move them further down the funnel.

One of our company's most recent content marketing campaigns involved a top-of-the-funnel trend piece for Nestlé Professional. The piece was so well optimized that it was a featured snippet for multiple broad research keywords related to the content, placing the client as a top result for tens of thousands of incremental searches so far this year.

# Bringing It All Together for More Relevance, **Faster Sales**

Marketing is never a one-size-fits-all initiative. Your efforts should always be based on your target market and your desired outcomes, which calls for a customized approach. Filter your initiatives through the lens of the customer journey. Be sure to venture into paid search, SEO, and content marketing, but you can also get results with avenues such as email, trade shows, user experience, and even direct mail.

Customizing your marketing efforts allows you to provide customers with the information and experiences necessary to establish trust, build loyalty, and potentially convert. It all comes down to positioning your brand as the most obvious and logical choice along every touchpoint on the path to purchase.

Start your digital strategy with relevant awareness to ensure you speak directly to people who are experiencing challenges that you can solve. Each interaction creates a familiarity that can go a long way toward nurturing prospects. Even when an interaction isn't a one-on-one exchange, there can still be the illusion of a personal connection. That's the advantage of technology: It puts you in the position of being there — without actually being there.

**Tenlo can help you quantify relevant awareness and create a rapid testing approach that delivers the messaging, experience, and ROI that advanced digital marketing tactics offer.**

**All it takes is a **simple click**, and we'll start a conversation.**

**tenlo**