

# B2B Organic Growth Newsletter



New Product Blueprinting by Dan Adams

Growth strategies for companies that supply businesses - not consumers

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## Sixteen Media Tools to Consider for Your Next Product Launch

Getting ready to launch a new product used to be so simple: train the sales force, build the trade booth, have the agency create an ad... maybe do some direct mail. You've got a lot more choices now... and they're expanding every year. Since slow-moving, contemplative marketing jobs are also a thing of the past, it's easy for you to overlook a critical launch medium. *That* could be the difference between a product launch that gets cheers and one that gets yawns.

In AIM's product launch training, we encourage clients to consider sixteen media—eight online and eight traditional. We can't do them full justice here, but stash this list away for your next launch to make sure you're at least *thinking* about all of them. At the end of this newsletter, look for some guidance on how to select the best media for your unique situation.

## Eight Online Media Tools

Compared to traditional media, online media make it easier for you to measure results and generate low-cost leads. Most important, though, they make you "findable." In 75-80% of B2B transactions today, the prospect finds the supplier... not the other way around. And they're not looking in a rolodex for your sales rep's phone number; they're doing a Google search.

**1. News Release:** Done well, this is incredibly powerful for directing Google searchers to your website. (See *Rule 7: Keyword Cattle Chute* in our free e-book, [12 New Rules of B2B Product Launch](#).) This is all about creating useful content from your *prospects'* perspective.

**2. Search Marketing:** This is everything you do to rank high in Google searches and should be the glue that holds your online launch campaign together. It all starts with understanding the keywords your prospects will use... which should start during customer interviews in the front end of product development.

**3. E-mail:** The 21<sup>st</sup> century counterpart of direct mail, this is

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## E-Book on B2B Product Launch



Fresh new approaches are now available for launching B2B products in the digital age. Download this 26-page e-book at [www.b2bproductlaunch.com](http://www.b2bproductlaunch.com). (No charge or registration required.)

## Today's Quote

*"It is not necessary to change. Survival is not*

especially helpful when you have hundreds or thousands of prospects in your target market. There's stiff competition for your prospects' inbox attention, so consider getting help from a specialist here.

**4. Webinar:** This is one of the best ways to connect with hard-to-reach prospects, e.g., executives and marketing professionals. As with e-mail marketing, there's a science to this... so consider working with a firm that specializes in setting up and hosting webinars.

**5. White Paper:** These should be rich in useful content and should be used as "offers" to develop leads early in the buying cycle. Make your white paper or technical paper 4-6 pages long, and ensure it's completely non-commercial until the last page.

**6. Online Advertising:** You can pay per click (PPC) with *search engine ads* or *contextual ads* (displayed next to related articles). Make your best efforts first with news releases and organic search marketing (above)... and *then* test with a small budget here.

**7. Web Micro-site:** This is part of your corporate website, focused on the needs of one audience—your target market. It should be customized for the prospects of your specific launch campaign... with the rest of your online marketing directing them here.

**8. Emerging:** These media include proven & unproven methods for B2B: blogs... online presentations... podcasts... social media... viral marketing. Before you get too excited about generating "tweets," try building informative presentations and video clips into your website: *very nice* for B2B.

## **Eight Traditional Media Tools**

It's premature to abandon traditional media. Prior relationships with suppliers influence B2B buyers in nearly 90% of all transactions... and many of these traditional media are great for building these relationships.

**1. Print Advertising:** This is getting less popular relative to online media—which allows you to measure click-through rates, page views, etc. But it's still helpful for keeping your brand familiar.

**2. Trade Article:** Articles and technical papers in journals now end up online as well... so fill your article full of well-planned keywords & web-links... to draw prospects to your website.

**3. Trade Show:** These remain highly influential... but time-consuming and costly. Make sure your staff is trained & your lead follow-up is strong... or you'll waste time and money faster here than anywhere else.

mandatory."

- W. Edwards Deming

**4. Road Show:** This is a multi-city tour with your technical staff. It's a great way to nurture leads if your target market has hundreds or thousands of prospective buyers.

**5. Direct Mail:** This can still be effective, especially as your competitors switch their focus to digital inboxes. Studies show many internet users have a printed publication in their hands while they are searching online.

**6. Trade Speech:** A well-delivered presentation conveys lots of complex information... and to an undistracted audience. Consider professional help to avoid "death by PowerPoint," rehearse hard, and try using tag-team delivery.

**7. Customer Seminar:** This is similar to a road show... but your staff visits one big customer at a time, using multiple presentations. The customer seminar is an excellent way to reach key decision-makers and leave a big impression.

**8. Sales Visit:** Typically, this is still the most effective—and expensive—approach. Use a disciplined lead nurturing program to make each sales call count. And spend the time and money on great sales tools and sales training to make your sales force look *good*.

## Selecting the Best Media Tools for Your Campaign

So how do you pick the best media for your next product launch? For starters, how about asking your prospects? In 2009, we developed a deceptively simple tool—which is part of our [LaunchStar® Excel-based software](#)—called the *Two-Question Launch Survey*. Q1 is "How does your company learn about new ideas?" and Q2 is "Who decides which ideas to pursue?"

The answers to these questions tell you which media to use, and which job functions within prospect companies to target with your campaign. This survey can be done via e-mail, web, sales force, etc. You certainly don't *have* to use a survey like this, but wouldn't it be shame to drop \$100k on a trade show, when Google searching is what your prospects are *really* using to find suppliers?

Beyond that, you can use some good old-fashioned logic to make your media selections. Consider that your target market can be described by a simple 2x2 matrix. On one axis, you're either a well-known, leading supplier of products into the market... or the market is completely new to you. On the other axis, there are either a handful of buying companies in the target market... or thousands.

**Few Prospects; You're a Market Leader:** Your sales force can easily reach prospects. Invest in sales training & tools; reinforce them with online media. The Customer Seminar is also very effective here.

**Few Prospects; You're New to Market:** This is easy for competitors to defend. Combine credibility-building content—white papers, webinars and trade presentations—with well-equipped sales reps.

**Many Prospects; You're New to Market:** There are too many to reach with direct sales. Use news releases & search marketing to drive them to your website... loaded with useful presentations and video content.

**Many Prospects; You're a Market Leader:** Use your database—and others'—to build a “community of users” via e-mail and other online methods, strategically combined with trade shows.

OK... that was over-simplified. We actually like to look at twenty different scenarios. But hopefully this illustrates the point: Compared to your marketing buddy down the hall, you may need to use *completely* different media to be successful.

One last tip: If you save these ideas for your next launch, remember to pull them out ten to twelve months before your actual launch date. It takes time to sort through these options and make the best of your chosen few. But you'll be well rewarded.

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