

B2B Organic Growth Newsletter



New Product Blueprinting by Dan Adams

Growth strategies for companies that supply businesses - not consumers

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Three Steps to a Great Product Launch

According to Tolstoy, “Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.” And so there are many ways for a product launch to falter... but just a few common steps to success. Of course, a key first step is that you’ve developed the right product and are not “putting lipstick on a pig.” We’ve addressed this in past issues and will assume you’ve developed a product that provides value beyond prospects’ next best alternative.

Once you’ve got the right product, you need to deliver it to the Right Market using the Right Message through the Right Media. Put another way, you must clearly understand who to tell, what to tell, and how to tell.

Step 1: The Right Market (WHO to tell) When you’re planning news releases, trade show booths, or email campaigns, a “fuzzy” picture of your target audience leads to missed opportunities and wasted dollars. You need to begin with a crystal clear picture of whom you wish to reach. In consumer goods marketing, a *persona* is often created—a detailed description of the type of person marketing efforts will be aimed at.

For B2B suppliers, your target audience is more complex than a single end consumer buying a razor or diaper. At AIM, we’ve developed a *Prospect Profile* our clients use to define prospects at four levels. Imagine these levels if you produced textile fibers:

Level 1—Market Segment: Your fiber could be used in sports clothing, work uniforms, business suits, casual wear, etc. You need to target just one “cluster of customers with similar needs,” or your campaign will lack focus and power. Let’s say you target work uniforms.

Level 2—Company Type: Your fiber is purchased by textile

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Visit www.newproductblueprinting.com

New Product Blueprinting at DuPont



Read how DuPont implemented New Product Blueprinting through TEAM e-MMERSSION™ ([PDMA Visions, Oct. 2010](#)).

F-Book on B2B Product

mills... who sell to cut-and-sew manufacturers... who sell to uniform suppliers... who rent to fast-food restaurants, hospitals, and others. Perhaps the uniform suppliers “call the shots” in this value chain, so you target them.

Level 3—Job Function: Unlike consumer goods buyers, you have several potential audiences within the uniform supplier: technical, marketing, purchasing, production, etc. If you know that marketing professionals make the key fabric buying decisions, you’ll target them.

Level 4—Key Outcomes: Uniform marketing managers could be interested in abrasion resistance, stain resistance, breathability, or dozens of other outcomes. If you’ve done your front-end homework (perhaps with New Product Blueprinting), you’ll know precisely which to pursue.

Fail to do this and you’ll be handsomely paying your ad agency to be inefficient on your behalf. We recommend you begin your launch planning by creating a *Prospect Profile* that details these four levels. Then share this document with your ad agency, PR firm, and other external agencies. Fail to do this and you’ll be handsomely paying your ad agency to be inefficient on your behalf. Don’t pay them for target practice when they’re guessing at the target.

Step 2: The Right Message (WHAT to tell)

Now that you know precisely who to tell, it’s time to decide what to tell them. Of course there are some rules you may have heard before: You need to craft a clear value proposition that highlights up to three key customer benefits. You need to flood your copy with keyword search terms. And you need to consistently use this same message in multiple media.

But it’s not as simple as getting in front of your prospects and beating the same value proposition drum over and over. That’s because your prospects aren’t the same: Each prospect is actually changing right

Prospects are changing right before your eyes... at least they are if you’re doing your job. before your eyes... at least they are if you’re doing your job. At first they’re unaware of your new product... then they are learning of your new product... then considering it... then negotiating for it... then buying it... then recommending it to others. Prospects are moving along a natural and predictable *buying cycle*.

Many suppliers try to use the same message with “unaware” prospects as with “negotiating” prospects — a ham-handed

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. (No charge or registration required.)

Today's Quote

“Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is, I don’t know which half.”

- John Wanamaker

prospects as with negotiating prospects... a half-hearted and doomed messaging approach. Far better to meet prospects where they are: Use *awareness content* early in the buying cycle and *persuasive content* later. Most suppliers are already infatuated with their own persuasive content... so let's explore awareness content.

How will you get the attention of prospects and begin moving them along the buying cycle so they will eventually be interested in your persuasive content? Here's the secret: It's all about them. Ninety percent of your awareness content should be about something of interest to prospects... with only 10 percent about your product (and this at the end of your copy). Here are some examples of awareness content:

- 1) *Industry Research*: You provide insights into their industry—trends, new technologies, shared views, etc.—that establish you as the “go-to” expert.
- 2) *Educational Material*: You provide online classes, how-to guides, glossaries, etc., delivered via newsletters, webinars, online video, etc.
- 3) *Industry News*: You consolidate relevant news, supplemented with helpful analysis... perhaps even data in your own “branded” chart or table.
- 4) *Thought Leadership*: You provide unique, compelling industry observations... using your own company executive or a paid industry expert.
- 5) *Case Studies*: You use a personalized narrative to describe how someone like your prospects overcame a common industry problem.

Ahh, you say... but how do I know whether a prospect visiting my website is learning, considering, or negotiating? Good point: You don't know... but they do. So let them “raise their hand” to move on to the next step in the buying cycle by accepting your offer. An offer is something that lets the prospect learn more when he or she is ready. Examples include technical papers, informative videos, webinars, in-depth brochures, value calculators, buyer's kits, free samples, etc.

Step 3: The Right Media (HOW to tell)

Today, in 80 percent of all B2B transactions, the prospect finds the supplier... not the other way around.

When it comes to how you tell your message, Bob Dylan was right: “Times they are a-changing.” In my early days of marketing, product launch was all about “hunting down” prospects. Today, in 80 percent of all B2B transactions, the prospect finds the supplier... not the other way around.

And isn't this how you find new suppliers? You enter a

And isn't this how you find new suppliers? You enter a keyword in a search engine such as Google to find possible solution providers. To take a quick pulse on whether your business is "a-changing" fast enough, consider these three questions:

- 1) Do we know which keywords prospects will use in their Google searches? (Hint: Data-mine your front-end interviews to learn *their* language.)
- 2) Do we know which media are most commonly used by prospects in this market today... when they're looking for help?
- 3) Do we select the optimal media blend for our *specific* launch situation... from a full complement of traditional and online media?

Let's look more closely at the last two questions. At AIM, we've identified nine traditional media and nine online media. We've developed a methodology so you can know—with great precision—which of these media your target prospects are using. And we've developed another methodology to help you choose the optimal blend of media for your specific situation. But first... here are the 18 media:

Nine Traditional Media: Print advertising, press kit, print article, direct mail, trade speech, trade show, road show, customer seminar, and sales visit.

Nine Online Media: Online advertising, news release, white paper, email marketing, online presentation, social media, webinar, web microsite, and search marketing.

For question #2 above—to learn which media prospects commonly use—we've designed the *Two-Question Launch Survey*. Simply ask prospects: 1) How does your company learn about new ideas? and 2) Who decides which ideas to pursue? Give them a drop-down menu of the 18 media for the first question and a drop-down menu of their job functions (purchasing, technical, marketing, etc.) for the second. You may be surprised at how much more efficiently you'll be able to focus your launch budget.

For question #3—selecting the optimal media blend for your situation—we've designed this framework: Imagine a four-cell matrix, where one axis describes your market position (leader vs. new entrant) and the other your target industry concentration (thousands of prospects vs. just a few). If you are a new market entrant, use media that *build credibility* (e.g., white papers). If you are a market leader, *leverage relationships* (e.g., sales visits). If you have thousands of prospects, *become findable* (e.g., online news releases). If you have just a few prospects, *pursue targets* (e.g., customer seminars).

Next Steps...

Okay... I've tried to give you 90 percent "awareness content" in this newsletter. (After all... we're in the B2B marketing business too.) Now for an "offer" and a bit about our "product." Here's the offer: You can download a free e-book that gives you 26 pages of insights on B2B Product Launch at www.b2bproductlaunch.com/e-book. You won't even have to register... just download.

Our "product" is training (one-day workshop or online) and software called LaunchStar[®]. It provides a roadmap for your new product teams to follow, delivering a concise two-page *Launch Plan*, supplemented with useful tools (e.g., *Prospect Profile*, *Message Brief*, and *Media Guide*). To learn more, contact us at information@newproductblueprinting.com.