

TAKE THE LEAD

4 Keys to Success with
LEAD NURTURING



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Executive Summary

So you've got a whole *slew* of leads. **Now what do you do with them?** This is the dilemma facing many businesses in today's modern world of limited attention spans and information overload. The relationship between business and buyer is not always a simple one. Far from it, in fact.

Even if you're able to stand out from the regular inbox clutter and get yourself noticed, actually managing to turn a lead into a sale is a multifaceted process. This is where lead nurturing can help you simplify things. Proper lead nurturing is about developing relationships with your potential customers—not only at every

part of the sales funnel, but at every part of the buyer's journey.

Your marketing and communication efforts are focused on listening to the needs of the consumer and making information readily available to them. This can be accomplished using a strategic lead scoring system, a dynamic content marketing plan, and a data-centric approach to measurement and analysis.

The following report focuses on key areas of insight to keep in mind when nurturing leads, as well as the potential pitfalls one should avoid.



Key #1: Understanding the Complex Sales Cycle

Before jumping into understanding your buyers and creating buyer personas, effective lead nurturing begins with an insider understanding of the sales funnel. This not only helps distinguish the point of the cycle potential buyers are in, but it also reduces your guesswork when creating targeted marketing content. Additionally, it allows you to score your leads based on how they fit with your business objectives and how likely they are to convert.

UPPER FUNNEL

The leads at the top of the funnel might not even be aware of your business, or if they are, the awareness is minimal. At this point, they are **simply seeking information** or “**testing the waters.**” Studies consistently show how the right information inspires action, and how something as simple as an **easy to find “about us” page** or a **clear company narrative** can further entice potential buyers.

MID FUNNEL

You’ve effectively hooked leads with your story and candor, and you’re now being compared to similar companies (likely your direct competitors). This is a crucial step in your lead nurturing process, as potential buyers have different needs and wants. Focus on what makes your brand unique and continually test and refine your message by analyzing your customer and prospect data.

LOWER FUNNEL

Consumers are nearly ready to purchase. While making your pitch at this stage, a hard sell might not be necessary since the buyer has usually already made up their mind. This is where the groundwork for a solid business relationship is established so make sure the purchase interaction is smooth & efficient as possible.

BEYOND THE FUNNEL

It may seem strange that the sales cycle would continue, but **following up after a sale is completed is equally important.** It draws customers back in, thus **growing your lifetime customer value** and opening up the opportunity for referrals and additional business. **Post-purchase emails, rewards programs, referral programs, responsive customer service, and user-generated content** are all ways to keep your customers happy and coming back for more. Though you’re likely familiar with the broad strokes, constant vigilance of this process is essential for lead generation and the creation of long-term business relationships.

Key #2: Focus Your Content

It's important to understand that lead nurturing is not a "one-size-fits all" strategy. However, in order to generate leads effectively, you need to do a little housekeeping.

First, you need to take an in-depth look at your buyer persona(s). A buyer persona is essentially a profile of your target customer. It focuses on who that person is and what they are looking for in a product or service. Buyers' needs, expectations, and goals are laid out in a persona to give an accurate analysis of your potential customer.

Often, a company will be able to easily identify one or more personas for their business and build them out through surveys, interviews, focus groups, social media, and more. Once you understand what kind of people are buyers and what information they want readily available, you can begin focusing on your content funnel.

Focus on answering the tough questions your personas have brought up. If there are intricacies to your product or service that might be confusing or complicated, content should be created to help clarify.



Additional Insight:

Content that is educational or focuses on the transparency of your business goes a long way in the lead nurturing process.

Key Buyer Persona Considerations

Initial Interests: Why they are a lead in the first place.

Goals: What they hope to get out of their relationship with you.

Business Objectives: What you can do to trigger them to stay in the content funnel/ marketplace.

Demographic Data: Age, race, ethnicity, gender, marital status, income, etc.

Behavioral Information: Shopping habits, browsing habits, website behaviors, etc.

Key #3: Nurturing Goes Beyond Email

Although traditional lead generation relies heavily on email campaigns, lead nurturing philosophies are expanding in different directions. The sheer volume of clutter plaguing most inboxes makes it hard to stand out, and whatever intimacy was once associated with email correspondence is mostly gone. Emails may be an effective, important tool for jump starting the lead nurturing process, or even helping to recover lost sales with browse recovery and cart abandonment campaigns, but there are more components to focus on if you want to see positive results on a holistic level.



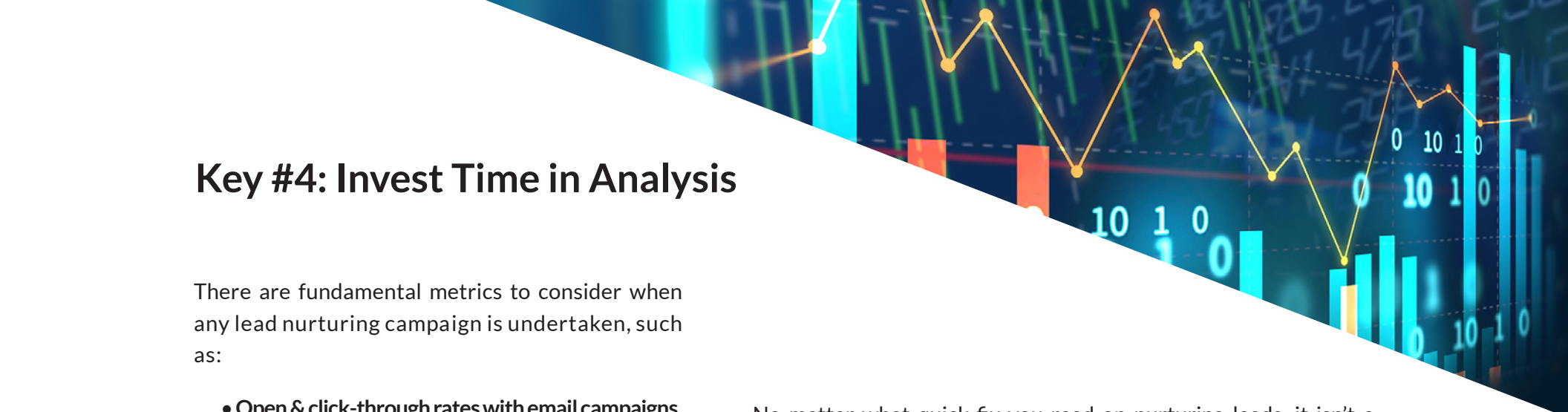
Social media is a great tool for lead development, but also helps build lasting relationships with leads. Even small, subtle gestures (following someone on Twitter, liking their LinkedIn update, etc.) can go a long way in developing lead relationships.

Social media advertising through targeted ad campaigns is also effective at rerouting leads through the sales funnel. Consumers following your social activity are likely prospects already. A well-timed/targeted campaign can be the final kickstart for your business relationship. Even those who don't know your brand can learn a lot through a well-planned social media campaign.



Retargeted marketing strategies have proven effective in generating new, lasting leads. Taking a proactive approach to establishing connections with buyers who have shown interest but fallen out of the funnel is a smart business move.

Though email blasts can generate some buzz and keep potential buyers motivated, studies show they have produced progressively fewer turnover leads over the last few years. Instead of relying on email as a broad-reaching Hail Mary, try re-targeting prospects who didn't convert the first time. Often, removing a simple friction can lead to a lifelong customer.



Key #4: Invest Time in Analysis

There are fundamental metrics to consider when any lead nurturing campaign is undertaken, such as:

- **Open & click-through rates with email campaigns.**
- **Click-through rate with targeted ad placements** (e.g. paid search, social media advertising).
- **Subscribe, like, & unsubscribe rate with social media content.**
- **Conversion rate on a website call-to-action.**

These metrics can change based on business and product, but industry standards should provide a stable benchmark by which to judge valuable metrics. Beyond the data, it is also a must to evaluate your internal outreach practices.

No matter what quick fix you read on nurturing leads, it isn't a perfect science. Changing marketplaces, business structures, location, etc. all play into how your specific business generates leads, and there's never going to be one final, correct answer.

The absolute best way you can cement the proper lead nurturing practices is to measure your performance. According to a recent survey, **44% of marketers cite measurement for demand generation initiatives** as their top priority for 2021¹.

Maintaining relationships with potential buyers is difficult without knowing where to improve. This is precisely where analytics can make a world of difference.



Additional Insight:

Even when current practices are converting well, they can always convert better. Don't be afraid to test the waters, and always be focused on where you can improve.

¹ <https://www.hubspot.com/marketing-statistics>

Tying It All Together

Although proper lead nurturing requires patience and some trial and error, creating lifelong converts and strong lead relationships is a sustainable practice.

Beyond anything else, maintaining an understanding of your current buyers and their lifecycle will help guide your lead nurturing practices and help you put a stable nurturing plan in place.

Remember: It's not just about reaching people anymore—it's about guiding them and facilitating the experience they crave.



We're here to help!



Still struggling to finalize a cost-per-lead, determine customer lifetime value, or come up with an effective lead gen strategy? Let the experts at ROI Revolution help!



Email Wendi at wlassiter@roirevolution.com to schedule a consult and take the next step to improving your lead generation while maintaining profitability and brand growth goals.



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