



THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO LEAD GENERATION FOR MANUFACTURING COMPANIES

How to Accelerate Your
Growth with Digital
Lead Generation
Strategies & Tactics





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Online Directories Are No Longer Effective Tools for Lead Generation

The reasons for this decline are multifaceted, but the company's 2021 acquisition by Xometry seems to have accelerated the downturn. At the time of the acquisition, the monthly US desktop traffic was 1,141,399. In April 2025, it's 84,274 - a 92% decline according to SEMRush. Not surprisingly, ThomasNet advertisers have reported a drop in leads, lead quality, weaker buyer engagement, and unreliable services, making it increasingly difficult to justify investing in the platform. Adding to these challenges is the high turnover in sales and support staff for Thomas Marketing Services.

The decline of online directories like ThomasNet isn't merely the result of poor business decisions or temporary trends. It is a reflection of how buyer behavior is evolving.

What does this mean for your business? Simply put, static directories are no longer a reliable lead generation tool. To thrive in this evolving marketplace, your company must adopt strategies that meet buyers where they already spend their time online.

The secret to generating leads without using directories involves connecting with prospects and finding ways to encourage online engagement. To help manufacturers navigate this process, the Marketing Metrics Corp. team has created this comprehensive guide. Herein, you'll learn about proven and highly effective lead generating tactics like Account-Based Marketing (ABM), social media outreach, and personalized email campaigns. All of these are methods that will help you target high-value prospects, build relationships, and establish trust with new and existing customers.



Case Study – Online Lead Generation in the Manufacturing Sector

A prime example of the lead generating power of digital marketing is the story of ACRO Automation Systems, Inc. (ACRO).

ACRO provides customized, robotic automation solutions to companies throughout the world. Like many manufacturers, ACRO faced three critical challenges: First and foremost, they were overly dependent on the automotive sector, so they needed to diversify their customer base and generate qualified sales leads from new vertical markets. Second, their outdated website didn't clearly illustrate ACRO's strengths, wasn't easily found on Google, and wasn't generating quality leads for their sales team. Lastly, they needed to recruit skilled labor to support their growing operations. Recognizing the limitations of traditional marketing methods, ACRO partnered with Marketing Metrics Corp. (MMC) in 2017 to implement a modern, results-driven solution.

The strategy began with a complete website overhaul, designed to better showcase ACRO's capabilities and make their services more engaging to potential customers. ACRO relied on MMC's marketing expertise in manufacturing to help write content for new market segments and case studies. MMC then launched a series of targeted lead generation campaigns, including search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, social media outreach, and account-based marketing. Sales leads from the website automatically feed into their CRM (Customer Relationship Management) software to support the efforts of the ACRO sales team. To address recruitment challenges, MMC also implemented a robust employment marketing strategy, including Facebook recruiting ads that positioned ACRO as an employer of choice for skilled professionals in the manufacturing industry.

The results were remarkable. ACRO received hundreds of RFQs and quoted 30+ large automation projects resulting in multiple high-value new customers in new markets, ranging from six to eight figures. The most exciting result? A deal with a new customer worth more than \$60 million in revenue – a direct result of MMC's ongoing digital marketing efforts. Their improved digital presence not only generated higher-quality leads but also strengthened their employer brand, making it significantly easier to attract and retain top talent.

Mike Loomis, President of ACRO Automation Systems, Inc. said it best:

The \$60 million-dollar new customer was the result of an online inquiry generated through sophisticated, proven digital marketing techniques executed by MMC. Our company has made strong efforts to leverage the power of the Internet, and we are very pleased with the steady results delivered by our digital marketing agency, Marketing Metrics Corp. We look forward to many more new customers coming forward to work with us after their online interactions with our brand.

Steve Condit, President of Marketing Metrics Corp., shared his perspective on the partnership, stating:

We are copied on every lead generated via the ACRO website and our digital marketing efforts. We meet with the ACRO team monthly to review these leads and get immediate feedback on the digital marketing tactics that work best to grow their topline revenue. In 2025, we worked with ACRO's in-house UI designer to launch an even better designed website.



Whether your goal is to diversify your customer base, hit ambitious revenue growth targets, or build a skilled workforce, this e-book offers actionable strategies that will help you stay competitive in a marketplace where static directories are becoming obsolete.

Ready to transform your lead generation efforts? Read on to discover how to build a powerful lead gen pipeline!



10 Ways To Generate Leads For Your Manufacturing Business

Your prospects aren't waiting by their mailbox for brochures or flipping through the latest edition of Automation World. They are using online resources to guide their purchasing decisions. To grab their attention, you need to engage with them on their terms.

Looking for the best ways to do this? We'll cut to the chase with a **Top 10 list of effective tactics for manufacturing lead generation.**

- 01** **Create content** for your website that includes answers to buyers' questions, by using videos, blogs, case studies, example projects, and testimonials.
- 02** **Optimize your website** so it performs better in key areas: search engine results, user experience, technical performance, and conversions.
- 03** **Send emails** with product/service news and calls-to-action that take prospects to a website landing page where you can collect contact information.
- 04** **Develop online advertising** that targets buyers who have visited your website.
- 05** **Host a webinar** that addresses a topic relevant to your prospects, and capture attendee contact information.

- 06** Offer **prospective customers** useful insights through downloadable resources like infographics, white papers, or e-books if they provide contact details.
- 07** Test your **digital communications** like emails and landing pages to identify the messages that get more leads as part of your conversion rate optimization (CRO) process.
- 08** Use tech tools like **LinkedIn Sales Navigator** that rely on algorithms to help you find the accounts and leads that align with your company's solutions.
- 09** Use **AI tools** to identify prospects and then target the ones who could provide a significant boost to your business by using account-based marketing.
- 10** Nurture **prospective customers** by using marketing automation to deliver useful information during their journey and help you continue your online 'conversation.'

Knowing these tactics is just the beginning. The real challenge is understanding how to create a marketing approach that moves the needle for your business. We'll guide you through transforming these strategies from isolated activities into a powerful, results-driven lead generation system.





Design Your Lead Generation Blueprint

Lead generation plans have 2 primary design elements:

- 01 Inbound activities:** These attract potential customers to your business.
- 02 Outbound interactions:** These involve actively seeking out prospects and offering tailored solutions.

The Magnetic Power of Inbound Lead Generation for Manufacturers

Inbound lead generation is about positioning your business as a go-to resource for helpful information and trusted solutions. You don't want to be just another company focused on closing deals. This approach shifts your strategy from blindly chasing leads to attracting them by sharing valuable content through your website, blog, or digital advertising campaigns.

Let's explore the benefits of inbound lead generation:

- **Your solutions are clear and accessible:** Effective inbound marketing acts like a magnet, drawing prospects to you by offering information that helps solve their problems. Remember to include video content; the saying "a picture is worth a thousand words" holds especially true for advertising your manufacturing business:
 - According to research by **eMarketer**, the average adult watched nearly 4 hours of digital video content per day in 2024. Video content that clearly demonstrates your solutions has the power to improve **engagement** and convert prospects into customers.
- **You become a trusted resource:** By positioning yourself as a subject matter expert through releasing case studies, educational resources, or detailed spec sheets, your prospects are more likely to reach out to you. If you're not engaging with prospects early in their decision-making process, you run the risk of being relegated to "order-taker" status. You may also encounter more price-bid business because you haven't differentiated your company from your competitors.
- **Lower cost-per-lead (CPL):** Inbound marketing costs about 60% less per lead than traditional outbound lead-generating techniques like tradeshows, direct mail, and cold calls from inside sales reps.

It's important to note that every prospect who visits your website or responds to an email may not be the right fit for your business. Some customers may need assistance outside your areas of expertise, while others may not offer enough long-term revenue to justify pursuing them. In these cases, outbound strategies like account-based marketing (ABM) become a valuable tool that can help your business zone in on its most promising opportunities.

Getting Results with Outbound Marketing

Outbound marketing activities often get low marks as an industrial lead generation strategy. You've probably heard tactics like print advertising, direct mail, and trade events referred to as "spray and pray", where you send a message to a wide audience and hope for a response from interested buyers.

But thanks to digital marketing and predictive data technologies, outbound lead generation has become much more effective. Traditional methods can now be targeted to deliver results that rival or exceed the lead generating abilities of directories like Thomasnet.

Let's explore some outbound marketing strategies:

- **Traditional outreach:** Television, radio, and print advertisements are still valuable for generating leads, especially when they are used to reinforce your brand message at key stages of the buyer's journey. For example, a targeted radio ad or TV spot can create awareness early on, while follow-up messaging through digital channels provides more detailed information.
 - **Modern radio advertising:** Podcasts are gaining traction as a way to share solutions with potential clients. This long-form medium gives you ample time to highlight real-world applications, success stories, and industry trends that resonate with your audience.
- **Account-Based Marketing (ABM):** Account-based marketing (ABM) has been a valuable tool for lead generation since the early 2000s. It works by identifying the traits of your most profitable customers, like company size, industry, or challenges, and using that data to target similar companies through industry databases.
 - **A strategic investment:** While ABM costs more per lead than inbound tactics, it delivers higher returns because it improves **outreach efficiency** and targets prospects with the greatest revenue potential.

Which Lead Generation Strategy is Right for Your Manufacturing Business?

How you allocate resources between inbound and outbound lead gen activities will be as unique as your product line. Factors like the size of your team, your marketing budget, and your customer's journey all play a role in shaping the right strategy.

A 2025 survey conducted by CMO.org showed that B2B manufacturing companies allocate about 4% of their total revenue to marketing activities. However, the real story lies in how these investments are deployed. Here's some data from WebStrategies that demonstrates how companies use different strategies based on their marketing budget:



Smaller budgets
(\$100,000 to \$500,000)

These companies typically dedicate about 70% of their marketing spend to inbound strategies and 30% to outbound efforts.



Moderate budgets
(\$500,000 to \$5 million)

The allocation shifts to approximately 60% inbound and 40% outbound.



Larger budgets
(exceeding \$5 million)

Outbound strategies start to take priority, representing 55% of the total marketing spend.

From our perspective, designing a successful lead generation involves supporting your customers throughout their decision making and purchasing process. This means understanding their pain points, knowing where they spend their time online, and presenting solutions in a way that feels natural and relevant.

For manufacturing companies, we've found success with strategies that combine account-based marketing and inbound lead generation. By analyzing inbound data, such as what content buyers engage with or how they navigate your website, you can create laser-focused outbound campaigns that drive results.



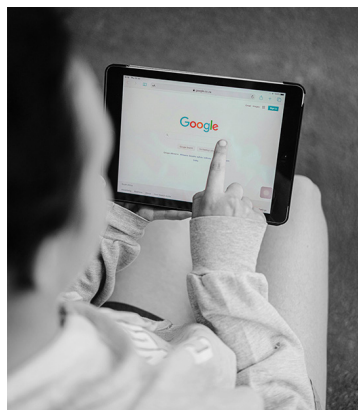
Lead Generation Tactics For Manufacturers

Static directories like Thomasnet were once a go-to for manufacturers, but they lack the precision, flexibility, and results that modern digital marketing tactics deliver. With inbound and outbound marketing, you can target the right audience, track performance in real-time, and generate a higher ROI.

Inbound Marketing Lead Gen Tactics

Getting the most out of your inbound lead generation starts with having the right perspective. Many manufacturers make the mistake of overwhelming prospects with technical details while failing to demonstrate how their products address customer needs.

Inbound marketing should highlight your business's ability to solve customer challenges and provide meaningful results. When you showcase how your solution can improve productivity or streamline processes, you're creating a stronger connection with your audience and building brand credibility. Below are some popular inbound lead generation activities:



- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):** This tactic is used to ensure your website shows up when clients and prospects search the internet. Here are the basics of this popular inbound marketing tool.
 - **Keyword strategy:** Think like your customers. What terms are they typing into Google when they are looking for solutions like yours? By understanding and using these exact phrases in your content, you'll start showing up in more search results.
 - **Content depth:** Create content that helps your prospects by exploring and solving their challenges. The more valuable and comprehensive your information, the more search engines will see you as a trusted resource.



- **Search Engine Marketing (SEM) / Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Advertising:** These two tactics build on your SEO insights and allow you to create targeted paid advertising campaigns. Here are some benefits of using these strategies:

- Ads can be tailored to the specific keywords and phrases your audience is searching for.
- Prospects who click on your ad are directed to a landing page or your website where they can provide contact details and request more information.
- If a visitor doesn't complete the form, you can retarget them with additional messaging that may be more useful.
- Once a prospect provides their information, you can send them additional material to support them through their buying journey.
- PPC advertising gives you control over spend by setting budget limits, helping you assess the quality of leads generated before scaling.



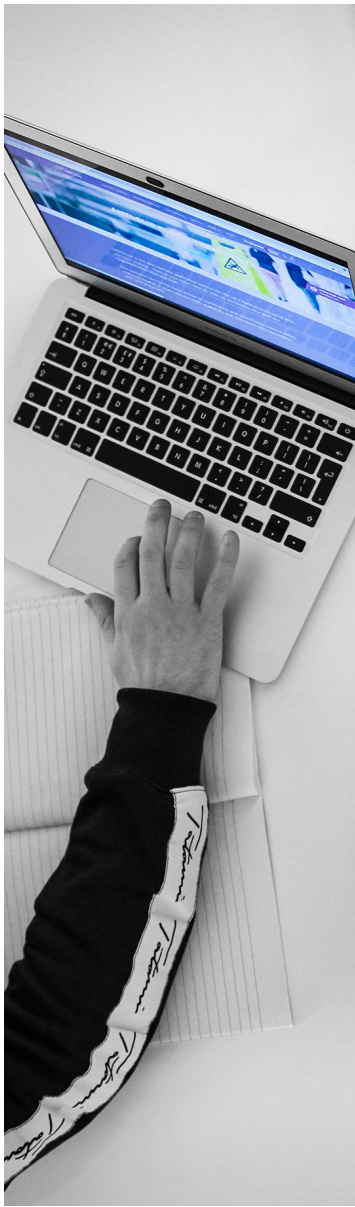
- **Social Media Marketing:** This inbound lead gen tactic ensures your business is visible on the platforms your prospects use daily. You can post, promote your content, or create targeted advertising on the following platforms:

- **LinkedIn** is useful for showcasing your industry knowledge, building a network of contacts, and offering a way for prospects to reach you.
- **YouTube** is the second-largest search engine on the internet and is an essential element of manufacturers' inbound lead generation plans. With SEO and professional videos, you'll expand your brand presence and elevate credibility with prospects.
- **Instagram's** visual platform gives you a useful tool for sharing video snippets and images about your capabilities. With **71% of U.S. businesses on the platform**, you may want to join the visual conversation.
- **X (formerly Twitter)** provides a forum for having conversations with prospects without any heavy-handed selling. You can also use the platform to drive potential buyers to your website, read your most recent blog post, or download your updated catalog.
- **Facebook's** personalized platform may not seem like a good fit for manufacturing lead generation. But check out companies like Caterpillar or the American Manufacturers Association, and you'll see posts that take prospective leads to educational courses, newsletters, and other online resources. Like LinkedIn, it's an awesome employment marketing tool for promoting and filling job openings.



- **Content Marketing:** Google's algorithms are designed to promote content that provides clear, helpful, and up-to-date answers to user queries. Your goal is to craft insights so valuable and precise that search engines naturally prioritize your message when prospects are searching for solutions. Here are three key questions you should answer when crafting your content marketing strategy:

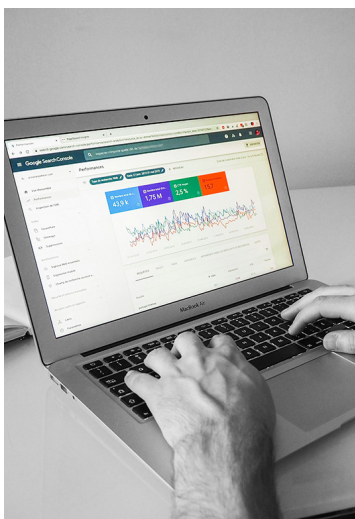
- **Who is your content for? Know your audience!** Start defining your audience by creating buyer personas. These are fictional profiles that represent your ideal customers. Qualities that make up a persona include:
 - **Roles:** What is their job title? Purchasing agent, plant engineer, facilities manager, etc.?



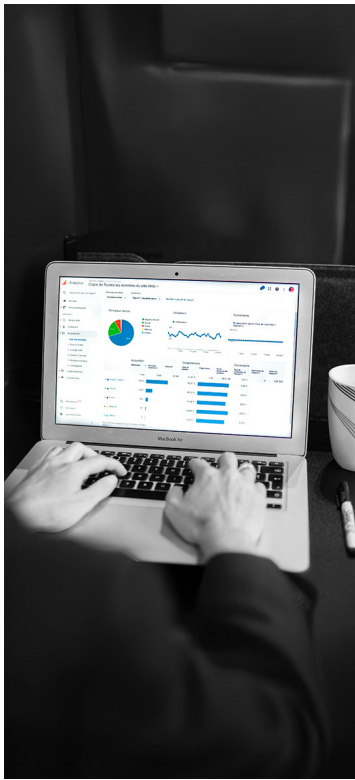
- **Challenges:** What are their pain points, and how can your product help?
 - **Goals:** What are they trying to achieve? What are their daily challenges?
 - **Buying behaviors:** How do they typically research and decide on solutions? Where do they go for information?
- **What benefits will your audience receive from your content?** To answer this question, think about the stages an industrial lead goes through when purchasing your product. Then, create content designed to support them as they navigate each phase of the decision process:
 - **Need phase:** The buyer identifies a problem and begins exploring solutions.
 - **Search phase:** The buyer researches products and sets a budget.
 - **Evaluation phase:** The buyer decides if your company is worth considering.
 - **Decision phase:** The buyer creates a shortlist from which they will make a purchase.
- **What desirable and distinctive content experience can we consistently deliver? Think like a customer!** Finding the answer to this question requires close collaboration between sales, marketing, product development, and leadership. Think about what your customers value, and strive to create content that prospects will click on, share, and use to help with buying decisions. Additional issues to consider are:
 - Will you have the resources to create high-quality product videos?
 - Are you able to write a new blog post every month? Does that frequency give your buyers the information they need, when they need it?
 - Do you have a large enough team to create all the content types that your buyer uses, like advertising, social media posts, videos, and blogs?

Pro Tip:

Quality is more valuable than quantity. Commit to the content you can easily maintain and broaden your outreach only when you have the resources to comfortably do so.



- **Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO): Maximize Your Digital Marketing ROI:** This marketing tactic is a way to ensure your SEO, PPC, social media marketing, and content generation are getting you enough leads to fill your prospect pipeline. Here is a quick rundown of this process:
 - **The basics:** Digital marketing provides precise, real-time metrics that show how well your message is connecting with potential leads. You're also able to measure user experience (UX) through your conversion rate.
 - **What is a conversion?** Conversions reflect the number of prospects transitioning from website visitors into contacts who:
 - Download an infographic or whitepaper
 - Sign up for your blog or newsletter
 - Request a demo



- **What is 'conversion rate'?** A conversion rate is the percentage of visitors who give you their contact details. For example, if 100 people visit your website and 15 of them sign up to get your e-book, your conversion rate is 15%.
- **What are the benefits of CRO?**
 - ─ CRO evaluates the performance of your inbound lead generation strategies and helps you improve your content to get better results.
 - ─ You can repeat the CRO process until you reach your ideal conversion rate, ensuring your strategies are connecting with your audience.
 - ─ CRO provides robust analytics and prospect feedback that can help you refine your marketing strategy. No more relying on instincts or gut feelings – just data and results.
 - ─ CRO can be used to examine metrics beyond conversion rate, including:
 - **Bounce rate:** If visitors leave your website quickly (bounce), it may mean your content isn't helpful or relevant.
 - **Time on page and page views:** When visitors spend more time on a page or view multiple pages, it shows your content is useful and engaging.

Outbound Marketing Lead Gen Tactics

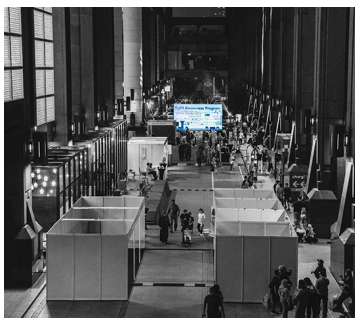
ThomasNet's passive directory model leaves your business stuck in a reactive position, waiting for potential clients to stumble across your profile. Outbound marketing offers a powerful alternative that allows you to proactively target decision-makers, showcase your unique capabilities, and form connections with your most valuable prospects.

To improve your success with outbound marketing, focus on your product's ability to deliver improved outcomes instead of directly promoting inventory or spec sheets. By positioning your products as solutions to common challenges, you will stand out from competitors relying on generic directory listings.

Within your outbound marketing toolbox, you'll find traditional outreach efforts and more targeted account-based marketing activities:



- **Traditional outreach:** TV, print, billboards, and radio advertising can still be highly effective for building brand awareness. With the availability of "big data," especially from digital media platforms, it is now possible to target the channels, publications, and regions that connect you with your target demographic. Here are the best ways to improve your outbound marketing lead generation efforts:
 - **Print and digital magazines:** We have a client that advertises in Design World, Machine Design, and other trade and vertical magazines. Some of them share subscriber email addresses, which we use for direct email marketing purposes.
 - **Podcast advertising:** Unlike terrestrial radio, podcast advertising offers a highly targeted way to connect with your audience. Podcast advertising gives you clear insights into audience size, subject focus, and direct access to engaged listeners, without having to worry about ad blockers.
 - **Best practices:** Using best practice guidelines from inbound marketing can improve the lead-gen power of your traditional media ads. For example, include a clear call-to-action (CTA) on your print ads that drives prospects to your website. If you're advertising on a podcast, be sure to clearly state your CTA and give prospects your 800 number or website address.



- **Tradeshow efforts:** Attendance at a tradeshow can generate more leads when paired with a strong email strategy. Before the event, email attendees with appointment forms to connect with prospects early. After the event, use lead capture software to send personalized thank-you emails and share valuable content to keep the conversation going.
- **Cold calling:** For industrial manufacturers, cold calling can still drive results when backed by targeting data. Use contact lists from industry organizations or event registries to identify qualified prospects.

Pro Tip:

Pairing cold calling with account-based marketing strategies can further improve its efficiency and lead quality.



- **Account-Based Marketing (ABM):** For industrial manufacturers, Account-Based Marketing (ABM) offers a highly effective approach to generating quality leads. Unlike traditional outbound methods that aim to reach a broad audience, ABM focuses on high-value prospects to create a more efficient and effective path to conversions. Here's how you can craft an ABM campaign that delivers superior results compared to static directories like Thomasnet:

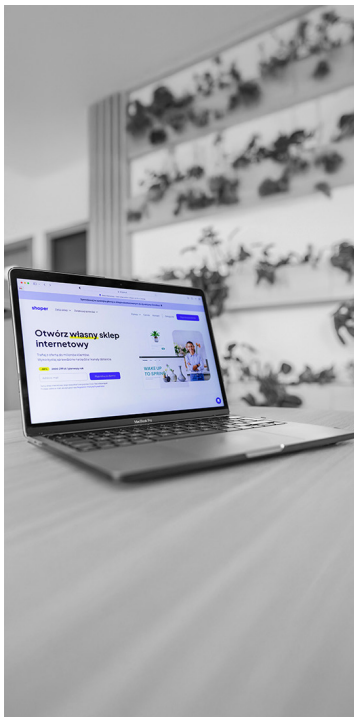
- **Define your Ideal Customer Profile (ICP):** Fortunately, ABM builds on many of the tools and insights you've already developed for inbound marketing. The first step of the process is to define your ICP by analyzing data from your best customers. Look at details like:
 - **Industry:** Are your key customers in manufacturing, automotive, aerospace, or another specific sector?
 - **Company size:** Are you targeting small-to-medium manufacturers or large enterprises with high production volumes?
 - **Revenue range:** What's the annual revenue range of companies that fit your ideal profile?
 - **Roles/job titles:** Identify decision-makers and influencers, such as plant managers, process engineers, or procurement officers.

Example:

If your top customers are mid-sized manufacturers of hospital equipment or food equipment with revenues between \$100M-\$500M, you will focus on targeting companies in those segments. You'll also want to target roles like operations managers or engineering directors who are involved in purchasing decisions.



- **Research target accounts:** Use AI data sources such as Seamless AI to pinpoint high-value accounts. Next, take a closer look at these accounts. What challenges are they facing? What goals are they trying to achieve? How do they make decisions? Understanding these details will help you craft messaging that showcases the value of your products.
- **Build a multi-channel engagement strategy:** To effectively connect with your prospects, it's important to engage them across multiple channels. Here's how to ensure your message reaches your target accounts.
 - **Use various platforms:** Use newsletters, blogs, videos, and whitepapers, to



Pro Tip:

With ABM content, you'll want to avoid using the same message for all contacts. Even if you're engaging with multiple buyers in the same organization, a personalized approach can be the difference in converting a lead into a sale.

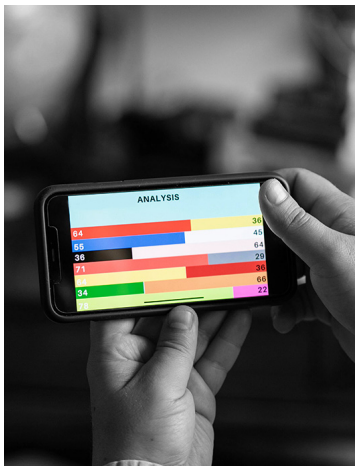


introduce your solutions to target accounts.

- **Create quality content:** Instead of pushing your products, focus on creating content that educates and informs. Examples include case studies, whitepapers, infographics, checklists, and videos.
- **Websites and landing pages:** Design landing pages with tailored messaging, case studies, and clear calls-to-action specific to each target account or industry.
- **Email campaigns:** Send personalized emails that speak to prospects' challenges and include relevant resources, such as case studies or event invitations.
- **Social media:** Use targeted LinkedIn ads and posts to drive key decision-makers to your landing pages or content.
- **Digital advertising:** Leverage account-based ads to guide your prospects to your website or contact information. Microsoft (Bing) ads can now target companies and job titles thanks to their strategic purchase of LinkedIn.

- **Use lead scoring to refine your ABM strategy:** A lead scoring system helps you identify and prioritize the prospects that are most likely to convert, so your team can focus on the best leads. By assigning points based on who the prospect is (external factors) and how they engage with your marketing (internal factors), you can create a clear picture of where each prospect stands in their buying journey. Here's how to build and use a lead-scoring system:

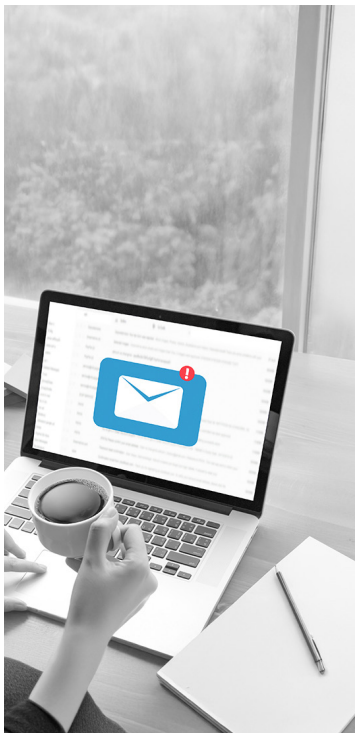
- **Use various platforms:** This is a simple, standardized way to rank your prospects.
- **Evaluate external factors:** These attributes help determine how well a lead fits your ideal customer profile (ICP).
- **Industry:** Add points (e.g., 10 points) if the lead is in one of your target industries.
- **Company size or revenue:** Assign additional points (e.g., 10 points) if their company matches your ICP criteria.
- **Role or title:** Decision-makers or key influencers can earn higher scores (e.g., 20 points).
- **Factor in internal engagement:** Track how actively the prospect interacts with your marketing efforts.
 - Reward actions like attending a webinar, downloading a white paper, or filling out a "Contact Us" form.
 - Give higher scores for repeat engagement, like multiple website visits or interacting with several landing pages.



- Subtract points if the lead becomes inactive for too long (e.g., no engagement within 90–120 days).
- **Create a grading scale to guide your next steps:** Once you've scored your leads, use a clear system to decide how to handle them.
 - Leads with scores **above 80** should go straight to sales for immediate follow-up.
 - Leads scoring **60–80** can stay in your ABM nurture program for further engagement.
 - Leads scoring **below 60** may not be worth pursuing and can be excluded from future outreach.

Pro Tip:

Perfection isn't the goal for your first lead-scoring system. As you gather data and insights, you'll have plenty of opportunities to refine it, focus on top prospects, and maximize your ROI.



- **Email Marketing:** This is one of the most effective tools for executing an efficient ABM strategy. It allows you to deliver highly personalized messaging directly to decision-makers and influencers within your target accounts. With email, you can nurture relationships, provide valuable content, and guide prospects through the buying process, all while continually optimizing your approach. Here's how email marketing can strengthen your ABM efforts:
 - **Personalized campaigns:** Craft tailored emails that address the unique challenges and needs of each target account, increasing engagement and building trust.
 - **Multiple touchpoints:** Use email to reach decision-makers at different stages of the buyer's journey, from awareness to consideration to purchase.
 - **Data-driven insights:** Track email performance, such as open rates, click-through rates, and responses, to identify which accounts are most engaged and ready for follow-up.
 - **Easy integration with other strategies:** Combine email marketing with other ABM tactics such as digital ads and content marketing to create a cohesive and consistent experience for your prospects.

How ABM Became a Superior Marketing Tool for Industrial Manufacturers

ABM is especially effective for manufacturing organizations because it zeroes in on high-value prospects while filtering out unqualified leads early in the process. This targeted approach allows your marketing and sales teams to focus their efforts on the contacts with the highest potential to convert. Here are the benefits of using ABM for lead generation:

- **Higher conversion rates:** Personalized campaigns build trust and position you as a go-to expert in your industry.
- **Shorter sales cycles:** By focusing only on qualified leads, you eliminate wasted time and resources.
- **Better resource allocation:** Your marketing and sales teams can focus their efforts on the accounts with the highest potential.
- **Sustainable growth:** ABM provides a repeatable framework for targeting and converting high-value leads.



Ways To Capture Lead Contact Information

Your shift from relying on legacy directories to tactics like ABM and inbound lead generation relies on one critical factor: acquiring accurate, verified contact information. Contact details are the currency of industrial marketing and are your key to connecting with qualified prospects, nurturing meaningful relationships, and converting leads.

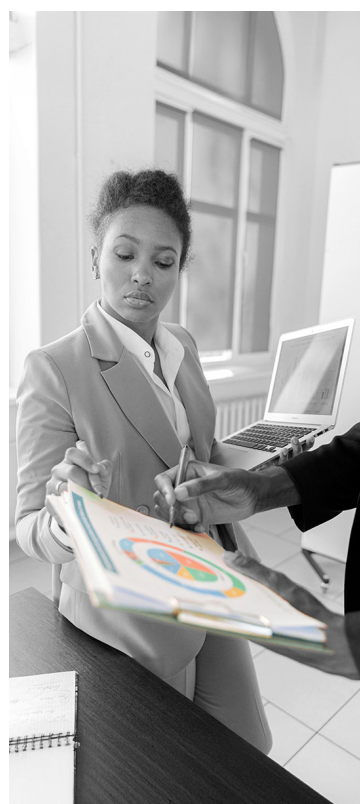
Wondering how to get your prospects to share their contact details? Here are the top three methods manufacturers use to collect accurate and actionable information:

- **Computer-Aided Design (CAD) files:** When prospects are in the decision-making process, CAD drawings and configurable components often provide the answers they need to make a confident purchase. Offering these resources in exchange for an email address not only supports their buying journey but also helps you acquire the contact information you can use to continue the conversation.
- **E-Commerce platforms or online product catalogs:** These resources are valuable to prospects during the search and evaluation phases of their buying journey. Requiring sign-up for access allows you to identify highly engaged leads who are actively exploring your product line, enabling your sales team to focus their efforts on the most promising prospects.
- **Gated content:** Requiring contact information to access eBooks, whitepapers, or case studies is an effective way to gather insights about potential leads. For example, you might start by offering an infographic with industry statistics in exchange for an email address. If the lead downloads a more in-depth resource such as research findings or use cases, you could request additional details, like their company size. A third piece of gated content could focus on uncovering the lead's specific interests or goals. Each of these steps helps to reveal the most valuable targets for your ABM efforts.



Technologies That Support Lead Generation For Manufacturing Companies

Lead generation has evolved from a manual activity of collecting business cards and building a contact list into a digital, highly efficient process. Modern technologies that support lead generation include the following:



- **Google Analytics** metrics contain a treasure trove of insights about which inbound lead generation tactics are building traffic and conversion:
 - Channels, including direct traffic, organic searches, paid search ads, social media channels, referrals, or emails, and which specific sources drive engagement.
 - Landing pages, including understanding which of the sources noted above, drove traffic to the page.
- **Anonymous website visitor tracking software** like Site Sonar can reveal your website visitors' details, such as the company name, website, address, and phone number. Many of these software applications have add-on features that link visitors' company profiles with specific contact information. The platforms harvest additional information through resources like LinkedIn, ZoomInfo, or Seamless AI. You'll gain information about your website traffic and can use it to expand your outbound lead generation activities, including ABM, to prospects with similar profiles.
- **Intent Data** includes information about web users' behavior that signals buyer intent. Companies gather data from various sources, which helps sales and marketing teams identify in-market or active buyers. While they don't provide actual names, they send you an encrypted list that you share with Google or Facebook for direct marketing purposes. Pearl Diver and 6sense are two of the top intent data providers.



- **Marketing automation** software like HubSpot streamlines your inbound and ABM lead generation activities. The platforms provide the following features and benefits:
 - A centralized location for your marketing data about prospects, customer interactions, and reactions to your outreach efforts. With marketing automation, you can easily segment your leads based on past behavior and send them the message that best aligns with where they are in their buying journey.
 - A user-friendly interface for creating and managing your content and retargeting workflows. These can help you create:
 - ─ Emails
 - ─ Landing pages
 - ─ Contact forms
 - ─ Social media posts and campaigns
 - Many of the platforms enable CRO, allowing you to set up tests of your content and provide you with robust metrics about your efforts' outcomes.

- **Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems** like Salesforce are technologies that help you connect with customers efficiently to improve company profitability. While any company can benefit from a CRM, B2B organizations with longer selling cycles or upgrade paths find CRM solutions useful.
 - A CRM system gives you a centralized platform for:
 - ─ storing customer and lead contact details
 - ─ identifying and quantifying sales opportunities
 - ─ recording customer service issues
 - ─ managing inbound and ABM marketing activities
 - ─ creating a record of every interaction you have with a lead or a customer
 - With a CRM tool, you're able to focus on your relationship with a customer throughout their lifecycle with you. You'll have a record of all the activities that helped transform a lead from a prospect to a qualified lead to winning the business. You'll also know what you've done to provide additional support or ongoing service after a deal closes.
 - A CRM solution gives marketing visibility into the leads that are converting and becoming more engaged with your company. Responding to insights from the CRM system will help your marketing team prioritize leads. Prospects more likely to convert will shift to sales, while those that need more nurturing receive additional outreach. The results are improved conversion rates and higher sales revenue. Because insights are available in real-time, marketers can adjust activities quickly to focus on what works, increasing the efficiency and profitability of programs.

Incorporating these technologies into your manufacturing lead generation process will help you monitor and measure the outcomes of your interactions with contacts. You won't have to search through emails to find your latest correspondence or double-book appointments. With a consistent, automated, and centralized approach to lead generation and nurturing, you'll stay in sync with your prospects' buying journeys and successfully accelerate your company's growth.



Employment Marketing For Manufacturers

To find success in industrial manufacturing, revenue growth and workforce growth must consistently be in lockstep. Achieving this balance requires a steady pipeline of talented candidates so your team can scale to meet growing demands. But in today's competitive labor market, finding and retaining top talent can be just as challenging as generating new leads.

That's where employment marketing comes in. This proactive recruitment strategy helps manufacturers target and engage with skilled employee prospects through personalized outreach and messaging. By building a stronger employer brand and connecting with high-value candidates, employment marketing ensures your business is prepared for the future.

Unlike many B2B agencies, Marketing Metrics Corp. specializes in this often-overlooked service—uniquely positioning us to help manufacturers generate leads and grow their workforce simultaneously. Here's how we helped one of our job shop clients grow from 70 to 125 employees in a very tight labor market:

- **Targeted candidate outreach:** Just as ABM focuses on high-value accounts, you can use the same strategy to identify and engage top talent. Build ideal candidate profiles (ICPs) based on your company's needs and target individuals with the right skills and experience.
- **Personalized messaging:** Create customized career pages and marketing campaigns that highlight why your company is the best fit for candidates. Tailor your messaging based on their career goals, industry experience, or expertise.
- **Showcase your brand:** Use ABM best practices to position your company as an innovative and reliable employer. Share content like employee testimonials, behind-the-scenes videos, or thought leadership pieces that highlight your company culture and values.
- **Advertising:** Advertising your job openings on LinkedIn, Google, Bing, and Facebook. Advertise or boost your job listing towards the top on job boards such as Indeed.
- **Engage passive candidates:** Like nurturing prospects in sales, employment marketing tactics allow you to maintain a relationship with passive job seekers by providing valuable insights about your company over time.
- **Data-driven recruitment:** You can use analytics to track candidate engagement, monitor responses to job postings, and analyze career page traffic. These insights help you identify and prioritize the most promising candidates for your organization.



Conclusion

Manufacturers looking to move away from failing static directories like ThomasNet can adopt modern lead generation strategies to maintain a steady flow of high-value prospects. Here are some key factors to remember:

- A combination of inbound and outbound activities makes sense for most manufacturing organizations since the selling cycle is long and potential customers need nurturing along the buyer journey.
- Lead generation strategies should align with your customers' purchasing habits and your company's growth goals. Your primary messaging must focus on solving your customers' problems.
- With data-driven strategies like inbound marketing and ABM, you can use targeted advertising to reach the right prospects and refine your content approach.

Let's use the lenses of inbound vs. outbound and buyer journey to review our top 10 ways to generate leads for your manufacturing business.

- You'll see that several of the tactics are valuable for both inbound and outbound strategies. For example, online advertising can act as a magnet for leads or can push a relevant message about your products out to prospects.
- Activities can have multiple functions throughout the buyer journey, with content designed to meet your prospects' needs during the decision process.

Start with your growth targets, set your lead strategy, and outline the tactical plan for reaching your prospects. The power of digital content and account-based marketing will accelerate your lead generation efforts and deliver the revenue (and ROI) your business needs to thrive.

Top 10 Lead Generation Tactics	Strategy		Lead Capture Activity	Phase in the Buyer Journey
	Inbound	Outbound		
Create content using videos, blogs, case studies, and testimonials.	✓		Subscription Form	Need Identification/Search
Optimize your website for SEO and conversions.	✓		Contact Us Form	All
Send emails with product news and calls-to-action that take prospects to a web landing page where you can collect contact information.	✓	✓	Product Order Form/ Contact Us Form	Search/Design/ Evaluation/Shortlist of Solutions
Develop online advertising that targets buyers who visit your website.	✓	✓	Get More Info/Get a Quote Form	All
Host a webinar that addresses a topic relevant to your prospects, and capture attendee contact information.	✓		Registration Form	Evaluation/Shortlist of Solutions
Offer prospective customers useful insights through downloadable resources like infographics, white papers, or e-books if they provide contact details.	✓	✓	Download Form	Search/Design
Test your digital communications like emails and landing pages to identify the messages that get more leads as part of your conversion rate optimization (CRO) process.	✓		All Forms/Headlines/ Images	All
Use tech tools like LinkedIn Sales Navigator to help you find accounts and leads.		✓	Email/Phone Call	All
Identify and then target prospects who could provide a significant boost to your business by using account-based marketing.	✓	✓	Account-Based Marketing (ABM)	All
Nurture prospective customers using marketing automation to connect with them throughout their journey.	✓	✓	Contact Us/Product Order/Get a Quote	All

For more information about developing a lead generation strategy or revisiting your current tactics, contact the [Marketing Metrics Corp. team](#). We'll partner with you to create a plan focused on revenue and profitability, generating higher quality leads that shorten your sales cycle.

Marketing Metrics Corp is a full-service digital marketing agency. Our unique ability to leverage sales, marketing, and technology has helped hundreds of manufacturing companies accelerate their growth.



www.marketingmetricscorp.com/



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