

51 TIPS FOR DOUBLING YOUR LEAD GENERATION WITH MARKETING CONTENT

*A “Quick-Implementation” Guide for Marketers of
Lab Equipment and High-Tech*

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Dear science marketer looking for more leads...

Is it really possible to double the leads generated from your marketing content?

The short answer is “Yes”.

Now, while there is no magic bullet for increasing lead generation, there are a few simple and straightforward direct marketing fundamentals you can use to give yourself and your company the best chance possible.

By applying these proven fundamentals to both your content and the material used to promote it, you can increase your conversion and response, and generate more leads. The little things do count!

This guide will show you how to optimise all of your communications so they generate a higher response.... so more people actually download and read your content.

Specifically, you'll learn not only how to optimise your marketing content (application notes, white papers, articles, webinars etc.) for lead generation, but also the emails, landing pages, direct mail letters, and advertisements you use to promote this content.

Put all this together and you'll soon be writing marketing communications that become profitable lead generating tools for your products.

Of course, you can still use your content for other purposes like nurturing and product evaluation. But learning how to write them for lead generation is the first step in the process.

Anyway, here are 51 tips you can use to increase the number of qualified leads you get from your marketing content.

Wishing you all the best for your future marketing campaigns.



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Want to boost response rates, generate more leads, and increase sales?

Here are proven ways to optimise your marketing content...

Yes, marketing content can be used for more than just generating leads. But to keep this guide focused, and to save you precious reading time, I'm going to talk only about lead generation here. Of course, many of tips below will help with other goals too, but the focus is on lead gen, since this is what many marketers cite as one of their biggest challenges.

So here are 51 tips and ideas you can use to optimise your content for lead generation:

- 1. Give your content an interesting and benefit-oriented title.** Boring titles are one of the biggest mistakes made in content used for lead generation. The fastest way to improve your title is to include a benefit. For example, look at the title of the following article in the optogenetics field: *"Afraid of the Dark? Conquering Fear with Optogenetics"*. Also consider using action words and numbers. For example: *"7 Questions to Ask When Choosing an Optogenetics Tool"*. Benefit headlines/titles increase downloads and interest because now you're enticing the prospect. They know exactly what they'll gain from reading your content. Curiosity also works well here.
- 2. Include an abstract.** An abstract should be included to tell readers what they're getting from your content. Alternatively, in the introduction, have a paragraph at the end that summarises the piece. Most people want to know what they're getting from a long technical document before they invest time reading it.
- 3. For lead generation, the best topic is a solution to a specific problem.** The best topic for a lead generation piece – such as a white paper - is a new and better solution to a specific scientific problem. You'll begin by highlighting this problem, then talk about what has been done before to try and solve it. Talk about why these methods failed and then position your solution as a better alternative.

- 4. Make sure it's not a sales pitch.** The body copy of your content should not mention your company or products. Only the call-to-action at the end does this. Instead, it talks about the technology, problem, or field in general terms. Bottom line: mentioning the product or company in the body copy makes your white paper, application note, etc. look like a sales brochure. And it'll undermine your credibility.
- 5. Don't write your white papers or application notes like academic papers.** This is another big mistake I see with science and technology marketing content. Marketers of scientific instrumentation see their content as an excuse to regurgitate reams of technical data. Remember, for lead generation, you don't want your prospects reading huge amounts of scientific data. Technical specifics are best used towards the end of the sales cycle, when it comes to evaluating different solutions.
- 6. Your content should be helpful.** Yes, this is obvious. Your content should help scientific and high-tech buyers solve a problem, make a decision, or understand an issue. Make sure it contains useful, helpful, and relevant information. One way of doing this is to ask about the common challenges and problems your buyers face. Then use your content to address these problems.
- 7. Target a specific stage in the sales cycle.** Make sure you're crystal clear on what stage of the sales cycle you're writing your content for. A white paper, article, or application note used as a product evaluation guide won't be much good to you for generating interest and leads at the top of your funnel.
- 8. Narrow down the readership of your content to one target audience.** Content and marketing copy written for one audience works best. Otherwise you risk writing something that doesn't appeal to anyone. And it's important you're specific here. Don't just say "scientific buyers". Dig deep into exactly who will be reading the document. Example: *scientists who wish to study ionic liquids for electrochemical storage, but who may not be aware of the potential of atomic force microscopy.*

9. **Avoid putting the product name in the title.** For lead generation purposes, you don't want to have a product name (or your company name) in the title. Doing so will make your document look like a sales pitch or brochure, and you will lose a lot of potential leads.
10. **Consider putting the job function in the title.** Putting the job function in the title increases the quality of leads generated and attracts more attention, because you're specifying whom the piece of content is for. In other words, you're selecting the audience. For example, an application note on using *in-situ* liquid-cell TEM to study electrochemical dendrite growth for Li-ion batteries could have the subtitle, "*A guide for Li-Ion battery research scientists*".
11. **Have a call-to-action at the end.** You don't want to go to the trouble of writing a piece of content and then not have your reader take the next step. So figure out what you want your buyers to do after reading and tell them to do it! Maybe you want them to schedule a product demo, call for more information, visit a landing page or your contact page, or visit your booth at an upcoming tradeshow. Whatever it is, make sure you mention it at end of (and throughout) your content.
12. **Make it easy to find your content on your website.** In addition to a dedicated landing page, make it easy to find your content on your company website. Don't bury it deep within your site's pages. Ideally, have a "resources" or "case studies" or "white papers" tab on your homepage navigation bar. If your prospects can't find your content, they can't download and read it, can they?
13. **Promote your content aggressively.** It's odd how many scientific firms create a piece of content, send out a few tweets about it, and then stop. For every piece of content you create, you need to have a plan to get it in front of as many potential customers as possible. Promote it in your newsletter, in industry newsletters, send out a press release, do a Google AdWords campaign, and give it away at tradeshow.

- 14. Repurpose your content for more mileage.** Your content can be sliced and diced into other forms. For example, you can divide a white paper into a series of blog posts, each focusing on a specific section of the document (the problem, what's been done before, the solution etc.). It can be repurposed into an article to be published in a trade journal. You could then repurpose it into a slide deck or webinar. Bottom line: make sure your content isn't a one-hit-wonder. So think 1-to-10, or repurpose each piece of content into 10 other pieces. And since you've already created the material, this doesn't require a lot of extra work on your part.

- 15. Measure your results.** Direct marketing is all about testing and measuring. You need to measure the effectiveness of your content so you can tweak and make your campaigns better over time. This means measuring clicks, click-through-rates, opens, downloads, revenue generated, open rate, cost-per-lead etc.

Landing pages

The copy on the landing pages you use to promote your content should be minimal. But don't take it for granted. Small changes in copy, format and design can result in significant increases in conversion.

- 16. Brand every landing page.** Your company logo should be visible on each landing page. The top of the page is ideal. But it can be placed anywhere, as long as it's clearly visible. This way, visitors instantly know who's offering the content. This is important because they want to see well-known brands they trust. And they want to know they've landed on the right page.

- 17. Make sure the key messages are restated.** The headline and bullets you use in emails, letters or ads promoting your content should be reused on the landing page. This provides continuity between the email/ad and the landing page, so the reader will know they've come to the right place. You'll also be repeating the same ideas they responded to in the ad/email, which helps to reinforce your message.

- 18. Use the word “FREE” wherever possible.** Think “FREE” is a cheesy, low-class thing to say in your communications? Think again. “Free” is one of the most persuasive words at your disposal. Use it in your landing page copy, emails, and ads to increase response. Don’t assume your prospects will know your content is free.
- 19. Leave out any navigation buttons.** A focused landing page works best. Navigation links will only distract the reader and increase the chance they’ll click away. I recommend checking out LeadPages. They’re pretty much the industry leader in clean, response boosting landing pages. Also, don’t send prospects to your website homepage for the same reasons. They should always be sent to a landing page with a clear “next step”.
- 20. Simplify the form.** Make sure the sign-up form doesn’t have too many fields. The more fields the prospect has to fill out, the less likely they are to complete the form. The fields *Name, Organization and Email* are enough. If you need more fields, consider setting those three as required and the rest optional.
- 21. Test, test, test.** You should also do A/B split tests for individual page elements. For example, test 2 different titles. Test the image. Test the copy. Obviously only test one thing at a time, but always be optimizing the page so the conversion improves over time.
- 22. Never leave them guessing.** Make sure the call-to-action is spelled out clearly. Ideally, repeat the call-to-action twice on a short-form landing page. For example, before you list any bullet points, the call-to-action might be: *“Click the button below to download this free 8-page application note”*. Then restate the call-to-action again on the download button: *“Download the app note now”*
- 23. Avoid clutter.** Write as much copy on the page as needed. But no more. Keep the copy short and focused. People skim when reading online, so the landing page should be easy to read. Use bullet points as much as possible.

Emails

Scientific companies use email to send announcements, newsletters, special offers, seminar and tradeshow invitations, catalogue updates etc. The points below deal with direct response email for promoting your content. In other words, emails that get your readers to click on the link, visit your landing page, and download your application note, white paper, webinar, etc.

- 24. Give the email a strong subject line.** The email subject line needs to be interesting. It can make or break your email, because if the email isn't opened, then it won't be read and nobody will download your content. When coming up with subject lines, brainstorm a list of at least 10 (ideally, as many as you can think of) and then narrow it down to the best one. Like great headlines, great subject lines can state a key benefit or arouse curiosity.
- 25. 5 proven ideas for email subject lines.**
- Ask a question
 - State the offer
 - Arouse their curiosity
 - Ask for immediate action
 - Highlight a great benefit
- 26. Include the URL at the top of the email.** Don't just put the landing page URL at the bottom of the email, at the end of the copy. Put a link to the landing page at the start too. Not everyone will read the whole email so having the link at the top and bottom increases the number of readers who will actually click it. This is a useful rule of thumb in general. The more times you give the link or ask for the action, the higher the chance of someone taking that action.
- 27. Start strong.** Don't start the email with scientific data or the technical features of a specific model. Start strong by talking about how the technology in general is advancing scientific knowledge. For example, you could talk about how the underlying technology of your TEM sample preparation product line is advancing materials characterisation. Starting with a great lead (opening paragraph) draws your readers into the rest of your email. Of course, starting strong applies to all of your communications.

- 28. Include a headline in your email.** This is optional. But it can improve response because once the email is opened (as a result of a strong subject line), a great headline will ensure your prospects will read the rest of the copy. Or at least scan it. In this way, having a strong subject line and a strong headline in the email can help increase readership.
- 29. Always say “click here”.** Like all great calls-to-action, the words “click here” tell the reader exactly what they should do and doesn’t leave them guessing. This is preferred over hot-linking other words. A call-to-action should always tell someone what to do, how to do it, and why they should do it.
- 30. Get straight to the point.** Your emails need to be short and they need to get to the point quickly. Inboxes are overflowing and your readers don’t have time to read long waffling introductions that don’t interest them. In print materials, you have the luxury of building suspense over several paragraphs. Not so with email. So get to the point within the first few sentences.
- 31. State the offer early and more than once.** Make sure you include the offer (in this case, your content) within the first few sentences of your email along with the URL link. Don’t make your readers scroll down to see the offer, because sometimes they won’t. Also mention the offer at the end of the email. Mentioning it twice increases the chance of your readers clicking the link. A great place to repeat the offer is the P.S. section.
- 32. Never trick a prospect into opening an email.** Don’t use teaser subject lines to entice a reader to open your email. Instead, use a benefit-oriented subject line that ties in directly with your offer and the email copy. Also, avoid clever phrases and cryptic word use.
- 33. Write for the skimmers.** Very few people read online or email copy in detail. Most will just skim through it or scan it. So make sure it’s reader friendly. Write short sentences and paragraphs. Leave plenty of space and don’t be afraid to use one-sentence paragraphs. Write subheads that give the gist of the email without the reader having to wade through everything.

Print Advertising

- 34. Make your ad a direct-response ad.** In this case, you want them to visit the landing page or call a sales rep and request a copy of your new content. Now, most people reading this will think: “hey, we already include our contact details in our ads. What else do we need to do”? If this is you, then you need to make some changes with your next ad. Specifically, tell your readers to do something.
- 35. Have a dedicated phone number or landing page URL.** Don’t just direct your readers to your website homepage. Too many distractions. Having a landing page or phone number specific to your ad makes it easy to track response.
- 36. Remember the call-to-action.** Like everything we’ve talked about above, your ad needs a call-to-action. And the call-to-action and copy on both the landing page and the ad should be the same. Tell your readers exactly what you want them to do, how they should do it, and why.
- 37. Make sure the headline is at the top of the ad.** Sounds obvious, but I’ve seen ads with the headline in the middle and the company logo and slogan on top. And use short, snappy headlines with the words “Free”, “Now”, “New”, or “Finally.”
- 38. Don’t be afraid to use the word “free”.** In this case, say that your content is free to download and read. This was mentioned above in the Landing Pages section. And it applies to most marketing communications. If it’s free, say so!
- 39. Don’t put your physical address in the ad.** It’s a waste of space. Unless you’re including a physical response mechanism that needs to be posted (unlikely), leave it out. For the same reason, don’t use more than one image. You have limited space for text, so you need to make the most of it. But including one image of the PDF can be effective, as it makes the offer concrete.

- 40. Don't hide your offer.** It belongs where your readers can see it. If you have a free application note to give away, then go for it in the headline. Let your prospects know immediately about the app note and what they'll get from reading it.
- 41. Use small ads for lead generation.** Small ads work well for lead generation because you're just looking for prospects to raise their hand (by downloading your content). So there's no need to go all in with a full-page ad, and you'll save money. Once you've got people's names, you can follow up with more elaborate marketing campaigns and advertising.

Direct mail letters

Direct mail is a great tactic for promoting long-form content like white papers. Sadly, it's also an underused tactic in the scientific industries, as online methods such as email and social media dominate. Keep the following points in mind when using direct mail to promote your content:

- 42. List selection.** Make sure the list you're mailing to is the right one. Sounds obvious, but list selection is the most important aspect of direct mail. A poorly written letter sent to a great list will do better than a great letter mailed to a poor list. For promoting content, the ideal list is comprised of those prospects most likely to be interested in the topic discussed. One way to do this is to make a list of prospects who have responded to ads about similar content within the past 6 months.
- 43. Inject some personality.** Direct mail and other marketing tactics work best when they can be personalised. Consider including the individual names of your mailing list in the direct mail piece you're sending out.
- 44. Use VIP seminars.** Have a smaller list of key prospects you want to contact. When they download your content, you can send them special invitations to attend executive briefings, or presentations of papers that highlight key findings in scientific research. You could also invite them to visit your booth at the next exhibit.

- 45. Add urgency.** Direct marketing is a tactic that aims to get a response right away. To do this, you need to give your reader a reason to act now, not later. You could encourage your readers to download your content by offering a free webinar (based on the content) to the first 100 people who respond.
- 46. Avoid a one-hit-wonder.** You can get a better response by mailing more than once. A printed direct mail piece that invites potential buyers to download your content can be sent a second and third time to those who didn't respond the first time around. Even better, you could send different pieces of content for additional mailings. For instance, you could start with a postcard and then send the full invitation package.
- 47. Use a headline above the salutation.** Once again, the headline is critical. Put a headline above the salutation and follow the advice given in the above points. Namely, write a benefit headline and consider starting it with the words "Now", "How to", "Why", "Finally", "Discover", "Introducing" or "Announcing".
- 48. Follow up with a great lead.** After the headline, make sure the opening paragraph (the lead) is enthusiastic and mentions the content along with what the reader will get from reading it. Don't be boring here J. The lead is not the place for dry technical features or scientific data.
- 49. Use the right tone.** In general, a friendly conversational tone is best when writing a direct mail letter. Even when you're targeting scientists, try and refrain from using stiff, formal language. This makes the letter sound more personal and your reader is more likely to read all the copy and download whatever content you're promoting.
- 50. Be sure to add a P.S.** This is an effective way of throwing in another call-to-action in your letter. Postscripts get very high readership. In many cases, readers will skip the rest of the letter and jump down to the P.S. So get the important information in there.

- 51. Don't forget the call-to-action.** Yes, I know I've mentioned the call-to-action several times. But it really is that important! The call-to-action should be mentioned several times throughout the letter (not just once). Twice should be considered the bare minimum. For example, you could include it after the lead, after the bullet points highlighting the features and benefits, at the end, and in the postscript. The more times you ask your readers to download your content, the more likely they are to do it.

Now it's time for your next step...



Colm O'Regan is a scientist and copywriter who helps lab equipment and high-tech companies create engaging marketing content. He also publishes and sells books, e-books, newsletters, reports, and other information on copywriting and content marketing for science and technology.

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