

ESSENTIAL LEAD GENERATION TIPS & TECHNIQUES

FOR MANUFACTURERS





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Generating large numbers of high-quality leads is critical for every manufacturer. A successful lead generation engine is what keeps the funnel full of prospects for a wide array of manufacturing companies. Surprisingly, only one in 10 manufacturers feel their lead generation campaigns are effective. What gives?

"LEADS ARE THE METRIC THAT WE RELY ON. BECAUSE LEADS MEAN MONEY."

- KIPP BODNAR, HubSpot Chief Marketing Officer

To compete today, manufactures need a strong digital presence and a way to reach the most qualified leads. There can be a lot of moving parts in any lead generation campaign and often times it's difficult to know which parts need fine tuning. To demystify this process, we'll expose the top 30 tips and techniques manufacturers should use to reach their audience and build successful sales funnels that keep qualified leads coming in.

So what goes into a best-of-class lead generation engine? First, we'll take a look at the mechanics of high-performing lead generation campaigns.



THE MECHANICS OF LEAD GENERATION

Before we dive into the 30 techniques, we should first cover the mechanics of lead generation. The best lead generation campaigns contain most, if not all, of these components. From a tactical perspective, a manufacturer needs four crucial elements to make inbound lead generation happen.



OFFER

An offer is a piece of content that's perceived as being high in value. Offers include ebooks, white papers, free consultations, coupons and product demonstrations.



CALL-TO-ACTION

A call-to-action (CTA) is either text, an image or a button that links directly to a landing page so people can find and download your offer.



LANDING PAGE

A landing page, unlike normal website pages, is a customized page that contains information about one particular offer, and a form to



FORM

You can't capture leads without forms. Forms will collect contact information from a visitor in exchange for an offer.

The techniques and tips in this guide will cover each of these elements so that each component is fully optimized to help you generate the most leads for your manufacturing company.

CHAPTER 1 CREATING IRRESISTIBLE OFFERS

Yes is one of the most powerful words in the human language. And if you think about all the things we do as manufacturers, it's ultimately to get people to say "yes" to our offers. When an offer is exclusive, scarce, or in high demand, it becomes more desirable. Whether they are white papers, industry knowledge, sales promotions or downloads, these irresistible elements can overcome a lead's typical friction, doubt or concern.

Why do these elements work? Because they trigger a physiological reaction that makes an offer more valuable. People need to perceive the value of your offer to be greater than what you're asking for in return. The higher the perception of value, the more irresistible the offer. So how do you create irresistible offers?

GLAD YOU ASKED...



#1 USE THE ELEMENT OF SCARCITY

If you look at the principle of supply and demand, you'll notice that when supply is limited, demand goes up.

Scarcity has a psychological influence on us, making us want something even more if there isn't enough to go around.

Scarcity is great because it creates a fear of shortage, and thus a sense of urgency.

Limited-Time Offers

Limited time offers are among the most popular in the scarcity category. Just think about your average car dealership. Practically every commercial is a limited time deal. "Get 0% financing before it's gone!"

Limited-Quantity Offers

When something is of limited quantity, it suddenly becomes more unique or exclusive. In some studies, limited quantity or supply offers have outperformed limited-time offers. Why? Because it's hard to tell when an offer of limited quantity will suddenly become unavailable, while a time-based offer has a known end time. Limited quantity offers are great for not only getting people to say "yes" to your offer, but to avoid procrastination completely.

Limited-Time and Limited-Quantity

Groupon is the perfect example of using both tactics. All Groupon deals end within a certain time frame, and they limit the number of people who can buy a Groupon. **That's a powerful combination.** The site also packages these scarcity tactics with discounting, which is another great value-add, especially for manufacturing marketing.



#2 THE BANDWAGON EFFECT

It's a natural tendency for humans to copy one another, even without realizing it—we like to be a part of tribes and social communities. So when we notice our social circle is doing one thing, we tend to follow suit. One great way to make an offer more valuable is to show that other people are participating in that offer.

Proof in Numbers

When possible, a great way to indicate how awesome an offer is to mention the number of people who have purchased, downloaded, signed up or donated. Some examples include:

- Webinars: When you promote a webinar on Facebook, state how many people have signed up.
- Blog Subscriptions: Similarly, under the "subscribe" module on your website, indicate how many blog subscribers you have. This is proof that it's a highly trustworthy and popular blog people should follow.
- Conferences: State how many people attended some of the biggest manufacturing events you attended.

JUST MAKE SURE YOUR CLAIMS ARE NOT ONLY TRUE, BUT *BELIEVABLE*.



#3 LEVERAGE NEWSJACKING

When something is buzz-worthy, it creates high demand. In situations like this, you can align offers with "what's hot." Companies will often leverage newsjacking for this type of technique and it works very well for offers, too.

As an example, back in 2013 people couldn't stop talking about Pinterest. HubSpot, a developer and marketer of software products, capitalized on this craze by creating the first Pinterest ebook for business owners, "How to Use Pinterest for Business". It quickly became one of HubSpot's most successful ebooks with more than 125,000 downloads to date. Because it was the first and only ebook available on Pinterest, and learning how to use Pinterest for marketing was in high demand, it made the offer more unique and thus more irresistible—that's the power of leveraging both timing and popularity!





#4 FOCUS ON CREATING AN AMAZING TITLE

Brian Halligan, HubSpot CEO and co-founder, once said that "you can have a great offer with a bad title and no one will download it. But if you have an amazing title, suddenly everyone wants it." Yes, people do judge a book by its cover. If your offer is a piece of content, such as a white paper, ebook or presentation, put effort into creating an amazing title.

As an experiment, we changed the title of an ebook and ran an A/B test to see which one would perform better. We took the original title The Productivity Handbook for Busy manufacturers and changed it to 7 Apps That Will Change the Way You Do Marketing.

Name	Views	Conversion Rate	Submissions	First Time Submissions	Customers
7 Apps That Will Change the Way You Do Marketing	37,636	51.7%	19,465	2,716	8
The Productivity Handbook for Busy Marketers	7,233	32.3%	2,333	310	0

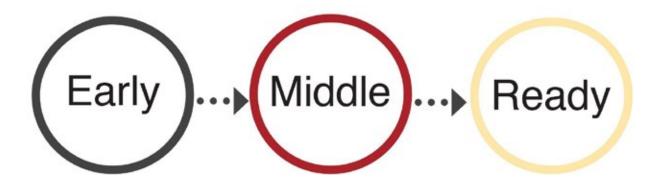
As you can see, the revised version outperformed the original by **776%** at generating leads (first-time submissions). Not only that, but it resulted in more customers as well. If you're struggling to come up with the perfect headline, try using the Headline Analyzer Tool by Advanced Marketing Institute or read 7 Proven Headlines that Convert.



#5 CREATE OFFERS FOR DIFFERENT BUYING STAGES

The most common offer on most websites is "Contact Us." Sure, you want all of your prospects to talk to sales, but not everyone is ready. As you know, buyers are more likely to do their own research before even engaging with a sales rep. And, every prospect is at a different stage of exploration. Some may need more education than others. That's why it's important to develop different offers that speak to buyers at different stages.

Someone at the top of the buying cycle may be more interested in an informational piece like a guide or ebook, whereas someone more committed at the bottom of the cycle might be more interested in a free trial or demo. You don't need to pick and choose; create offers for each phase, and include a primary and secondary CTA to these offers on various pages throughout your site.





#6 AVOID CORPORATE GOBBLEDYGOOK

A professional image is necessary but you still want to avoid the dreaded corporate gobbledygook. What is gobbledygook you ask? Great question.

These are jargon terms and phrases that have been over-used and abused rendering them meaningless (you'll find them mostly in the high-tech industry, but everyone—including manufacturers—is an offender at one point or another). These words are meant to add more emphasis of a particular subject but instead they make your eyes roll.

Avoid these words when describing your offers:

- Next Generation
- Flexible
- Robust
- Scalable
- Easy to use
- Cutting edge
- Ground breaking
- Best of breed
- Mission critical

To learn more, download <u>The Gobbledygook Manifesto</u> ebook by David Meerman Scott.



#7 USE HIGH-VALUE OFFER FORMATS

Not all offers are created equal. Some "formats" of offers perform better than others at converting leads. For example, what's more valuable, a white paper or an ebook?

Below are the type of offers, in order of performance, that generate the most amount of leads for manufacturers.

- Ebooks, Guides, or Kits (multiple offers packaged together)
- Templates or Presentations
- Research, Reports, White Papers
- Live Webinars
- On-Demand Videos
- Blogs (that include offers in the navigation or sidebar)
- Blog Posts (if there's a CTA in the post)
- Middle-of-the-Funnel Offers: Demo Requests,
 Contact Sales, RFPs, etc. (more sales-ready offers)

IT'S IMPORTANT TO TEST DIFFERENT TYPES OF OFFERS WITH YOUR AUDIENCE TO DETERMINE WHAT WORKS FOR YOU. WHILE EBOOKS SCORE HIGH ON OUR LIST, YOU MAY FIND THAT REPORTS, VIDEOS OR OTHER FORMATS DO BETTER.

CHAPTER 2 CALLS-TO-ACTIONS THAT ROCK

Calls-to-action (CTAs) are the secret sauce to driving people to your offers. If your CTAs aren't effective at capturing people's attention and persuading them to click, then your offers become useless.

CTAs can be used on product pages (non-landing pages), in display ads, email, social media, direct mail and pretty much anywhere you can market your offer.

But not all CTAs are created equal. In a world where every brand is fighting for viewers' attention, it's critical that prospects choose your offer over your competitors.

LET'S CREATE CTAS THAT ROCK!



#8 PLACE YOUR CTA WHERE THE EYE CAN SEE

Calls-to-action do best "above the fold"—or, the web page space visible to a visitor without having to scroll down.

Studies have proven that anything "below the fold" will only be viewed by 50% of people who visit your page. Doubling the number of times your CTAs are viewed can significantly increase your lead count.

Notice the placement of the primary CTA on the FreshBooks home page. Two CTA buttons that state "Try it Free for 30 Days" stand out above the fold.





#9 CLARITY BEATS PERSUASION

Often times, companies will put more focus on being clever than clear. Your call-to-action must clearly convey what the offer is, and state exactly what the visitor will get if they click on it. The CTA button should be five words or less and begin with an action-oriented verb like "Download," "Register" or "Get."

THE CTA HEADLINE AND SUPPORTING COPY SHOULD ALSO CLEARLY CONVEY AT LEAST ONE COMPELLING BENEFIT.

Manage your connections without the busywork.

Get deeper insights on every lead, monitor deals, and stay organized with ease.

GET STARTED FREE

Already using the CRM? Log in here.

Bring your marketing team, tools, and data together, all in one place.

REQUEST A DEMO



#10 USE CONTRAST TO MAKE CTAS STAND OUT

A call-to-action is meant to stand out, so if your CTA blends in too much with your site design, no one will notice it. You want as many eyeballs to land on that CTA as possible, so use contrasting colors to make it stand out, and more importantly, use design to make it clear that it's a clickable call-to-action.

#11 LINK YOUR CTA TO A DEDICATED LANDING PAGE

This tip might seem minor, but it's incredible how often businesses miss this opportunity. Calls-to-action are meant to send visitors to a dedicated landing page where they receive a specific offer. Do not use CTAs to drive people to your home page. Even if your CTA is about your brand or product (and perhaps not an offer like a download), still send them to a targeted landing page that's relevant to what they are looking for. If you have the opportunity to use a CTA, send them to a page that will convert them into a lead.



#12 PROMOTE OFFERS ON PRODUCT PAGES

CTAs shouldn't be one size fits all. If your company offers various products or services, you may want to consider creating a different offer for each of them. Then you can place CTAs linking to each offer on the website pages that are most relevant to that offer.

#13 THANK YOU PAGES ARE GREAT CTA REAL ESTATE

Even if someone completes a form on your website (meaning they've converted as a lead), don't stop there. Increasing engagement must also be a top priority for manufacturers so that prospects turn into loyal fans.

Once someone reaches a thank you page (or, the page a visitor is taken to after completing a form), use that space as an opportunity to promote more offers and content.

CHAPTER 3 LANDING PAGES THAT CONVERT

Landing pages are one of the most important elements of lead generation. In fact, according to MarketingSherpa's research, landing pages are effective for 94% of B2B and B2C companies. The use of landing pages enables manufacturers to direct website visitors to targeted pages and capture leads at a much higher rate.

What's great about landing pages is that they direct your visitors to one particular offer without the distractions of everything else on your website.

VISITORS ARE ON A LANDING PAGE FOR ONLY ONE PURPOSE: TO COMPLETE THE LEAD CAPTURE FORM.



#14 ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE LANDING PAGE

Landing pages, sometimes called "lead capture pages," are used to convert visitors into leads by completing a transaction or by collecting contact information from the visitors.

Landing pages consist of:





#15 REMOVE THE MAIN NAVIGATION

Once a visitor arrives on a landing page, it's your job to keep them there. If there are links on the page to move about your website, it will distract the visitor and decrease the chance of them converting on the page.

One of the best ways to increase your landing page conversion rates is to simply remove the main navigation from the page. That's it!

#16 MATCH THE HEADLINE AND CTA

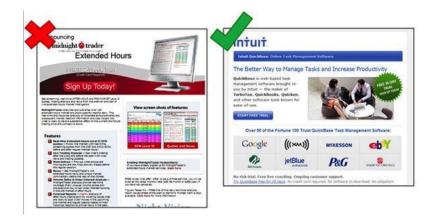
Keep your messaging consistent on both your CTA and the headline of the landing page. If people click on a link for a free offer and then find out there's a catch on the landing page, you'll instantly lose their trust. Similarly, if the headline reads differently than the CTA, it might lead to confusion, and the visitor might wonder if the CTA is linked to the wrong page.





#17 LESS IS MORE

I'm sure you're aware of the rule "keep it simple, stupid." The same applies to landing pages. A cluttered page means a distracted visitor. Be brief and to the point; it's in the offer itself where you give more information. In addition to your headline, include a brief paragraph explaining what the offer is, followed by a few bullet points outlining the benefits of the offer.



#18 EMPHASIZE THE BENEFITS OF THE OFFER

Make the benefits of the offer clear in a brief paragraph and/or bullet points. This takes more than just listing what the offer is; it takes a bit of spin. Instead of "Includes specifications of product XYZ," say something like "Find out how product XYZ can increase productivity by 50%." In other words, convey the value of your offer clearly and effectively.



#19 ENCOURAGE SOCIAL SHARING

On your landing page, don't forget to include buttons to enable your prospects to share content and offers. Include multiple social media channels as well as email, since people have different sharing preferences. When your offer is shared more, more people land on the page, and therefore more people fill out your form and become leads!

#20 MORE LANDING PAGES EQUALS MORE LEADS

According to a marketing benchmarks report, companies see a **55% increase in leads** by increasing the number of landing pages from 10 to 15. The more content, offers and landing pages you create, the more opportunities to generate more leads for your business.









CHAPTER 4 OPTIMIZED FORMS

Forms are the key to a landing page. Without them, there's no way to "convert" a visitor into a lead. Forms come in handy when it's time for people to sign up, subscribe to your site or download an offer.

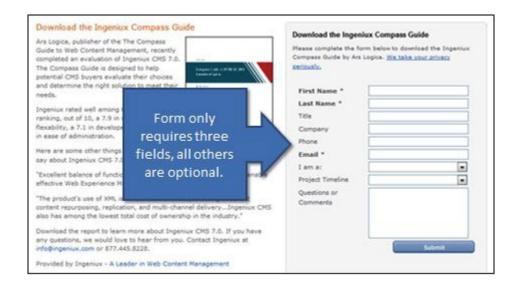
THE FOLLOWING TIPS WILL UNCOVER HOW TO BUILD GREAT LANDING PAGE FORMS.



#21 THE RIGHT FORM LENGTH

You might be wondering how much or how little information you should require on a form. There's no magic answer when it comes to how many fields your form should contain, but the best balance would be to collect only the information you really need.

The fewer fields you have on a form, the more likely you'll be to receive more conversions. This is because with each new field you add to a form, it creates friction (more work for the visitor) and fewer conversions. A longer form looks like more work and sometimes it will be avoided all together. But on the other hand, the more fields you require, the better quality those leads might be. The best way to determine what works best is to test it.





#22 TO SUBMIT OR NOT TO SUBMIT

That's the question most of your visitors are asking. One of the best ways to increase form conversion rates is to simply NOT use the default word on your button: "SUBMIT."

If you think about it, no one wants to "submit" to anything. Instead, turn the statement into a benefit that relates to what they are getting in return.

FOR EXAMPLE, IF THE FORM IS TO DOWNLOAD A
BROCHURE KIT, THE SUBMIT BUTTON SHOULD SAY,
"GET YOUR BROCHURE KIT." OTHER EXAMPLES INCLUDE
"DOWNLOAD WHITE PAPER," "GET YOUR FREE EBOOK,"
OR "JOIN OUR NEWSLETTER."

Another helpful tip: Make the button big, bold and colorful. Make sure it looks like a button (usually buttons are beveled and appear "clickable").



#23 REDUCE ANXIETY WITH PROOF ELEMENTS

People are more resistant to give up their information these days, especially because of the increase in spam. There are a few different elements you can add to the form or landing page to help reduce a visitor's anxiety to complete the form:

- Add a privacy message (or link to your privacy policy) that indicates their email will not be shared or sold.
- If your form requires sensitive information, include security seals, a BBB rating or certifications so that visitors know their information is safe and secure.
- Adding testimonials or customer logos is another great way to indicate social proof. For example, if your offer was for a Free Trial, you may want to include a few customer testimonials about your product or service.





#24 MAKE THE FORM APPEAR SHORTER

Sometimes people won't fill out a form just because it "looks" long and time-consuming. If your form requires a lot of fields, try making the form look shorter by adjusting the styling.

FOR EXAMPLE, REDUCE THE SPACING IN BETWEEN
FIELDS OR MOVE THE TITLES TO THE LEFT OF EACH FIELD
INSTEAD OF ABOVE IT SO THE FORM APPEARS SHORTER.
IF THE FORM COVERS LESS SPACE ON THE PAGE, IT MAY
SEEM AS IF YOU'RE ASKING FOR LESS.

Both forms have the same amount of fields, but version A might look shorter than B on the page.	A Name:*	Name:*	
	Email* Company*	Email*	
	Phone*	Company*	
		Phone*	

CHAPTER 5 MULTI-CHANNEL LEAD GENERATION

Your website isn't a silo. So, you must use many other channels to maximize lead generation efforts. In this sense, a channel might be a website, a social media platform or an email. The objective is to make it easy for buyers to research, evaluate and purchase products in any way that's most appropriate for them. It's all about having the right marketing mix.

IN THIS LAST CHAPTER, WE'LL BRIEFLY COVER A FEW CHANNELS THAT CAN HELP MANUFACTURERS GENERATE THE MOST LEADS.



#25 BLOGGING BRINGS IN THE LEADS

According to HubSpot's recent benchmarks report, companies that blog six to eight times per month double their lead volume. This proves that blogging is a highly effective channel for lead generation.

IN EVERY BLOG POST, INCLUDE HYPERLINKS TO LANDING PAGES WITHIN THE COPY OF THE POST, AS WELL AS A PROMINENT CALL-TO-ACTION.





#26 EMAIL MARKETING

Many manufacturers may think email marketing is only best used when communicating with existing prospects and customers. Not so! Email can be a great channel for new lead generation. Here are some ways you can use email to generate more new prospects:

- Focus on an opt-in strategy. If you're buying email
 lists and spamming your prospects, no one will want
 to share your email with others. They will only want to
 unsubscribe! The first step to email lead generation is
 to make sure you have happy subscribers that enjoy
 receiving emails from you.
- Send people valuable offers. If you send really interesting or valued offers— whether they're downloads, discounts or educational content people will be more likely share your emails with their friends or colleagues.

 Give people the tools to share. Don't forget to add a "Forward to a Friend" link or social media sharing buttons within each email so people are encouraged to pass it on.

Hilthere,
In 2012, the world of marketing underwent major changes. We saw
the new of Pinterest, the growth of big data, an aggressive political ad
wor, and Facubook's 1 Billionth ever, to name a few.

But what's in store for the next year? Download this new guide, 20
Must Know Marketing Trends 8. Predictions for 2013, to gaze
into the future of marketing.

Read the 20 Marketing Trends

Download this guide to hear predictions from industry analyst and
thought leaders, such as:

Rand Fishkin, SEOmoz founder and CEO
Billian Halligam, HubSpot oo founder and CEO
Billian Halligam, HubSpot oo founder and CEO
Brian Halligam, HubSpot oo founder and CEO
David Meetman Scott, Best Selling Author
Greg Alexander, Sales Benchmark Index CEO
David Reab, Gleanster Research Director

Enjoy,
Jessica Mether
Head of Entreprise Marketing
IsbSpot

Simple email promoting a valuable offer that includes social media

sharing buttons.



#27 SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media isn't just for liking funny pictures or tweeting what you ate for breakfast. Social media is an emerging channel that many manufacturers are taking advantage of. Here are some great tips for generating leads on social networks.

- Build a loyal following. Building a relationship with potential customers is a critical first step. Social media connections are really about people-to-people, not always company-to-individual or company-to-company. Get to know your audience online, communicate and share information. In order to generate leads, you need to have human interaction with others.
- Remember, social media is a dialogue. Companies that only use social media to blast out messages about themselves aren't using social channels effectively. The goal is to interact with others and be helpful. When you share content on social media, don't always post something that relates to your company. Share links to other interesting things you've found online. People will be very thankful you are noticing their work, too!
- Influence connections for content sharing. Publishing and sharing content that directs traffic to targeted landing pages is the single biggest lever to increase lead generation through social media. Share your new content offers by posting links to landing pages, and in addition, share blog posts and other great resources.



#28 ORGANIC SEARCH

While promoting your offers in many channels is crucial for lead generation, it's also equally important to make it easy for people to find your landing pages through search engines. To do this, you need to apply search engine optimization (SEO) best practices to your landing pages, such as:

- Pick a primary keyword for each landing page and focus on optimizing that page for that word. If you oversaturate a page with too many keywords, the page will lose its importance and authority because search engines won't have a clear idea of what the page is about.
- Place your primary keywords in your headline and subheadline. These areas of content have greater weight to search engines.
- Include the keywords in the body content but don't use them out of context. Make sure they are relevant to the rest of your content.
- Include keywords in image file names (e.g., mykeyword.jpg).
- Include the keywords in the page URL.





#29 USE LINKS AND CTAS WITHIN OFFERS

Your offers themselves are great channels for lead generation. For example, in an ebook, you can link to other content offers readers can download. As people share the ebook, they may discover other resources you offer by following the links within the content.

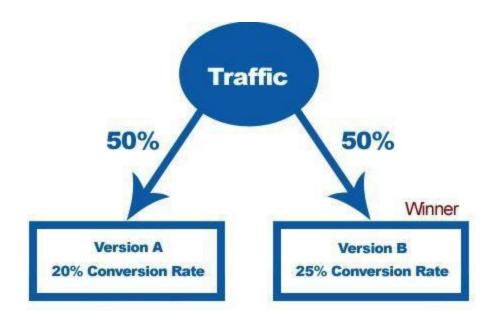


Within this ebook, 25 Website Must-Haves, there are links to other, related ebooks and guides.



#30 A/B TESTING

While this isn't a channel per say, it is a great way to increase leads across all channels and tactics. A/B testing, or comparing two versions of a web page to see which one performs better, can be used in calls-to-action, landing pages, email marketing, advertising and more. According to HubSpot research, A/B testing your landing pages and other assets can help you generate up to 40% more leads for your business. When done correctly, A/B testing can provide a huge competitive advantage for your company.



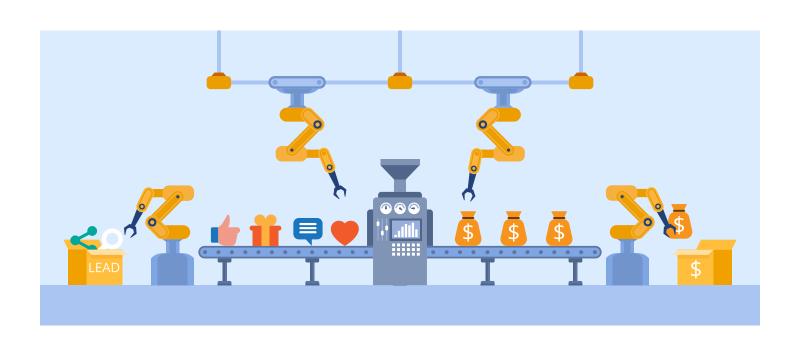


CONCLUSION

Generating leads online has the power to transform your marketing. Using great offers, calls-to-action, landing pages and forms—and promoting them in multichannel environments—can reduce your cost-per-lead while delivering higher-quality prospects to your sales team.

The basic tips and techniques we just covered are only the beginning. Continue to tweak and test each step of your inbound lead generation process in an effort to improve lead quality and increase revenue.

NOW GO, YOUNG GRASSHOPPER, ON YOUR WAY TO BECOMING A LEAD GENERATION MASTER.



WONDER HOW YOUR WEBSITE STACKS UP AGAINST YOUR COMPETITORS?

GET A FREE COMPETITIVE ASSESSMENT

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT LEAD GENERATION?

Founded in 2002, SyncShow is a digital marketing agency committed to professionalizing the sales and marketing infrastructure for American manufacturers.

