



EMERGING B2B MARKETING TACTICS 2014

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS FROM
THE WRITE2MARKET TEAM

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Which tactics are going to create competitive success for b2b brands in the near future?

Today's growing businesses need smart boots on the street to succeed. Some of our team takes a stab at sharing their favorite tactical approaches for the year ahead.

See what you think:

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*“Strategy is overrated,
simply doing stuff is
underrated.*

*We have a strategic plan.
It’s called
doing things.”*

*—Herb Kelleher,
Southwest Airlines*



Lisa Calhoun, MBA

Founder

In the last fifteen years, I've worked with scaling companies in big industries like energy, cloud services, water management and logistics. I've been privileged to be in board-level discussions over the years at dozens of firms.. I've been at ground zero for hundreds of b2b marketing campaigns that have succeeded--and those that have failed. It gives me a lot of perspective for this simple, tactical recommendation.

My top recommended tactic for b2b companies in 2014: *Create pages for your web site that support verbal search.*

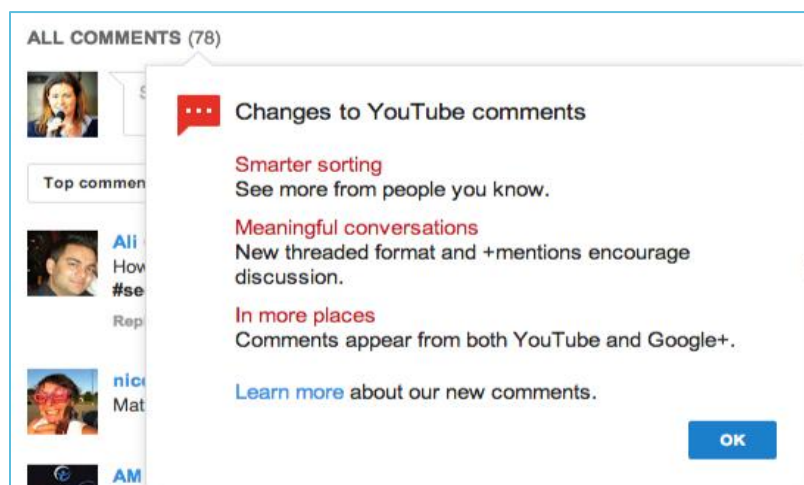
The mechanics of how new prospects find you is evolving rapidly. We hear more about this in traditional b2c space, but it's going to have an impact on b2b companies too. In the near future, content marketers will need to write for the intention in natural language, rather than writing for keywords.

The whole concept of keyword is dead.

Think about the semantics of the verbal, natural language question, "Where can I buy lilies?" Today's wholesale florists are optimized for terms like "wholesale lilies"--but in the future, for example, wedding planners are going to ask their car, or their wearable technology, a natural language phrase instead of a "keyword" phrase.

In fact, apps like Siri and Google Now already search for images and meanings in different ways that keyword search.

Take a look at how



YouTube positions comments, for example. It's called "smarter"--in fact, it IS.

Based on a study by Chitika, the biggest category for voice search is news at 20 percent, while text-based searches for reference-related topics is at 22 percent. Additionally, mobile voice-related searches are 3X more likely to be local-based than text.

Take advantage of this tactic in 2014:

1. Start writing web copy in natural language--think question/response.
2. Test drive your web site by voice. Can you find what you thought you were looking for?
3. Go back to having FAQs posted on your site--but use a whole page per question.

*“Building a visionary
company requires
one percent vision and
99 percent alignment.”*

*—Jim Collins, Ph.D
and Jerry Porras,
Built to Last*



Jean-Luc van Hulst

Partner, COO

As CEO of Finalist, I had the opportunity to learn how to build a sales department that went from 0, when I founded the company, to over \$10 million in annual revenue. I've developed a keen nose for marketing

tactics that work in the b2b technology space—and I've tried most of them.

My top recommended tactic for b2b companies in 2014: **LinkedIn Links**

From a referral point of view, LinkedIn ranks high on link quality. You want to stimulate a community where all company motivations are actively shared through your industry--and only LinkedIn can do that.

Take advantage of this tactic in 2014:

1. Set up a company-wide LinkedIn policy that encourages or even mandates LinkedIn sharing of company updates on their professional LinkedIn page. Include some guidelines on their LinkedIn company profile, including weekly engagement in discussion of concern or merit to your industry. You can try an app like Buffer for your team to make this easier to do--Buffer has a one click "share this page" that lets people post to LinkedIn very simply.
2. Have the marketing group determine the top 10-15 LinkedIn groups that help the company move forward, and assign people to those groups just like you might assign them to volunteer work, board work or parking locations.
3. Post updates regularly from the executive, marketing and product teams on a schedule that makes sense to your firm (weekly? monthly?) in these groups, and at large. Make sure your "asks" or marketing pushes have a proper ratio to your "answers" such as 20:80.

*“The thing that keeps a
business ahead of the
competition is excellence in
execution.”
—Tom Peters*



Martin Humphrey

Senior Account Executive

In the last decade, I've pitched U.S. Army Generals to CNN, BBC and FOX News. I've had the opportunity to work with some of the largest companies, like Aflac, Nissan, Eaton and SMART Car - but also had the chance to make a real impact for smaller companies

like LEC, InReality and Holcombe Financial. Throughout my experience in public relations, I've learned that every client has a story to tell. It could be small or an extremely big story that garners national recognition, but it comes down to the PR professional to really look at the client and the available information and find the best story you can tell to maximize the opportunities available to the client.

**My top recommended tactic for b2b companies in 2014:
Find your best story and maximize its capability to reach trade and tier one media.**

When looking for your story, you want to find the things about your product or service that garner the most attention and are most related to current news.

Take advantage of this tactic in 2014:

1. Research the industry and find out what reporters are talking about in regard to your product or service and begin thinking of a way to fit your story in with a news topic that's timely and interesting.
2. Build a media list based on the previous research. For instance, if you can connect your story to a news topic about taxes, then you need to build a media list of tax reporters.
3. Draft a pitch explaining how your service or experience is related to relevant tax topics in the news.

4. Call the reporters, by doing this you can gain insight on a couple things

- Are they interested in your angle?
- Get a feel for how they and others may have received your pitch. This can tell you whether you need to tweak it or if your pitch is good and it's working.

5. Begin lining up media opportunities with reporters and editors.

6. After you conduct the interviews, circle back around to the reporters to get their feel on the interview and try to get a publish date for the article.

“An astounding 90% of well-formulated strategies fail due to poor execution.”

—Gary Harpst



Joé Lloyd

Relationship Manager

As the Retail Technology Practice Lead at Write2Market, with over five years of hands-on ecommerce experience, I have had the opportunity to work with companies like the end-to-end SaaS ecommerce platform ShopVisible,

the mid-market ecommerce experts at Celerant Technology, Pioneers of Design on Demand® Smart Furniture, luxury bed specialists Tempur-Pedic and one of the newest disruptive technologies in pricing, PriceWaiter. They all face the same challenge; how do MY technology and MY story stand out in this multi-billion dollar industry? I've learned that a great story, told through customer satisfaction and delight is the key to optimum engagement.

My top recommended tactic for b2b companies in 2014: Ace the case study.

There may be no strategy more tried and true than the case study.

No matter the volatility of the media industry, journalists and editors alike are ALWAYS on the lookout for an exemplary case study. Engage and talk with your happy customers, it is the ideal time to work with them on case studies and exciting media opportunities. Nothing entices human interest more than wanting what someone else has, or in this case - what your competitor has done better. In my experience, every retailer believes that they are unique.

They are looking for a vendor who can understand and partner with them. Allowing another similar customer to share their fabulous experience with you engages new customers to want to find out more. Case in point, PriceWaiter was recently featured on ecommercebytes.com with a case study of one of their retailers. This led to direct double-digit retailer sign-ups of the PriceWaiter technology!

Take advantage of this tactic in 2014:

1. Survey your clients--find your happiest cheerleaders.

2. Share with your clients the mutual benefits of great case studies.
3. Don't be scared of the ask, its a simple question with a likely positive outcome.
 - ✓ Looking for [more](#)? Read our blog article on how to get your clients quoted in your case studies.

*“Strategies
most often fail
because they aren’t well
executed.”
—Larry Bossidy,
The Discipline of Getting
Things Done*



Emily McDougald
Account Executive

I have the responsibility of covering what we call Access and Awards for quite a few clients. One of my main focuses has been writing award and conference submissions for b2b companies in multiple industries. While landing speaking engagements and winning

awards, I have learned that no matter the industry, be it digital marketing, ecommerce, advertising or multi-family asset management, smart decisions about where to focus your efforts make a world of difference. Choosing the right awards and conferences will put your name in front of your ideal audience, giving you a chance to showcase the work you are most proud of and share your expertise. These speaking engagements and award wins can feed directly into your sales funnel and provide a reason for reporters to pay attention to you.

My top recommended tactic for b2b companies in 2014: ***narrow your audience.***

Find out who you need to speak to, and go from there. The most innovative ideas will fall flat if the selected audience is disinterested. By narrowing your focus and deciding your target audience, you can find out where your story should be told and where you should be spending your time. For example, our client InfoTycoon has an incredibly innovative product that is changing the way multifamily housing owners and operators do business.

Their time at a recent conference attended by just 600 people, including vendors, has left them with more leads than most b2b companies find at much larger conferences. InfoTycoon knows exactly who they want to talk to, and they carefully choose their conferences based on who will be in attendance.

This eye for detail is a direct path to industry leadership, because if you're not wasting your time (or expenses) on people that don't matter for your business, you can pay more attention to those that do.

Take advantage of this tactic in 2014:

1. Take the time to find out exactly who you want to reach, and be specific. You wouldn't go to a cashier at a Macy's and present them with your brilliant marketing plan, because he/she isn't the decision maker. Once you pinpoint exactly who you need to talk to, you can target them much easier.
2. What conferences will your target audience be attending in 2014? A 600 person conference with the right people can draw more leads than a conference with 2000 attendees that aren't as interested.
3. Maximize your time at conferences- Apply for awards that will be announced at the conference and submit to speak on topics that are relevant to the audience and your industry. Any additional recognition or face time you can get in front of your target audience builds credibility. Additionally, awards at conferences tend to gain coverage from some attending reporters, adding to the awareness of your brand.



Paul D. Snyder

In my most immediate past position, relationship building was paramount to success. As director of development for a school of business and economics for a mid-sized private university, I generated more than 40 new leadership-level donors and cultivated 10 new C-level members of the business school's board of visitors.

In that career, asking for gifts (most often monetary) was nearly the last step in the process. The relationship had to be in place to make the ask. The same applies to potential new partnerships and customers, even in the b2b space. In many cases, the relationship building started with lunch.

My top recommended tactic for b2b companies in 2014: Get personal. Take more colleagues to lunch.

In the b2b space, “scale,” and “efficiency,” and “valuation,” and “e-everything” seem to involve more time in front of one’s retina display than connecting in an entirely human way, void of distraction.

So my top recommended tactic for b2b companies and their employees at all levels is take someone outside of your regular circles to lunch once a month. Share your knowledge. Mentor someone. Build new partnerships. Learn something new.

Connect. Connect. Connect. All of these things happen over lunch. It can be invigorating and bring new perspective to your business and its mission.

Take advantage of this tactic in 2014:

1. Schedule and attend at least one industry or target market networking event every month.

2. From the contacts you make follow up with one the very next day and ask them to lunch.
3. Prior to the lunch, share a piece of news (article, case study, etc.), reconfirm the date and look forward to expanding the relationship.



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ABOUT WRITE2MARKET

We help create recognizable industry leadership. Our clients are growing **visionaries** in b2b industries who want to get the attention they **deserve**.

We're friendly. Reliable. Real. We get it done. Let's talk about getting your business in the spotlight.