



# From leads To sales:

Developing an Effective  
Chemical Marketing Plan

Empowering Trust™

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# Intro—finding new customers to buy raw materials and ingredients

Finding new customers is always a challenge. But it doesn't have to be difficult, especially in today's raw materials and ingredients market—where you can use newer, more cost-effective digital tools to find and convert new leads into customers.

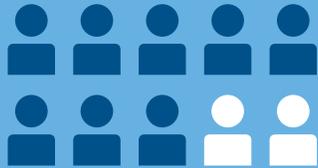
## How has chemical marketing changed in the last 5 years?

Today, there are more online tools than ever before, so your customers can (and usually do) educate themselves about your products before they buy. In fact, according to research performed by the CEB Marketing Leadership Council (in partnership with Google), **today's customers are 57 percent of the way through the purchase process before they ever engage a salesperson.**

As a result, it's important to not only use “traditional” outbound marketing efforts to find leads (such as trade shows or cold calling), but to also find leads through newer, inbound digital tools that send customers directly to you—like social media, blogs, and other forms of content marketing.



Today's customers are  
**57%** OF THE WAY  
THROUGH  
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a salesperson



**80%** OF BUSINESS  
DECISION  
MAKERS

prefer to acquire company  
information through articles  
rather than advertisements)

## Customers want an educational resource—not a “hard sell”

Today's customers are savvy decision-makers who leverage online resources for product research and are highly resistant to a “hard sell.” This is why the “soft sell” of digital marketing appeals to them.

A recent study by industrial marketing agency Gorilla 76 found that 80 percent of business decision makers prefer to acquire company information through articles (rather than advertisements).

The lesson here? For B2B marketing today, you can win more customers by becoming an information resource—rather than by inundating customers with print ads, catalogs, and cold calls. According to the Content Marketing Association (CMA) in their publication, “The Content Marketing Revolution,” 68 percent of online buyers will spend considerable time reading content published by a brand they are interested in.

## Yes, you will need inbound marketing

Content marketing—also called “inbound marketing” or “digital marketing”— costs 62 percent less than more traditional outbound marketing, yet it guarantees more than three times as many leads (according to the Content Marketing Institute).

In fact, the Institute has found that 88 percent of B2B marketers now use content marketing in their strategies. Gleanster Research teamed with Kapost to study 3,408 marketers and found that companies who utilize inbound marketing tactics (like blogs, white papers, and webinars) see a 45 percent increase in their volume of sales-accepted leads.

But what mix of B2B marketing is right for your raw material or ingredient? What if you are doing plastics marketing, industrial marketing, or materials marketing of industrial chemicals?

If you don't know where to begin, this guide will take you through the steps to get started.



# 5 steps to creating a good chemical marketing plan



## STEP #1—CHOOSE A TARGET AUDIENCE

When you're ready to find new customers for your raw material or ingredient, the first question to ask yourself is:

### WHO BUYS OUR PRODUCT?

Knowing the answer to this question will help you set up the right industrial marketing campaign—whether you decide to use more traditional outbound marketing, or newer, digital inbound marketing (ideally, you'll use a mix of both).

### What type of company buys your products?

Take 60 seconds to brainstorm a quick profile of the ideal type of company you want to target. Ask yourself these questions:

1. How many employees does the ideal company have?
2. Where are they located?
3. What is their typical sales volume?
4. What industry is the company in?

If you're not sure what type of company buys your products, it may be helpful to understand who views your products online. Analyzing website traffic by using a free or paid website traffic analyzer can help. You can also list your products on a specialized material/ingredient search engine like [Prospector](#)® to begin to analyze who among your target audience views your products. By leveraging an [analytical product](#), Prospector will help you understand exactly who is looking at your products—and which products interest them—within a search engine designed with your audience in mind.

### What job role usually buys your products?

In addition to knowing the type of company who buys your products, you also want to think about the person at the company who places the order. We call this a “buying persona.”

There are specific job types who respond to chemical marketing. Who are they? At Prospector, we've found that all of the following job types strongly influence these purchasing decisions—and frequently use Prospector to research those raw materials and ingredients:



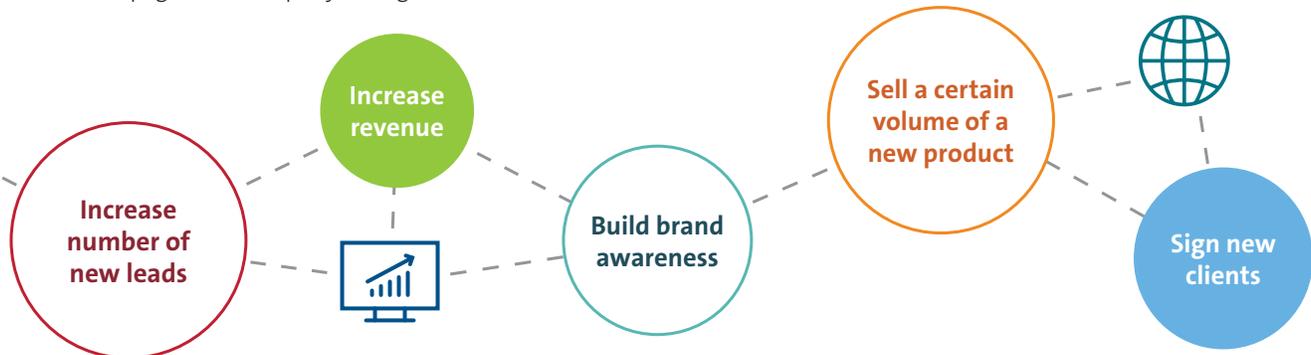
The more you know about who buys your products, the more focused—and productive—your marketing efforts will be.

## STEP #2—DEFINE YOUR GOALS

### What do you want to achieve in the next 12 months?

Your next step is to define your goals for the coming year. What do you want to achieve with your marketing efforts over the next 12 months?

It may also help to involve key stakeholders from both sales and marketing in your conversation about goals, so that everyone is on the same page. For example, you might want to:



### Write a specific, measurable goal

Once you've determined your marketing objective, then you'll want to write up a very specific, measurable goal for the next 12 months. The simpler and clearer the goal, the easier it will be to get everyone on board.

### Examples—chemical marketing goals

Here are a few examples of concrete, measurable goals for a chemical selling or a materials marketing plan:

Sign 12 new clients by Dec. 31	Get 1,000 clicks on Prospector searches of XYZ product by year end	Increase overall revenue by five percent this year	Sell \$250,000 of XYZ product in the next 12 months	Generate 150 new leads before Sept. 30
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This goal will form the basis of your marketing plan. Getting everyone involved in the goal-setting is not required, but may ultimately help you get buy-in from the sales and marketing teams on achieving it.



### STEP #3—CREATE A COST-EFFECTIVE MARKETING PLAN

Once you've established your goal for next year, you can write up a brief materials marketing plan to help you achieve it.

A marketing plan for industrial chemicals does not need to be fancy or elaborate. It can be as simple as a half-page statement of how you'd like to accomplish your new sales goal. This can be shared with the marketing and sales team (or even with the entire staff) so that everyone is clear on the objective—and moving in the same direction.

#### What should I include in a marketing plan for a raw material or ingredient?

A good industrial marketing plan needs only four things:



#### Choosing the right industrial marketing tactics

When you choose marketing tactics for your plan, you'll want to choose three to five different options—then assign a budget to each. Be as specific as possible, just like with your company's annual marketing goal.

The next section offers a more detailed discussion of inbound versus outbound marketing tactics, and why you need both in your materials marketing plan (or really, any B2B marketing plan).

#### Example—chemical marketing plan

Here's an example of a short, simple marketing plan that could be used for a new product launch of an ingredient.

**GOAL** Sell 400 tons of glycerin—by Dec. 31

- Participate in three trade shows in next 12 months (\$17,000)
- Publish two blogs/mo. for 12 months on product “hot topics” (\$4,000)
- Run four different pay-per-click ads on Google for six months (\$8,000)
- Create five whitepapers for website on new uses for glycerin (\$1,000)

**BUDGET** \$30,000

## STEP #4—CHOOSE YOUR MARKETING TACTICS

When choosing your marketing tactics, you'll want to find a good mix of inbound and outbound strategies. This may require some experimentation for the first few months, to see what works best. Any of these tactics work equally well for:

- Chemical marketing
- Manufacturing marketing
- Raw materials marketing
- Plastics marketing
- Industrial marketing
- Materials marketing
- General B2B marketing

### Inbound marketing

#### *What is inbound marketing?*

**Inbound marketing** allows new customers to “discover” your business and products through your web content—on search engines, social media, blogs, your website, and your online articles. Rather than reaching out to customers directly to ask them for a sale, they build trust in your brand through the quality of your content. This is also called a content strategy.

#### *Why use inbound marketing for chemical sales?*

If you've never tried using inbound B2B marketing before, you might want to consider it. According to HubSpot, inbound leads cost 61 percent less than outbound leads on average. And those inbound leads yield three times more leads per dollar than traditional marketing methods (Kapost).



Inbound leads cost  
**61% LESS THAN**  
outbound lead on average

A good inbound content marketing strategy can:



#### *Inbound marketing tactic ideas*

##### BLOGS

A blog is a quick, inexpensive way to get started with your new content strategy. All you need is a short, 250-500 word article posted on your website once a week—or even once a month.

And if you're willing to invest a little more time and energy into blogs, HubSpot found that B2B companies that blog 11+ times per month get more than three times as much web traffic as those that blog one time per month (or not at all).

##### SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

SEO is all about using search engines (like Google) to drive visitors to your website. The more people that visit your website, the more they are exposed to your products—resulting in better brand awareness and sales opportunities.

There are two main ways to utilize SEO marketing: through pay-per-click ad campaigns on search engines, and by optimizing your website with keywords.

- **Pay-per-click ad campaigns**—you pay search engines like Google to display your business on the first page of search results
- **Keywords**—you add popular search keywords to your website so Google will send visitors to it

According to HubSpot, Google gets a whopping 3.5 billion searches/day—making it a prime location for an ad campaign.

But you can also utilize SEO on other websites where your product is mentioned. For example, by making sure your product listing is optimized on a specialized chemical search engine like [Prospector](#), you can ensure that developers, formulators, and engineers will find you when they're looking for technical information about products they need. Prospector also offers a [sponsored search service](#) to elevate your product listing to the top of relevant searches.

## ARTICLES AND WHITE PAPERS

Articles and whitepapers are another great content strategy for chemical marketing because they feed plenty of keywords to search engines. These are simply longer blog posts (1,000-3,000 words) with a more polished graphic design element. For the industrial chemicals or raw materials industry, they may include information about:

- Products
- Safety
- Changing regulations
- Market conditions

## Outbound marketing

### *What is outbound marketing?*

**Outbound marketing** includes the more “traditional” forms of chemical marketing that you may be accustomed to—such as cold calling, trade shows, print ads, and newsletters. In addition, it can now include newer methods of B2B marketing, like social media, emails, and digital ads.

### *Why use outbound marketing for chemical sales?*

Although inbound content marketing is more cost-effective, outbound marketing still has an important role in reaching your audience. You'll need a mix of both inbound and outbound marketing to reach the widest possible field of potential customers.

In fact, outbound marketing is:

- Still a major source of leads for many companies
- Helpful for building brand awareness
- A necessary part of product launches
- Important for communicating events and promotional offers

### *Outbound marketing tactic ideas*

## SOCIAL MEDIA

According to HubSpot, 77 percent of the U.S. population has a social media account. Facebook has 2 billion active users worldwide, while Instagram has 1 billion active users, and Twitter has 365 million active users (HubSpot).

Social media posts are a great, inexpensive way to increase website traffic and increase your brand visibility. And they don't require a lot of time. 91 percent of marketers who use social media campaigns notice an increase in brand visibility by spending only a few hours per week on social media (HubSpot).

**91%** OF MARKETERS WHO USE  
SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

NOTICE AN INCREASE IN BRAND VISIBILITY BY SPENDING  
ONLY A FEW HOURS PER WEEK ON SOCIAL MEDIA

And don't assume that social media is limited to consumer (B2C) advertising. Many B2B marketing strategies now successfully use Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to reach their target audience. The robust targeting options and sophisticated ROI measurements—combined with the sheer size of the audience on these platforms—make them important channels for your chemical marketing mix.

## LINKEDIN

You can also use your presence (and your employees' presence) on LinkedIn to build brand awareness by posting articles and white papers. This network also gives you the opportunity to buy digital ads that display specifically to your targeted audience. It's an excellent strategy to use in conjunction with other social media networks, where you can easily post a link to your latest LinkedIn article.

## DIGITAL ADS

There are many types of digital ads you can use. You can post ads on your own website alerting customers to upcoming events and promotions. You can also buy targeted digital ad space on other strategic platforms or websites. [Prospector uses digital ads](#) to share products, product announcements, and brand information to engineers, product developers and R&D professionals in the chemical industry. And Prospector is a great place to start, since you get an experienced team to help ensure your digital ads are as successful as possible.

## EMAIL MARKETING

Email is still a valuable channel for materials marketing. It is relatively inexpensive to produce and keeps you "top of mind" when they are ready to make a purchase. The Content Marketing Institute reports that companies receive a \$38 return on investment for every \$1 spent on email marketing.



The key to successful email marketing is to earn trust with leads and customers by providing high-quality content. You can use this channel to send blog posts, articles, white papers, event notices, and new product promotions. [Prospector can help you send highly targeted email campaigns](#) that can be viewed by a select group of potential customers who have already expressed an interest in your products. Prospector can also help you find people who work in a particular job type or industry.

## TRADE SHOWS

Yes, buyers still attend trade shows to "meet and greet" with companies and learn about new products. According to SpinGo, 81 percent of trade show attendees have buying authority—and 51 percent of attendees request that a sales representative visit their company after a show. Depending on your audience, this may still be a valuable marketing tactic for you.



## STEP #5— CREATE A COST-EFFECTIVE MARKETING PLAN

Your marketing plan is only as good as your ability to measure what works, what doesn't work, and where there might be future opportunities.

### Check in every three months

Every three months, it's a good idea to check in with your marketing plan, tactics, and overall goal to measure your progress relative to your goal. Share that info with both the sales and marketing teams (or possibly with all key stakeholders), so they can monitor your progress.

Each time you check in, you'll want to measure:

1. How much new business has each marketing tactic earned so far?
2. How much progress has been made toward your overall goal (in revenue, new customers, product sold, etc.)?
3. How much money have you spent on each marketing tactic?
4. How much of the total marketing budget have you spent so far?

### Which marketing tactics worked best?

Question #1 is probably the most important: knowing how much new (business, revenue, customers, brand awareness) each marketing tactic has generated for your company. This is referred to as "return on investment," or ROI.

Why is ROI so important? It tells you which industrial marketing tactics are working well to generate new business,

and which marketing tactics aren't working. By measuring ROI, you will know where to spend money next year, if you want to continue to grow your business.

For example, let's say you are doing plastics marketing. After the first 12 months, you'll probably find that some of your marketing tactics bring a huge return, while some don't work at all. This is completely normal and may even change from year to year—as market conditions change, federal regulations shift, and new technology develops. (For example, social media marketing opportunities are continually evolving.)

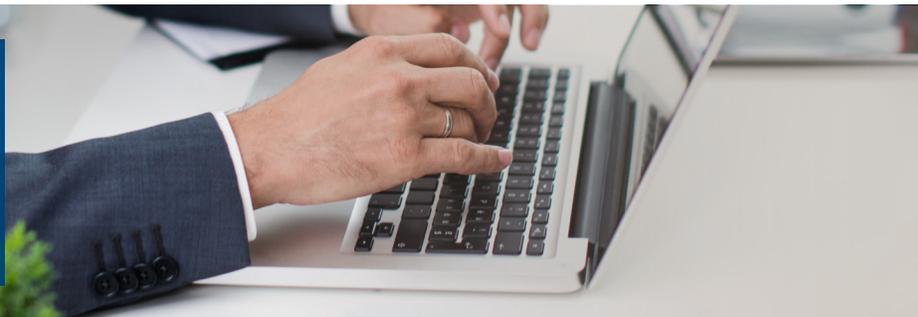
### Measuring your ROI

One way you can gauge the return you received on each marketing tactic is by using a service like [Connect](#), which can measure your target buyer's interest (through clicks, views, and product/ingredient searches) as well as new sales opportunities. By comparing this to your final sales and revenue targets, you can see exactly how your marketing tactics have impacted your sales. It can even provide your sales team with valuable information about specific, interested buyers who can turn into present or future sales. Tools like marketing performance reports can also give you feedback to know which chemical marketing tactics work best. For example, [Prospector digital marketing](#) offers metrics on ad performance.

You will also want to use your in-house CRM and point-of-sale software to measure revenue increases, new customers, and product volume sold over a three-month, six-month, nine-month, and one-year period. This will give you a full picture of how well each marketing tactic is performing—so that next year, you can invest more time and money into the tactics that work best.



# About Prospector



**Prospector®** is an online search engine tool that connects suppliers with formulators, product developers, and engineers around the world.

With an audience of 350,000+ in 175 different countries, **Prospector can connect you with the right audience to meet your marketing goals.** Our services allow you to:

Reach a verified audience



Measure and optimize results



Target new customers by industry, region, job function, and more



We provide accurate, technical product information on thousands of products to your buyers in 10 different industries:

- Adhesives and sealants
- Food, beverage, and nutrition
- Graphic arts and inks
- Household, industrial, and institutional cleaners
- Lubricant and metalworking fluids
- Paint and coatings
- Personal care and cosmetics
- Plastics
- Plastics additives
- Metals

**Prospector** offers comprehensive solutions for [lead generation](#), [email marketing](#), [content marketing](#), [newsletter advertising](#), and [digital ads](#) that reach your target audience directly—as well as tools that [measure the effectiveness of your product marketing campaign](#).

Our tools can help you with:

- Chemical marketing
- Chemical selling
- Manufacturing marketing
- Plastics marketing
- Industrial marketing
- Raw materials marketing
- Industrial chemical marketing

Contact your account representative or send an email to [sales@ulprospector.com](mailto:sales@ulprospector.com).  
Visit us at [ULProspector.com](http://ULProspector.com).



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