

# The Truth About **B2B** **Marketing**

## Standing Out Among the Clutter and AI Saturation

The absolute basics you need to get your marketing strategy going to attract and retain customers.



Let's cut to the chase: B2B marketing is an investment—of time, money, and a little bit of faith. If you're looking for an overnight miracle, you're in the wrong place.

## The Golden Rule of a B2B Marketing Investment:

More money = Faster results.

Less money = Longer timeline.

No money, no patience? = No marketing.

What does this mean in practice?

**You Have to Spend to Grow:** Marketing isn't a slot machine where you throw in a quarter and hit the jackpot. In the beginning, 80–90% of companies spend an uncomfortable amount of money with little to show for it. And that's totally normal. You're laying the groundwork—building awareness, credibility, and a pipeline that will pay off big over time.

**Patience is a Competitive Advantage:** It takes at least six months to see the first signs of success and 12–18 months before marketing efforts really start compounding. Want to speed things up? Simple. Spend more. If you can't? Then commit to the long game. The worst mistake companies make is pulling the plug right before things take off.

**Trust the Process:** Marketing isn't magic, but it does require faith in the strategy. We've seen too many companies go through a Crisis of Confidence™ (right on schedule, usually month 5 or 6), panic, and start second-guessing everything. This is the exact moment when patience and consistency matter most.

## But first let's answer—Why spend money on marketing?

Why do you need marketing at all? Here are some typical reasons:

- Your sales team has no one left to call and they need new leads.
- You want to sell your company, but the multiplier and offers are too low.
- Your new company's growth is too slow.
- Your VC says you need "marketing."
- You have experience and you know you need marketing, but don't have any time.
- You have been at this for five to ten years and growth has stagnated.

The common thread and the only reason we will work with a company to implement B2B marketing (or in many cases re-implement) is that they need more revenue. And great marketing drives revenue right to the front door.

This guide will answer the five questions we receive most about B2B marketing when talking to potential clients:

1. Who can B2B marketing help?
2. How does it work?
3. How much will it cost?
4. How long will it take?
5. How can it help retain customers?

## 1. Who can B2B marketing help?

Not every growing business is ready for marketing, and we're not about to sugarcoat that fact. If you want results (and not just an expensive exercise in frustration), your company needs to meet a few non-negotiable criteria.

Here's the **"table stakes"**—the absolute minimum you need before diving into the marketing deep end:

- **A REAL PRODUCT** – You have a product (or can pull one together fast) that solves an actual problem. And no, "we think they need it" isn't enough. Your prospects need to visualize the need when you talk about it. Big difference.
- **ACTUAL PROSPECTS** – Your audience must be reachable through marketing. If your entire strategy hinges on landing Starbucks' CIO or the CHRO of Target, you'll run out of cash before they ever return your cold email. We love ambition, but let's be realistic—start with customers who are actually winnable.
- **A SALES TEAM THAT FOLLOWS UP** – Leads don't close themselves. If your sales team won't call, email, or DM multiple times before giving up, no amount of marketing magic will fix that. We need reps willing to work those leads until they're either customers or have a restraining order. (Kidding. Mostly.)
- **A BUDGET (AND THE PATIENCE TO USE IT WISELY)** – If you're expecting instant ROI, marketing isn't for you. The uncomfortable truth? Most companies spend a painful amount upfront before seeing results. And that's normal. If you're not ready to commit financially and mentally for the long haul, it's best to sit this one out.
- **A LONG-TERM GROWTH MINDSET** – Marketing is not a "set it and forget it" game. You'll need to invest in content, SEO, paid campaigns, and customer engagement to build real momentum. If you're looking for overnight success, we suggest buying a lottery ticket instead.

**Bottom line:** If you've got a legit product, a reachable market, a sales team that hustles, and the patience to invest in long-term growth—congrats! You're ready to make B2B marketing work for you. If not? You might want to rethink your strategy before throwing money at ads and crossing your fingers.

## 2. How does B2B marketing work?

### What makes an excellent B2B marketing program?

There are some essential components to great marketing. We aren't going to bore you by going over the details of executing each piece. However, you must understand that implementing each of these items will help you along the way to what you want: revenue.

When we start working with clients who are desperate for leads, we start with a...pancake stack.

What we mean here is that each marketing activity does not, cannot, solve your revenue problem on its own. You will not get that lucky. Just because you read on the internet that (name your favorite unicorn) just did X and suddenly they were a billion-dollar company, it's not true. **You need a variety of interconnected infrastructure components and activities.**



### B2B Marketing's Three Foundational Layers

Your marketing efforts need to begin with your website, CRM, and content.

#### 1-Website

It helps to **have a website already in place that doesn't suck**. It doesn't have to be beautiful; it just has to describe your product accurately, explain its benefits, and identify the people your product will help. Once your business is chugging along, you can always embark on building a fancy new website with perfect messaging and beautiful pixel-perfect graphics.

And do not forget to check how your website looks on a mobile device. The majority of your traffic will likely come from mobile users. If it looks terrible and, more importantly, if it's impossible to navigate, fix it. Stat. **Google now primarily uses the mobile version of your website for ranking and indexing**, meaning if your mobile site is lacking, your search visibility will take a hit.

Ensure your mobile site has the same content, structured data, and metadata as your desktop site. Avoid hiding key information or using separate, stripped-down mobile pages—Google ranks sites based on the mobile experience first. Also, make sure images and videos are high quality, optimized for mobile, and don't rely on interactions like clicking or swiping to load.

If your website isn't mobile-friendly, now's the time to fix it. A seamless mobile experience isn't optional anymore—it's the foundation of your online presence.

## 2-CRM

This is a non-negotiable for us: our clients need a decently sophisticated marketing and sales CRM to execute the basic marketing elements we recommend.

We prefer an integrated sales and marketing product like [HubSpot](#), which is perfect in the B2B space. Not only is its price point reasonable for the amount of tools and functionality you get, but its implementation process is quick (weeks, not months) and relatively pain-free. (Full disclosure, [we sell HubSpot](#).)

A real marketing CRM gives you the analytics and tools to look like a big city marketer for a fraction of the cost.

We DO NOT recommend you cobble together “best of breed” solutions with duct tape, Zapier, and popsicle sticks.

When it comes to B2B marketing for companies with a limited team, a one-stop-shop is best. We believe in simplicity over trickiness any day of the week. In the long run, an integrated marketing solution saves you both time and money.

## 3-Content

And now we come to good 'ol content marketing. We know you've heard all the tips before: "Content is king," "You need a blog," "SEO is everything."

But here's the problem: **AI is changing the game**, and most companies are still playing by the old rules.

### The Old Playbook: More Content = More Traffic

For years, the B2B marketing formula was simple:

- 📌 Publish a high volume of educational content →
- 📌 Optimize for search engines →
- 📌 Drive inbound leads.

That worked—until it didn't.

### The New Reality of Content

- AI-generated search results are killing traffic – Google's AI Overviews answer questions directly in search results, reducing click-through rates by up to 60%.
- Social media is deprioritizing links – LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter actively suppress posts with external links, forcing brands to rethink how they distribute content.
- Buyers are bypassing traditional search – Instead of Googling, buyers are asking AI (ChatGPT, Claude), watching YouTube explainers, and searching Reddit for real opinions.

## The New Playbook: Less Content, More Impact

Instead of churning out endless SEO blogs, focus on content that AI can't replicate.

- ✓ **First-hand insights and personal experiences** – AI can summarize facts, but it can't tell your story.
- ✓ **Contrarian viewpoints & strong opinions** – Content that challenges the status quo stands out.
- ✓ **Interactive & multimedia formats** – AI can't replace a live demo, webinar, or hands-on tutorial.
- ✓ **Content that builds communities** – Reddit discussions, LinkedIn interactions, and YouTube comments carry more weight than static blog posts.

If you're still relying on high-volume content production, you're wasting time. Instead, go deep, be personal, and prioritize content formats that drive engagement.

## B2B Marketing Lead Generation - First-Tier Strategies

### Content Promotion Musts

You can create the best content in the world, but if nobody sees it, it doesn't matter. And here's the harsh truth: The old distribution tactics no longer work.

### What Doesn't Work Anymore

- ✗ Posting blog links on social media – Algorithms punish outbound links.
- ✗ Relying only on SEO for traffic – As noted, AI search results have slashed organic click-through rates.
- ✗ Waiting for leads to find you – Buyers now research across multiple platforms before making a decision.

### What Works Today:

#### 📌 **SEO is now "Search Everywhere Optimization"**

- Your content needs to be optimized for AI-generated search results, not just Google.
- Reddit, Quora, YouTube, and LinkedIn conversations now shape AI search results more than traditional blog content.

#### 📌 **Think Like a Creator (Not a Marketer)**

- Corporate accounts are losing reach—employee-generated content performs 4X better than brand posts.
- Use platform-native content – **LinkedIn posts**, Reddit discussions, and YouTube shorts drive more traffic than traditional blog shares.

## **Leverage AI-Powered Personalization**

- You can boost email conversions by using AI to match personalized content to each lead.
- Tailor social posts, landing pages, and CTAs based on user intent—not just generic segmentation.

## **Invest in Video & Community Engagement**

- YouTube is now a primary search engine—use it to host product demos, deep dives, and expert interviews.
- LinkedIn creator content drives more leads than paid ads—empower employees to post instead of relying on corporate channels.

### **The New Promotion Playbook:**

- ✓ Optimize for AI search (not just Google).
- ✓ Turn employees & company leaders into brand advocates on LinkedIn & Reddit.
- ✓ Invest in video, webinars, and interactive formats.
- ✓ Use AI to personalize outreach at scale.

The new era of content marketing isn't just about what you create—it's about where and how you distribute it. You need to adapt or get left behind.

## **B2B Marketing Lead Generation - Second Tier Strategies**

After getting the basics in place, you should consider typical paid promotional strategies. **Paid media** is what you can use to get that lead generation bell ringing, loudly and frequently. Here are the starter forms of paid:

1. Paid Search
2. Paid Social
3. Retargeting

### **1-Paid Search**

Paid search is evolving beyond just Google Ads, though it remains essential in competitive industries where organic reach is shrinking. AI-powered search advertising (e.g., Perplexity, ChatGPT, Gemini) is emerging, allowing brands to sponsor AI-generated answers and track visibility with tools like **HubSpot's AI Search Grader**.

Social platforms now function as search engines, making **LinkedIn (B2B)**, **YouTube (product research)**, **Reddit (community-driven discussions)**, and **TikTok (Gen Z and Millennial discovery)** valuable for ad placements. For product-based searches, **Amazon (high-intent buyers)**, **Instagram**, and **Pinterest (visual discovery)** offer strong conversion opportunities. Investing in a mix of these platforms ensures broader reach and adaptability as search behavior shifts.



## 2-Paid Social

Paid social is no longer just about boosting posts—it's about strategic placement where audiences actively research and engage. LinkedIn Ads dominate in B2B, offering high-intent targeting. YouTube Ads capture users deep into their buying journey, while TikTok and Reddit Ads are gaining traction as AI-driven search pulls insights from these platforms.

With social media algorithms deprioritizing external links, native content and creator-driven ads now outperform traditional promotional posts. Brands that embrace platform-specific, engaging content and leverage AI for personalized targeting will see the highest ROI in paid social.

## 3-Retargeting Display Ads

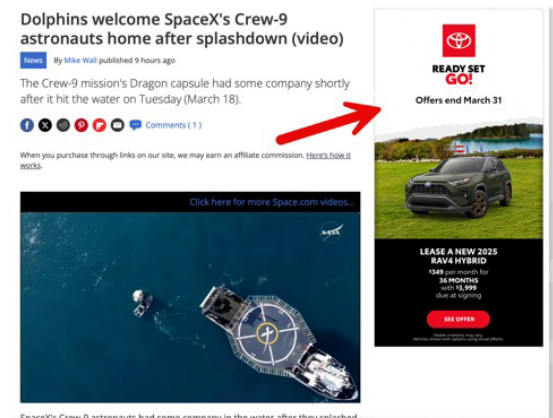
Retargeting display ads aren't just about stalking your prospects across the internet anymore. Smart marketers use **AI-powered retargeting** to serve up relevant ads that feel less creepy and more like a friendly nudge.

The trick? Frequency capping (so you don't annoy people into blocking you), sequential messaging (guiding users through a perfectly timed story instead of spamming the same ad), and dynamic retargeting (showing folks exactly what they were eyeing, making it impossible to resist clicking).

The result? Ads that feel helpful, not pushy—like a personal shopper who remembers exactly what you were drooling over last week.

Tools like **AdRoll** make it easy to remind visitors about your product after they leave your site without converting. Ever browsed for something online, only to have it follow you across the internet? That's retargeting in action. And guess what? It works. Even with a modest budget (think \$100–\$500/month), we've had prospects say, *"I see your ads everywhere!"*—which is exactly what you want.

Bonus move: Target people by email, so when your sales team reaches out, your brand isn't just a stranger in their inbox—it's already on their radar.



## B2B Marketing Marketing Lead Generation - Third Tier Strategies

These third-tier strategies are the next things we investigate for our clients as quickly as possible, but not until we have the Tier One and Tier Two Strategies spun up and operating effectively.

These strategies include but are not limited to:

1. Trade shows and industry events (combined with speaking opportunities)
2. Review websites like Capterra, G2 and the like
3. Association and organization promotions



4. Sponsored content (webinar/white paper) from a reputable source
5. Sponsored email promotion
6. Awards applications
7. Direct mail (not kidding)
8. Promotional give-aways (e.g. contests and sweepstakes)
9. Re-do your website messaging and design to match what you are selling
10. Public relations (regarding all of the above)
11. And the sky's the limit.

What do all these strategies have in common: decent outlays of money.

Your marketing and sales organization must be firing on all cylinders to get the most value out of these third-tier opportunities.

### 3. How much does a typical B2B Marketing Strategy Cost?

How much can you afford to spend? JK. We know most marketing companies you talk to will have that question running in the back of their minds. But we want to be real with you. Getting lead generation up and running through marketing will cost. Not a fortune, but a somewhat reasonable amount of money.

We think you should begin with your Sales and Marketing [CRM implementation](#). Training to ensure your Sales and marketing work together is essential. Or your marketing budget will be a giant waste of time and money.

#### Basic Budgets

Here is how most new B2B clients prioritize their sales and marketing budget:

1. Tidy up your website and ensure it has clear product and prospect messages. (Don't worry so much about aesthetics/graphics for now.)
2. Implement a good sales & marketing CRM with appropriate sales and marketing training. We publish our [CRM Implementation](#) pricing right on our website.
3. Then, start your First Tier Marketing Strategies.
4. Next, follow closely with your Second Tier Marketing Strategies.
5. As time and profitability warrant it, move on to your Third Tier Strategies.

The money can look something like [this Google Sheet](#) for a basic, newer company B2B marketing plan if you use a moderately priced third-party consulting company (like us).

Suffice it to say, it can be \$5K to \$15K to implement software including foundational training and programs. \$1.5K a month for CRM software, and another \$7.5K a month for marketing support (manpower via an agency or in-house). When you move into Tier 2 and Tier 3 strategies, that is another \$5K-\$10K a month at a minimum.

Remember, you start out with Tier 1, after success you move to Tier 2, and when Tier 2 is firmly under your belt, you begin with Tier 3. An existing B2B company with a headstart in many areas, or perhaps with a tradeshow-heavy industry, might have wildly different budget allocations.

## Metrics

We are fanatical about metrics. Successful marketing isn't about throwing money into the void and hoping for the best—it's about tracking every dollar and knowing what's working.

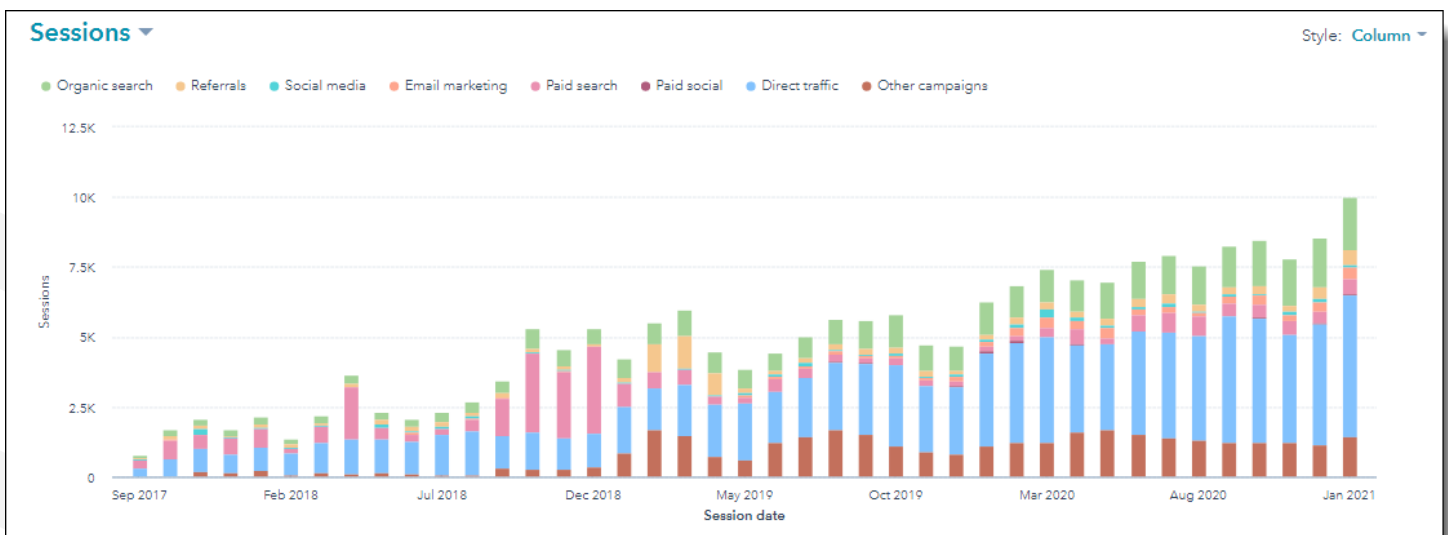
Most advanced marketing CRMs offer robust reporting and dashboarding, helping businesses connect spend to leads and ROI. Layering in expert analysis ensures these insights translate into actionable strategies. Without clear metrics and accountability, marketing quickly turns into an expensive guessing game—one that neither leadership nor investors will support for long.

### 4. How long will it take to see results from B2B marketing?

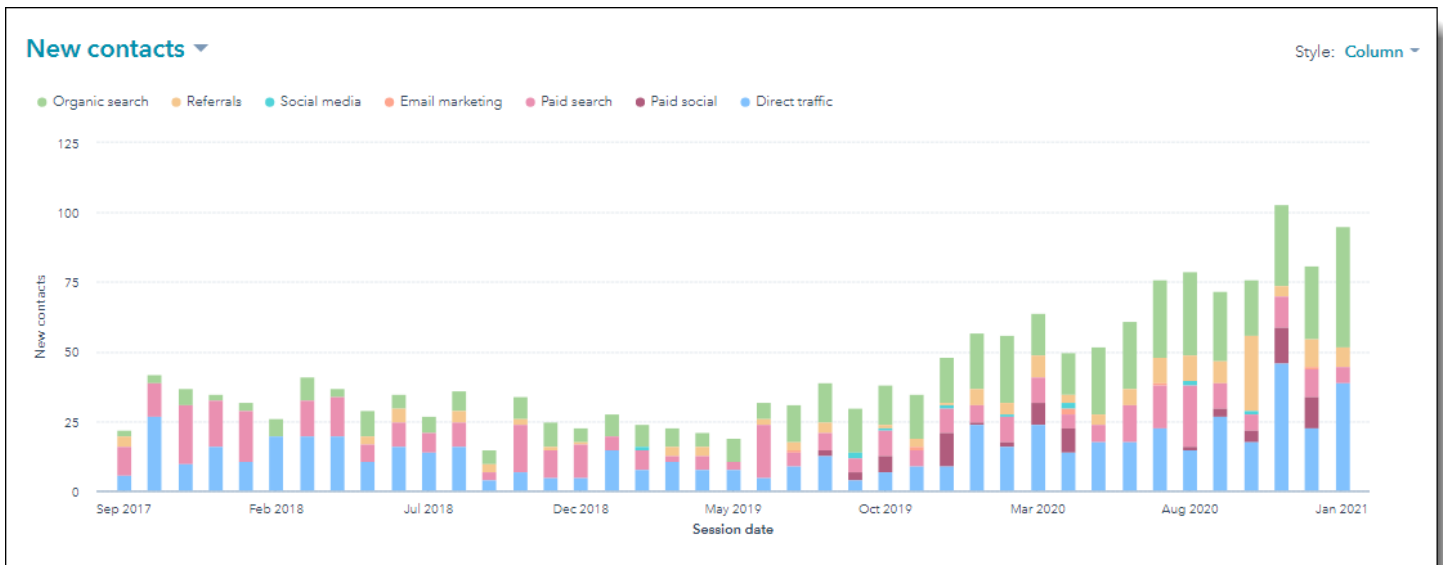
Right after “how much will this cost?” comes the second most common question: **how long until we see results?** And the answer is—longer than you'd like, but faster if you do it right.

Here's a real-life example: A SaaS startup we worked with jumped into a serious marketing commitment in September 2017. Within 6–12 months, their lead flow started picking up. By 2019, as they layered in more advanced (Tier 3) marketing strategies, their growth exploded.

And when 2020 threw the world into chaos? They didn't just survive—they thrived. Because their marketing engine was already compounding results.



Client Success: Sessions or Website Traffic 2017-2021



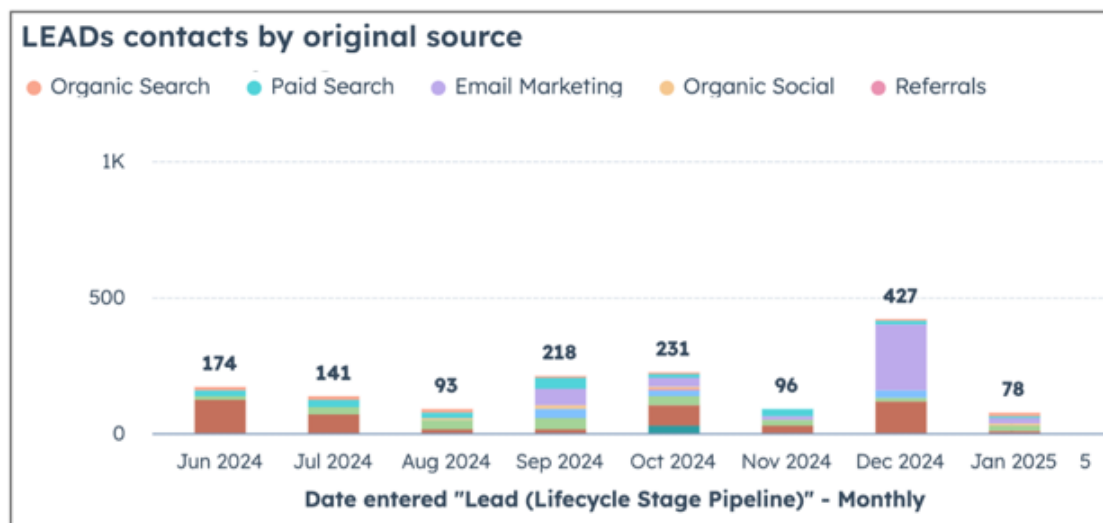
### Client Success: New Contacts/Marketing Leads 2017-2021

Marketing isn't a vending machine where you insert a quarter and get a lead. It's a pancake stack, where each marketing layer supports the others. A Google ad might bring someone to your website, but they don't convert—yet. Maybe they explore a few pages, leave, then return later because of a retargeting ad. Then they download a white paper, get nurtured through email, and finally, boom, a sales conversation.

The key takeaway? **No single tactic works alone.** If you only run Google Ads but don't have content, email follow-ups, or retargeting, your results will be mediocre at best. Stack your strategies, keep executing, and watch the whole become greater than the sum of its parts—or in this case, a lead-generating diamond.

### The Rainbow Effect in B2B Marketing

We call the multi-colored effect of sessions and leads from every possible marketing source the “rainbow effect”.



The rainbow happens because the charts and graphs in the marketing metrics are colorful, with bar chart showing a wide variety of marketing sources. We feel good when clients get a multi-colored rainbow effect, meaning their activity comes from a wide variety of marketing tactics and campaigns.

This is a healthy marketing effort that is not overly reliant on one source of leads. Because things change on a dime. You will suddenly find your Pay-Per-Click Google ads stop working and you have not changed a damn thing. No worries! You still have leads coming in from Google Organic Search, review websites and your white paper 3rd party sponsorship while you figure it out.

## Crisis of Confidence

It happens to everyone. Around month 5 or 6, right on schedule, our clients hit a wall of doubt. They've spent money, executed campaigns, and... where are the leads? Where's the hockey-stick growth?

We get it. But here's the reality: Marketing isn't a vending machine where you insert cash and instantly get revenue. It takes time, layering, and momentum to see real results.

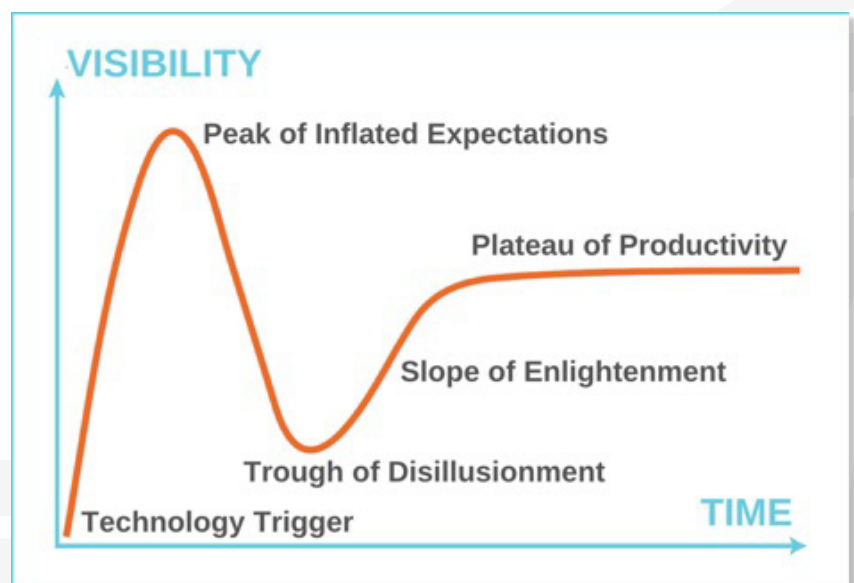
### The Timeline of Marketing Growth:

- ✓ **6 months in:** You start seeing early signs—more traffic, engagement, and brand awareness.
- ✓ **12 months in:** Things feel more solid; lead flow is consistent, and sales starts noticing a difference.
- ✓ **12–18 months in:** The magic happens. Strategies start compounding, channels reinforce each other, and you see multiplicative results.

If you want it to happen faster? Spend more. If you're working with a limited budget? Give it more time.

### Avoiding the “Sea of Despair”

This phase of doubt is so common that Gartner even mapped it—the **Technology Hype Cycle**. In marketing, it's the moment companies pull the plug too soon, right before their efforts pay off.



Technology Hype Cycle

## How to Push Through:

- 👍 **Trust the numbers.** Metrics will tell you if you're trending in the right direction.
- 👍 **Keep executing.** The only failed marketing strategy is the one you quit too early.
- 👍 **Stay committed for at least a year.** If you believed in the strategy at the start, don't abandon it mid-race.

Marketing is a long game, but the biggest wins come to those who stay the course.

## 5. How can B2B Marketing help retain customers?

Great news—you got the customer. Bad news? The work isn't over. In B2B, landing a deal is just the beginning. If you're constantly chasing new leads but losing customers out the back door, your revenue is on a treadmill going nowhere. Smart marketing doesn't just attract customers—it keeps them around, spending more, and singing your praises.

### Why Customer Retention is the Real MVP of B2B Marketing

- 📌 New customers are expensive. **It costs 5–7x more** to acquire a new customer than to keep an existing one. That's not an opinion; that's cold, hard math.
- 📌 Retention = more revenue. **Happy customers spend 31% more than newbies** and are 50% more likely to try your new products or services.
- 📌 Churn kills businesses. SaaS and subscription-based companies know the pain—losing customers tanks predictable revenue. A 5% boost in retention can increase profits by 25% to 95%.

So, how does marketing help you keep the customers you worked so hard to win?

### The Marketing Playbook for Customer Retention

- **Keep talking to them.** Marketing doesn't stop after the contract is signed. Retargeting, email sequences, and exclusive customer content keep your brand top of mind.
- **Sell them more.** Cross-selling and upselling aren't dirty words—they're how businesses grow. A well-executed customer success strategy ensures they know about your latest and greatest offerings.
- **Turn them into your hype squad.** Happy customers = free marketing. Word-of-mouth, online reviews, and referrals bring in high-quality leads without increasing your ad budget.

- **Make them feel special.** Webinars, VIP content, user communities (LinkedIn groups, Slack channels), and early product access create a sense of exclusivity. People stay where they feel valued.
- **Personalize everything.** AI-driven marketing lets you send emails, recommendations, and content tailored to what customers actually care about—because nobody likes feeling like just another invoice number.

Marketing isn't just about getting customers—it's about keeping them. A loyal customer spends more, refers more, and costs less to maintain. Want predictable, scalable revenue? Shift part of your marketing budget to retention-focused strategies, and watch your business thrive.

## Your To-Do List

Marketing isn't just a checkbox—it's the engine that drives revenue, retention, and growth. But let's be real: marketing today is not what it was five years ago. AI is changing search, social platforms are killing outbound links, and customers are skipping traditional funnels in favor of AI-assisted buying journeys. If you're still running on the old playbook, you're already behind.

### Here's what you need to do to stay ahead:

- ☐ **Shift from “Google-only” to “Search Everywhere Optimization”** – Your buyers aren't just Googling; they're searching on LinkedIn, YouTube, Reddit, and AI-powered platforms like ChatGPT and Perplexity. If you're not showing up in these spaces, you're invisible.
- ☐ **Ditch the content treadmill and focus on high-impact assets** – AI can write generic content, but it can't replicate first-hand experience, strong opinions, and interactive content. Prioritize insights, storytelling, and community-driven engagement.
- ☐ **Stack your strategies for multiplicative results** – No single marketing tactic works in isolation. Organic traffic fuels paid efforts. Retargeting reinforces brand recognition. Email nurtures leads over time. Marketing works best when everything works together.
- ☐ **Invest in customer retention as much as acquisition** – Getting leads is great, but keeping customers is cheaper, more profitable, and easier than constantly filling a leaky bucket. Upsells, referrals, and customer advocacy should be a core part of your marketing plan.
- ☐ **Test, track, optimize, repeat** – Marketing without data is just guessing. Use a real CRM (not spreadsheets) to measure impact, adjust strategies, and get more out of your budget.

## How Orange Marketing Helps B2B & Nonprofits Win the Long Game

We've built, tested, and optimized marketing strategies for B2B companies, SaaS startups, and nonprofits across industries—and we know what actually moves the needle.

Whether it's lead generation, customer retention, or scaling demand with AI-driven strategies, we help businesses stop wasting money on outdated tactics and start getting measurable results.

So, are you ready to make marketing work for you? Let's talk.

# Diamond HubSpot Agency







## Laser-Focused On B2B & SaaS

### About Orange Marketing

Orange Marketing helps B2B companies succeed with HubSpot by offering implementation, optimization, and operational support across all Hubs: Sales, Marketing, Service (Help Desk), and CMS (Website).



### Achievements & Recognition

-  115+ 5-Star [HubSpot Reviews](#)
-  [Women-owned business \(WBENC certified\)](#)
-  [HubSpot Data Migration Accredited](#)
-  [HubSpot Onboarding Accredited](#)
-  HubSpot [Marketing Impact Award](#) winner
-  Hold all [42 HubSpot certifications](#)



### Expertise

- ☆ **Marketing Services** – Email marketing, content creation, customer marketing, full inbound and outbound marketing services, SEO, social media, conversational marketing, landing pages
- ☆ **Paid Media Management** – Google, Bing, LinkedIn
- ☆ **Sales Services** – Sales coaching & training, CRM migration, sales and marketing alignment, CRM implementation, sales enablement
- ☆ **Website Services** – Quick and easy HubSpot CMS website migrations, builds & updates
- ☆ **Customer Success Services** – Ticketing system implementation, knowledge base development, customer success training, help desk implementation

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