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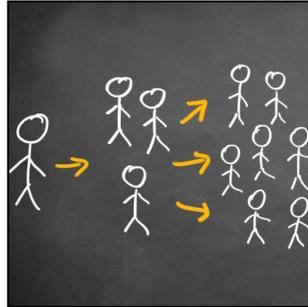
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## How To Use Word of Mouth to Find Leads During Social Distancing



It's not uncommon for professionals in the MSP industry to treat the formal marketing of their business as an afterthought. However, during the current crisis, where social distancing reduces the opportunity for face-to-face contact, and many business owners are focused more on keeping the cashflow going rather than improving and upgrading their IT, having leads fall into your lap may be difficult. It doesn't have to be. Now is the time to develop your online persona and drive lead generating conversations.

### Are You Relying on Word of Mouth to Market Your MSP?

When we consult with potential clients about how they find leads, the number one method they usually depend on is via word of mouth. Clients, colleagues, family, and friends tell other people about your managed IT services, and with any luck, someone will eventually give you a call. To mix it up, sometimes you go to your local chamber meetings, hold a presentation, and collect business cards. If you're ambitious, you may sign up for a trade show and try your chances there and hope to generate some interest. Obviously a lot of events have gone digital, and interfacing face-to-face with prospects has become much more of a challenge.

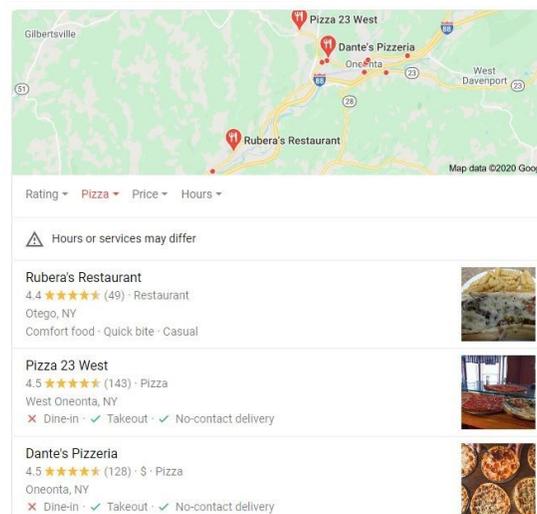
Fortunately, social media offers a means not only to keep 'talking' but to use social media as part of your marketing strategy to generate leads.

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## How To Have Your MSP Turn Up In a Local Search



When it comes to search results, all search is local. The more connected you are to your community, the better your chances are to rank higher in local search results. While there are a variety of steps to increase your local search marketing, the most basic, but critically important, is to ensure that Google knows where your business is. If your NAP (Name, Address, Phone Number) isn't consistent throughout your presence on the internet, there is a chance that you may not appear in your localized search results.



### What is the Local Search Result?

Privacy issues aside, Google (yes, there are other search engines, but they pale to the market share Google has) knows where you are located. According to Google, 46 percent of searches have a local intent, this means when a person searches for "pizza restaurants", Google assumes that the searcher means, 'near me' and will provide the searcher with a list of local pizzerias. This listing is known as the Local 3 Pack.

### What is the Local 3 Pack?

The Local 3 Pack is the block of three business listings that appear below the map in the result page after a localized search.

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### How To Market Your MSP During COVID-19



Marketing your MSP services can be difficult during the best of times, so it's no wonder many MSPs are having trouble gaining leads right now. Despite the uncertainty, now is not the time to stop your marketing efforts. If you don't market your services, you won't be able to attract any leads. If you aren't sure how to start, here are six ways to market your MSP during the pandemic.

### Six Ways To Market Your MSP During COVID-19

Review your lead list: Reach out...



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## Write More Effective Calls-to-Action Using These Tips



Calls-to-action (CTAs) are an important part of marketing. The right call-to-action will drive your target audience to

act, while the wrong one will lead to your message being ignored.

An important thing that you need to be doing is mixing things up every now and then. Are you using a “Read More” call-to-action when pushing all of your blog/newsletter articles? Do you use a simple “Sign Up” for all of your live events?

What you eventually might see happen if you’re doing this is that your audience will stop doing what you’re trying to get them to do. It’s the same incentive every time to do X, why would they continue to do X if they’re not getting any additional value?

Instead of turning in the towel and giving up trying to promote your IT service offerings, try mixing things up a bit and

## How To Have Your MSP Turn Up In a Local Search

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User intent is a critical component of how and why Google decides on which businesses to place in the Local 3 Pack. Google tends to focus on immediate purchase intent, which is why if you search for ‘Pizza parlor’, Google assumes you want to purchase a pizza (locally) now and the Local 3 Pack is triggered.

However, searching for a purchase or service that is not recognized as an immediate need or a generic term such as ‘cloud computing’, may result in your search not delivering a Local 3 Pack result.

Due to the nature of managed services, few customers are going to make an immediate purchase. Many an MSP can attest to this; closing the deal can take months, even years after the initial contact. Google also sees that, based on traffic and browsing habits, many IT-related terms are typically used to research and understand a topic and not

educating yourself on general best practices when it comes to calls-to-action.

### Some Call-to-Action Ideas for MSP Marketers to Use

There are a LOT of calls-to-action that you can use to make your MSP marketing more effective. To make things easier, we categorized a bunch of them for you. Note that some of the ideas we give you could fall into more than one category; we placed them where we thought would make it easier for you.

#### Knowledge-Based Calls-to-Action

- Learn More!
- Get More Info!
- Read More About \_\_\_\_\_
- Learn How!
- Find Out More!
- Read This [URL]
- Continue Reading About \_\_\_\_\_
- Discover How To \_\_\_\_\_
- Visit Our Website!
- Click Here To \_\_\_\_\_
- See More Here: \_\_\_\_\_

necessarily lead to a business selling something. In a way this makes sense, how many calls has your MSP received from potential customers who were ready to make a purchase then and there? The initial contact is more often than not one for more information and that is what Google offers as a search result.

A good example (and keep in mind, this changes based on your location) would be looking up terms like “tech support” and “it services.” This, for the most part, pulls in a Local 3 Pack. Searching for “cybersecurity” doesn’t.

In order to trigger the Local 3 Pack for Directive, we had to make our intention to make a purchase more definitive by making the search criteria more specific: **managed service providers near me**. If we had just used the term, “managed service provider”, the results would have been blogs or a featured

#### Registration or Event-Based Calls-to-Action

- Join Us!
- Sign Up!
- Subscribe
- Register Now!
- Sign Up Today!
- Register to Attend!
- Reserve Your Spot!
- Register to Receive \_\_\_\_\_
- Visit [URL] To Learn More!
- Get More Details

#### Trying, Downloading, or Ordering Something Calls-to-Action

- Try For Free!
- Claim \_\_\_\_\_ Now
- Start Your Trial!
- Download Now
- Request Yours Today
- Start Now
- Get It Now!...



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[jmct.io/writebetterc2a](https://jmct.io/writebetterc2a)

snippet describing what a managed service provider does.

Make no mistake, there is nothing wrong with your blog or a featured snippet being a page one result on Google. However when trying to increase your presence locally, you want your business to be the result of a local search, because that is where the majority of your customers are going to be coming from and the Local 3 Pack is where you should strive to be.

#### Where Does the Information in the Local 3 Pack Come From?

Google pulls the information which goes into the Local 3 Pack about your business from your Google My Business (GMB) account, not your website. Google My...



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## How To Use Word of Mouth to Find Leads During Social Distancing

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### Why Word of Mouth Marketing (WOM) Is Important

While word of mouth marketing seems to be a quaint notion people use to sell tchotchkes at community social events, WOM is, in reality, one of the most potent lead generators your business can utilize. For this reason, you still need to use it to promote your MSP, even if you aren't having face-to-face meetings. Here are some reasons why word of mouth marketing is so useful:

- 92% of consumers trust recommendations from people they know
- 50% of word of mouth recommendations are a leading factor to a purchase
- 72% of people trust online reviews as

- much as personal recommendations
- 84% of B2B decision makers start their process because of a referral

### MSP Marketing in the Age of Social Distancing

One of our ongoing goals is to help MSPs grow and thrive, but now that we are in the "new normal," contactless interactions are the standard, not the exception. This means that face-to-face communication opportunities may need to be curtailed, reducing opportunities for traditionally generated leads. Fortunately, the digital age has provided a wealth of opportunities to still take advantage of word of mouth marketing by updating it. Here are seven ways you can use social media to continue to communicate with potential clients and generate leads.

### Five Ways to Market Your MSP Using Word of Mouth

**User-Generated Content (UGC):** Content created by users of your services. Think testimonials and reviews, but social media comments are also found under this. This content is often a topical, real-time discussion of your business, services, or other topics of interest. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and others are well designed to provide UGC. When you put the social in social media, your ability to generate leads will grow.

- *Share Customer Testimonials:* Customer reviews provide the type of social...



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[jmct.io/womleads](http://jmct.io/womleads)

## The Optimal Content Marketing Strategy for MSP Marketers



Like any business, you want to sell more of your products and services. To do that, you have to let your target

audience - current and prospective clients - know about these services, which you do through marketing.

While researching the best way to market your MSP, you've probably come across the term "content marketing," and how important it is for successful marketing ROI. What is it exactly, and what sort of content marketing strategy is needed to sell managed services and other IT-related service offerings more effectively than the competition?

Let us tell you how can you use content marketing to take your MSP marketing strategy to the next level.

### Content Marketing...What Is It?

Before we talk about the strategy you need to use, you need to understand what exactly content marketing is.

Content marketing is marketing that involves creating and sharing various types of valuable, relevant, and consistent online content with the intention of stimulating interest in a product or service amongst the intended target audience.

You'll see it equated with search engine optimization (SEO). You'll see it equated with blog writing. It's definitely related to both of those, but it's so much more than that.

Blogging is considered by many marketers to be the foundation of content marketing. But, it's not just any blogging.

Effective content marketing blogs are often written after thorough keyword research, and incorporate the keywords in which that business is trying to rank higher in - hence why it's so closely tied to SEO.

This quote from well renowned marketing expert Neil Patel explains it nicely:

*"SEO demands content. Content marketing is content. There is no such thing as SEO without content. You need words, articles, substance, keywords, verbiage. I wince whenever I have to say it, because it's so*

*cliché, but it's true: Content is king." - Neil Patel*

As you can see, content marketing is **very** important, and it's something that you need to be doing to promote your MSP.

### It's Not Just Keyword-Filled Custom Blog Articles

When you hear the word "content," you may be thinking of blog content.

While blogging is an integral part of any effective content marketing strategy, there's more that you need to incorporate into your MSP's marketing efforts if you want that strategy to be effective.

Some other highly effective content marketing formats include:

- **Videos** such as webinars, explanatory, animated, testimonials, company culture, walkthroughs, webinars, and talking heads
- **Social Media Marketing** on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, and...



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## 2020 MSP Marketing Guide Part 1 of 4: Your Marketing Budget



In this four-part blog series, we're going to talk about what it takes to market and grow your MSP. We're going to look at this from the perspective of a small IT company,

but expand outwards to be inclusive for more established managed service providers.

Throughout this series, we're going to cover the following topics:

1. How much should MSPs spend on marketing and what to do when there isn't a marketing budget.
2. What's the bare-minimum marketing infrastructure you need to grow beyond just being a referral-based IT company.
3. How to budget and effectively launch aggressive, targeted campaigns
4. How to plan and justify the costs of marketing and get a return on investment.

For a lot of MSPs, trying to determine where to allocate your marketing budget to get the best return on investment can feel like herding kittens. We all have limited marketing budgets and don't want to choose a method that isn't going to show a return, so it's easy to feel like we need to be choosy when we pull the trigger on marketing services. Let's talk about how to determine your marketing spend, and what to do if your budget isn't very high (or doesn't exist yet).

### How Much Should My MSP Spend On Marketing?

As a general rule of thumb, new and growing

companies should plan on putting around 20 percent of their gross revenue into marketing. That number can start to go down for more established companies with massive brand recognition, but if you want to grow, be prepared to put effort into it. This is especially true when word-of-mouth growth starts to stagnate.

### What if My MSP Doesn't Have a Marketing Budget?

When times are tight, 20 percent can feel like a major barrier. For small one-man shops, growing your business might mean a lot of hard work and sneaker marketing. Sneaker marketing is where you are spending your evenings going to chamber of commerce events and taking prospects, clients, and referrals out to dinner. In other words, whatever it takes to physically get in front of the people you want to do business with.

At the very least, you need to be active in the places that other local business owners are, making friends and sharing business cards. Drive people back to your website, and make sure the content on your website reflects the conversations you are having. There's no easy way to say it; if you aren't able to pay for marketing, you'll need to bustle to get in front of people.

Granted, thanks to COVID-19 and the global pandemic, this has put a damper on a lot of face-to-face meetings. That doesn't mean sneaker marketing is dead in the water. Some organizations are still holding networking...



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