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Is Social Media Still Viable as a Marketing Tool?



Have you considered investing more resources into your social media presence, and due to all the drama, have you begun to question if social media is still the right call? If you're sitting on the fence, here are some reasons social media may still bring value to your MSP marketing plans.

Is Social Media Still Relevant?

For some time now, we have championed the idea that social media is necessary for your MSP marketing strategy. For a good reason, too: there are nearly 5 billion social media users worldwide, meaning there is a considerable pool of potential leads. However, the recent turmoil in the social media ecosystem has caused many businesses to reconsider their commitment...



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6 Tips You Can Easily Apply to Your Email Marketing Efforts



Email marketing is a hugely useful effort when you're trying to accomplish any of various business initiatives, and there are plenty of ways that you can make it even more useful. Let's run through some of our favorite email marketing tips that aren't challenging at all to implement if you're committed to enhancing your efforts through this medium.

Split Up Your Lists

You've likely been collecting email contacts (and the permission to email them) for some time. Have you taken the time to subdivide this list into different groups, based on various factors?

This is a process known as market segmentation, and is a very valuable endeavor to undergo. Think about it: would you engage with one of your prospect's employees the same way you'd engage with the CEO of the company? Would you bring identical sales pitches to try to sell your managed services to a healthcare group as you would a manufacturing company? What about someone you were just beginning communications with, as compared to a loyal, repeat customer?

Hopefully not—so why would you treat your email marketing any differently?

Creating varied lists to send different emails to allows you to better shape the message you're sending. Unfortunately, an email urging someone to make a purchase is ultimately going to be wasted if it is sent to someone without the authority to make that purchase, or to someone who wouldn't benefit from such a purchase. Dividing up your lists helps you more directly communicate with your recipients, allowing you to focus your messaging more specifically to their segment's shared concerns. Not only does this help keep your messages from being

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Does Marketing Have to Be Boring? (The Answer is No)



Okay, let's take a moment and address the elephant that's in the room, and has been in the room ever since the managed service industry really took off. Ready?

Managed services are really, really tough to make interesting—which can have an impact on your marketing efforts and their efficacy. So, let's take a few moments to consider how to make your marketing more engaging, without detracting from the message you're trying to convey.

The Problem: It's Hard to Sell Dry Steak

Stay with us here. One might think that something so many find desirable (like a steak dinner) would, as they say, sell itself. However, there are a few complications that you need to consider:

- Some people may assume that the steak you're offering wouldn't be worth the money.
- Some people may prefer to prepare their steaks themselves, and not want to trust someone else with that responsibility.
- Some people may have had a bad steak before, and are reluctant to try again.
- Some people may not find steak to their liking, making it a bad fit for them.

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6 Tips You Can Easily Apply to Your Email Marketing Efforts

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deleted unread or unsubscribed to, personalizing your emails can increase open rates and overall return on investment

Be Mindful of Mobile Devices

How do you most frequently check your business email? If you're like most people, you probably use a mobile device most often. In light of this, it pays to ensure that your emails are optimized for these devices—and that your website is as well, so slow loading times don't discourage visitors from clicking through the links your emails provide.

The foundational idea of mobile optimization is to make your content as easy to access and read as possible, so your marketing materials (emails included) need to reflect this kind of optimization.

Be Strategic While Writing Your Emails

There's a lot that you can do while

actually composing your emails to make them more effective for your marketing. Keeping them short and sweet is a good start, not focusing on the features that your services offer in favor of promoting the benefits. Adding some visually appealing elements, like templates, images, and even formatting can all help to get your message across more effectively as well.

Your emails can also be written in such a way that helps coax your recipients further through the marketing funnel, utilizing social proof to show them that your claims have merit and giving them clear calls-to-action to guide them to their next steps.

How do you do that?

Use Automation to Your Advantage!

Today's marketing solutions and email platforms can work together to make keeping in touch with your prospects and clients very much a "set it up and let it go"

effort. Automating what you can in your marketing makes it far easier to maintain the level of communication that proper marketing requires. Which sounds more sustainable to you: manually responding to each and every inquiry you get, or letting the system you have in place do it for you as you take care of your other responsibilities? By allowing an automated platform to ensure your entire campaign is sent out, your marketing efforts are much more likely to be consistent.

Personalize Your Messages

This is where the benefits of marketing segmentation really come into play. Take the determinations that you made while segmenting your lists and implement them into your different messages, crafting them to more directly target the recipient of that particular email. After all, a company's CEO and a member of...



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Does Marketing Have to Be Boring? (The Answer is No)

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- Some people may not understand what is included in the steak dinner, and instead stick to their usual dinner selection.

...and so on and so on. In essence, while a steak dinner might sound fairly self-explanatory and in need of little additional context, there are many reasons why someone may be reluctant to make the investment without more information. They may have only been served dry steak up to that point. Trying to sell managed services can create similar complications.

For example:

- Some people may assume that the services you're offering wouldn't be worth the money.
- Some people may prefer to manage their IT themselves, and not want to trust someone else with that responsibility.

- Some people may have had a bad experience with an MSP before, and are reluctant to try again.
- Some people may not rely on enough IT to justify managed services, making it a bad fit for them.
- Some people may not understand what is included in a managed service agreement, and instead stick to their usual sources of IT support—even if these sources are falling short.

So, what can you do to make your marketing more effective? To stick with our steak metaphor, you need to prepare it properly. Let's explore how to do so.

How to Prepare Your Marketing the Way You'd Prepare a Steak

Again, stay with us. Let's consider all the ways that the approach you'd take to plan your marketing efforts lines up with the ways you might prepare a nice steak dinner.

First, You Need to Determine How You Plan to Market Your Services/Prepare Your Steak

There are a lot of different ways you can cook a steak—you can cook it on the grill, in a cast iron, by broiling it, you can even prepare steak tartare. It can be cooked rare to well done. It's all a matter of preference. There are lots of different cuts of steak you have to select from, as well, that all cook in different ways

Likewise, there are a lot of options as to how you share your MSP's messaging. You have your website and the content on it, direct mail, email marketing, video content, and social media activity, as well as live events, webinars, and so many more. Just like people like their steak prepared differently, from the method of cooking to the dish that is made with it to the temperature it is cooked to...



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<https://jmct.io/beboring>

How to Host an Open House

It might not be the first thing you would think of as a means of getting potential business in the door, but you could certainly do a lot worse than to host an open house as a managed service provider. Let's go over why you might want to put on this kind of event, as well as a few tips and ideas to help you do so.

Why Would an MSP Host an Open House in the First Place?

Let's take a moment and consider why anyone would ever host an open house of any kind. Whether it's an open house in the sense of a home going up for sale, a school welcoming parents in to see their progeny's progress, or indeed a business opening its doors to visitors, the root motivation is the same: **starting a relationship**.

That's really it. An open house simply gives you the opportunity to welcome prospects to show them what you have to offer, invite business peers and associates to form bonds with you, and humanize your business to the public at large. It's a marketing opportunity, just like any public-facing event is, you just have control over it as the host.



This means, however, that it's up to you to ensure that your open house is as successful as possible. Let's run through how you can do this to the best of your ability, from start to finish.

How to Plan Your Open House

Hosting an open house is a bit of a layered marketing effort. After all, not only are you trying to spread awareness of your business, your services, and your company culture during the event, but you also need to publicize the event itself in order for anyone to show up.

Because of this duality, let's break down the planning process into these two sections—starting with how to plan and hold your open house itself, and then

diving into how you can market the event successfully.

What Goes into Hosting a Business Open House?

There's a lot that you need to consider. To some degree, you are simultaneously executing a marketing push and hosting a party. Either of these two things is challenging enough on its own, and combining them is going to add some level of complexity.

Fortunately, things can get a lot simpler if you just keep your needs organized.

Set a Date, and Establish a Budget

First of all, when are you going to hold your open house? When making this decision, try to account for things like holidays and other major community events. All of the promotion and outreach in the world would be wasted if your event's attendance plummeted when your invitees realized that it would conflict with another priority. Try to find a time that doesn't already have a major event...

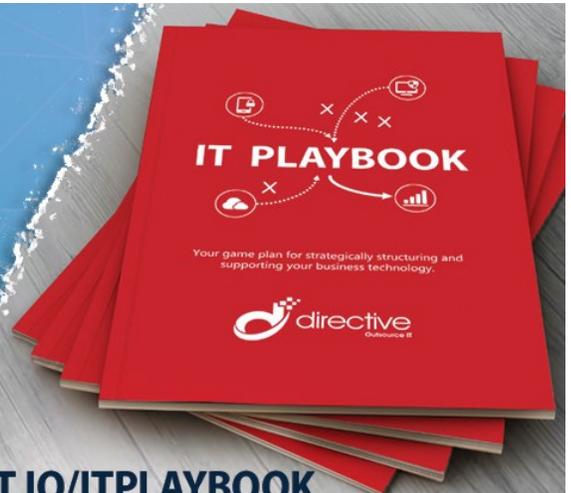


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Flywheel or Funnel: Which Lead Conversion Method is Best?



When it comes to your marketing, we've long been proponents of a concept known as the marketing funnel. However, we've recently been made aware of

another marketing approach—the marketing flywheel—and thought it may be interesting to compare the two to see if, as reports say, this latter option is the more effective one for modern businesses to use.

Comparing the Funnel to the Flywheel

Let's review how each approach works to really get an appreciation for how they divert from one another.

How a Marketing Funnel Works

We've talked about the marketing funnel before, but since it's been a while, let's break it down again.

The marketing funnel is a construct meant to assist you in optimizing your marketing processes, from acquisition to contract. Beginning at the collection phase, the start of the funnel is where you're trying to pull in as many potential business contacts as possible, and then your continued marketing efforts make up the rest of the funnel, drawing only those who are your most qualified and promising leads through the process until you're left with the someone ready to sign up for your services. From that point, you have the option of putting them through abbreviated funnels to upsell additional services to your new client, but otherwise, your efforts can largely focus on cultivating and maintaining a relationship between your company and theirs.

How a Marketing Flywheel Works

Alternatively, the marketing flywheel model works a bit differently. While the funnel has a distinct beginning and end, instead of a linear path, the flywheel—fitting to the name—follows a more circuitous one.

The idea is that, in addition to converting new prospects into paying customers, your marketing also focuses on continuing to cultivate interest in your existing clients. The funnel model has an entrance and an exit, whereas the wheel has no exit point and can therefore be used to continuously nurture one of your contacts at any point in the buyer's journey. As a result, you can continue to sell your products and services to your contacts, without resetting each time a new product or service is involved. The entire thing rotates around the idea of delighting your clientele so they stick around and share their experiences with others by serving their needs.

How to Build a Marketing Flywheel

There are a few steps that go into the construction of a flywheel, starting with...

Identifying What You Can Repurpose from Your Existing Funnels

In many ways, you can take your existing sales funnels and twist them into the beginnings of a flywheel—the key performance indicators you track, the content you share, and the campaigns you run—so you can incorporate them into your new efforts. Why start from scratch if you have things that work, after all?...



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Marketing Fact

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