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What Marketing Numbers Actually Matter for MSPs



Most marketing dashboards will show you a hundred numbers. Follows, clicks, impressions, opens, bounce rate, and sessions. Almost none of them answer the question you actually care about: Is my marketing working?

The three marketing metrics that actually tell you whether your efforts are working are the *pipeline created by marketing*, the *cost per acquired client*, and the *conversion rate at each stage of your funnel*. Everything else is context

at best, noise at worst.

That's not a provocative take. It's a practical filter. If a number can't tell you whether to act differently, it doesn't belong on your regular review.

The Numbers That Feel Important, but Aren't

Social media follower counts, email open rates, website sessions, and ad impressions are the most commonly watched numbers in most marketing setups. They're easy to see,

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If You're Not Staying in Front of Your Clients, Someone Else Is Filling That Space



The risk that one of your clients is being actively pitched by a competitor right now is higher than most MSPs want to admit. Not because your service is lacking... because your competitors are making calls, sending emails, and showing up consistently, silence is an easy opening to walk through.

You don't lose clients to better service as often as you lose them to better presence.

A newsletter is one of the highest-return touchpoints available to a service business, because the cost of sending one every month is nothing compared to the cost of losing a client you never saw leave.

Client relationships feel stickier than they are. An MSP can do excellent work for years, stay invisible between service calls, and still lose a client to a competitor who simply showed up more often.

Not with better service.

Not with a lower price.

Just more **presence**.

The Real Cost of Staying Quiet

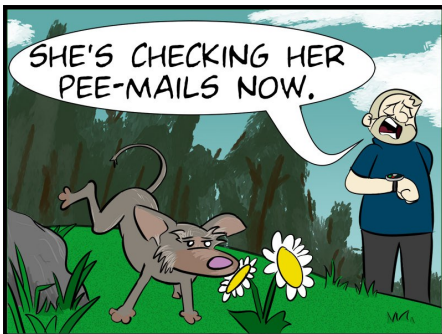
A marketing touchpoint, in the simplest terms, is any regular, intentional contact with a client or prospect outside of a service interaction. It doesn't ask for anything. It doesn't

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This Month's MSPW Campaign

Our Ultimate MSP Website subscribers get exclusive, ready-to-use marketing content every month!

This month's focus:
Why "It Looked Legit" Is How Most Cyber Incidents Start



Marketing Tidbits

"B2B buyers expect B2C experiences—without the fluff."
- Brian Solis

 info@joomconnect.com

 facebook.joomconnect.com

 linkedin.joomconnect.com

 x.joomconnect.com

 instagram.joomconnect.com

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they tend to go up over time with any consistent activity, and they look like evidence that something is happening.

The problem is that none of them connect to **revenue**. A dentist who follows your Facebook page has not demonstrated any interest in switching IT providers. A 32% email open rate is encouraging, but if those openers never become leads, it doesn't justify the campaign. Impressions measure how many times your content appeared in front of someone, not whether they *cared*.

These numbers are worth a glance when you're testing something new. That's very different than the numbers that help you measure your active, day-to-day success rates.

The Three Numbers That Actually Tell You Something

Pipeline Created by Marketing

This is the dollar value of qualified

opportunities generated by a marketing activity: a blog visit that turned into a completed form, a newsletter reader who booked a call, or a referral that came in through your LinkedIn profile. If your marketing is working, this number grows over time. If it's flat or you can't calculate it, you either don't have attribution set up or your marketing isn't reaching the right people yet.

This is the north star metric for any managed services firm doing marketing. Everything else you measure should help explain why this number is what it is.

Cost Per Acquired Client

Most IT businesses that track anything stop at cost per lead. That's better than nothing, but a lead isn't a client. Cost per acquired client (calculated as your...



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jmct.io/mktnumbers](https://jmct.io/mktnumbers)



Why Case Studies Are One of Your Most Underused Marketing Tools

You can describe your services all day. You can list your certifications, your response times, and your tools. But what actually moves a skeptical prospect closer to signing is a real story from a real client, told well. Case studies do that work, and most businesses are leaving them on the table.

The Pitch You're Giving and the One They Need to Hear

When a business owner is evaluating IT providers, they are not looking for a list of services. They have already seen that list from three other companies. What they want to know is: what happened when you worked with someone like *me*, with a problem like *mine*?

That is where most IT marketing falls flat. It describes capabilities, but it does not show outcomes. A case study bridges that gap by putting an actual client situation on the page, the problem they had before working with you, the work you did, and the difference they are experiencing now.

That is not the same as a testimonial, though those matter too. A case study walks a reader through a complete situation. It gives context. It shows your process in action, not just your...



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The Marketing Channel That Costs More Effort Than Money



You can outspend a competitor on Google ads and still lose the deal to the IT company whose owner

the prospect already met at a chamber breakfast. The cheapest channel available to you is also the one most owners skip, because it asks for the one thing money can't replace.

The most effective marketing channel for most growing IT businesses isn't paid, digital, or automated. It's showing up in person, consistently, in the places your prospects already gather.

We call it "sneaker marketing" because the only real cost is putting on your shoes and going. It costs effort instead

of dollars, which is exactly why it works and exactly why most owners avoid it.

Here's the logic: your best clients almost never come from a cold ad. They come from someone who already trusts you, or from a face they recognize. A regional manufacturer, a dental group, a law office: when their current IT setup finally breaks their patience, they don't open a browser and start comparing feature lists. They ask the people they know. They think about who they've actually met. If you're the name that comes up in that conversation, you've already won before the search ever happens...



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announce a problem. It just shows up and says: we're here, we're paying attention, here's something worth your time.

Many managed service providers have zero regular touchpoints with their clients. No newsletter, no monthly email, nothing that lands unless something's broken or a contract is due.

From the client's side, that silence reads as absence. Not maliciously—they know you're there when they need you—but they're not thinking about you when they don't. So when a competitor calls with a pitch, there's no recent positive impression to push back against. The last thing they remember from you was a bill.

A newsletter changes that math. It shows up every month, whether anything is wrong or not. It says: we're thinking about your business, here's something useful, here's what's going on with us. That's not a sales pitch. That's presence. This presence, compounded over twelve months, is what makes a client feel like switching would mean giving something up.

Why Print Still Works (and Better Than You'd Expect)

Here's something most service businesses have stopped thinking about: the physical mailbox.

Everyone is fighting for inbox attention. Promotional emails, newsletters, follow-ups, vendor pitches...it's a crowded, noisy place, and most of it gets skimmed or deleted.

The physical mailbox, by contrast, is almost empty. Real mail is rare enough now that it actually gets handled. Held. **Read.**

A printed newsletter arriving at a client's office once a month doesn't compete with much. Your client's accountant isn't sending one. Their HR software vendor isn't sending one. Their last IT company almost certainly wasn't sending one. You show up in the mailbox, and you're immediately different, because almost nobody else is there.

Print costs more than email. It also does something email can't: it sits on a desk. It gets passed to a colleague. It doesn't disappear when someone closes a tab. The MSPs who run both a

monthly email and a regular print piece have a presence that's genuinely hard to replicate with digital alone.

What Should Actually Be in It

So what does a good MSP newsletter actually include? Useful information your clients care about...

- Security updates worth knowing
- Tips for the tools they use every day
- Things happening in the business world that affect how they operate

...plus a layer of content that could only come from your company. That second part is what most MSPs skip, and it's the part that matters most.

A note about something you worked on recently. A mention of the local event your team attended. A holiday message that sounds like it came from an actual person, not a template.

These are short, and they're the parts clients actually remember. They're also the part that turns a content delivery into a relationship touchpoint...



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Your Best Sales Rep Is a Customer You Already Helped

Every prospect wonders if you can actually do the job. A case study answers that for you, in your customer's words, before you ever get on the call. It turns a finished project into proof that closes the next one.

- Shorten the sales cycle with a real story that addresses objections before they arise.
- Win skeptical buyers by showing that their exact problem has been solved for someone like them.
- Give your sales team something to hand over that does the convincing for them.
- Keep the credibility, lose the work. We interview your client and write the whole thing.

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