

Learn Proven Strategies and Field-Tested Tactics through Real World Success Stories

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FOREWORD BY RAY WANG

"42 Rules for B2B Social Media Marketing" Book Excerpt

Learn Proven Strategies and Field-Tested Tactics through Real-World Success Stories

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Foreword by Ray Wang

A confluence of forces in society, technology, environment, economy, and politics has emerged to transform B2B marketing as we know it. Prospects overwhelmed by a barrage of irrelevant content and offers automatically tune out marketing noise. Cold calls go unanswered. Email blasts are unopened. Marketing literature is thrown by the wayside. Traditional marketing techniques face fatigue and continue to fail their marketers.

Compounding marketing fatigue, most prospects already know more about your product than your best sales reps. Prospects have the tools to connect with peers and form their own conclusions in the sales cycle. As marketing and support converge, savvy organizations have discovered that their customers know how to support each other better than their best service reps. In fact, marketing has been turned inside out and outside in. Competitors can read everything about your customers and how well your products and solutions fare in the market. Transparency leaves many enterprises and brands exposed.

Inside the boardroom and executive suite, panic has set in. Leaders used to constructs of one-way communications, hierarchies, and command and control models realize social media in B2B marketing is more than a shift. The corporate culture must evolve as enterprises move from transactional systems to engagement systems.

As the world continues to shift from transaction to engagement, a focus on relevancy and context will emerge. This shift to engagement platforms will transform marketing for the next decade and bring sales and support closer to marketing than ever before. Organizations must relearn how to engage in this new model or risk relevancy.

While some old adages still apply, B2B social media marketing comes with new rules. Organizations and brands must rediscover how to mix social media into marketing efforts, create content for social media, leverage key social media sites, use social media in the sales cycle, and put social media into practice.

Success will require marketers to embrace this change. The new medium comes with new risks and new opportunities. The 42 rules outlined here by Michael, Peter, and Natascha articulate how to succeed in this new paradigm. Consequently, CMOs, marketing professionals, and customer experience leaders should take note of the 42 rules in the design of their B2B social media marketing programs.

R "Ray" Wang Principal Analyst & CEO Constellation Research

About Ray Wang

R "Ray" Wang is the Principal Analyst and CEO at Constellation Research, Inc. He's also the author of the popular enterprise software blog "A Software Insider's Point of View." With viewership in the millions of page views a year, his blog provides insight into how disruptive technologies and new business models impact the enterprise. Prior to founding Constellation, he was a founding partner and research analyst for enterprise strategy at Altimeter Group and one of the top analysts at Forrester Research for enterprise strategy.

Ray's blog: http://softwareinsider.org/ Ray's complete bio: http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-f01¹

2 Foreword

^{1.} www.constellationrg.com/users/rwang0

We believe the B2B (business-to-business) marketer is underserved by material on social media. For example, many social media conferences are B2C-focused (business-to-consumer) and when people ask questions about B2B they often receive blank looks in response. We, on the other hand, work in Global 2000 companies selling to other Global 2000 companies and that is our primary focus.

The primary difference in enterprise B2B marketing is that the sale is more complex, typically high dollar value, where multiple people need to agree to a purchase and those people have different concerns which need to be addressed during the sales cycle. And, the sales cycle typically runs several months with different stakeholders participating at different points in the process. Unlike selling a piece of consumer electronics, many people can say "no," and the "wow, this is cool" factor is minimized by the many meetings to discuss the purchase. B2B marketers also have a smaller set of social media marketing tactics available than our B2C brethren, and we don't usually have the gratification of generating immediate sales from a great campaign.

When we had our first meeting about writing this book, the first question we asked ourselves was, "who is our audience?" After some debate, we concluded that the primary person is a product marketing professional, campaign marketing professional, product manager or other marketing professional who is familiar with traditional marketing and is now being asked to include social media marketing into their mix. In addition, if you manage one or more of these groups, this book will make you conversant in the strategy and tactics of social media.

We are fortunate to work in environments that encourage risk and experimentation, which gives us the freedom and flexibility to try many social media concepts without worrying too much about the immediate, measurable return.

We are active in social media as marketers, educators and speakers. Current and former colleagues come to us for advice on social media marketing, and we find we have to discuss the same basic concepts over and over.

This is our chance to pay it forward, allow others to learn from our experience and mistakes, and to pass on our best practices. And, perhaps, hand someone this book rather than provide another hour of personal training.

There is already lots of great information available on social media (which we will point you to), but not in a single location, not in short, accessible chunks, and not with so many real-world examples. Busy marketing managers and executives know that social media is important to their success, but they do not have time to read multiple 300-page books on the various disciplines within social media marketing. We chose the 42 Rules series because it has the right balance between covering the topic comprehensively and being an actionable, brief, easy read.

Our goal is for this book to be a training reference for new employees and colleagues just starting to venture into social media marketing. We hope it will quickly make them functional (or at least functionally literate) in social media marketing. For more seasoned social media marketers, this book can fill in gaps or provide a starting point to leverage new social channels.

One final note: social media is in its early days. Things are changing very rapidly. We will cover some "why" along with the "how-to" so that you'll be able to apply the tactics to new social media sites as they become available. You can also follow the book and ask questions at http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-i02.²

Let's get started!

Intro

^{2.} www.B2BSocialMediaMarketingRules.com

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Go Social, Now

Social media gives you the opportunity to show up in buyers' search results and to show up higher than in the past because search engines favor fresh content. I (Michael) started blogging in 2008. Although there was not much research on social media at the time, there was a lot of discussion in the marketing press. I tried it and it worked. One measure of success talked about, even in 2008, was better search ranking.

Fast forward to today; you've been asked to start doing social media. You hear statements like, "We need to get into social media," or "We need to be on Twitter or Facebook, or <fill in the social network>." Why is this so important? Since 2008, a lot of research has been done on the topic. It is not just marketing buzz anymore, the facts are clear:

- If you consider a company's home page as the place you start learning about a company, then search engine results are the new home page. 93% of B2B buyers start their search for a product or service on a search engine,³ not your website. Correct use of social media gives you the opportunity to show up in their search results and to show up higher than in the past because search engines favor fresh content that social media provides. While you might update your website monthly, you'll post to a blog once or twice a week and Facebook or Twitter once or twice a day.
- A 2009 study on trust shows that 90% of people trust recommendations from known people and only 70% trust brand websites.⁴ Social media gives you a chance to be that known person and increase the trust of your brand.

blog.marketo.com/blog/2011/08/optimizing-landing-pages ----why-testing-is-critical.html

^{3.} http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-0200

- A social media lead (inbound) comes at a significantly reduced cost compared to leads from traditional outbound channels.5
- Social media can humanize your company. It exposes the individuals that are involved in designing, building, and selling products and services. It allows these experts to form relationships with customers and participate in online discussions. Since people buy from people, this is a big plus.
- In June 2011, Google added a per person social component to its search results. 6 which means that if a searcher is "connected" to your company (e.g. following you on Twitter or LinkedIn), you will show up higher in their personal results than for someone not connected. For more on how social bookmarking sites influence search, see Rule 32 ("Boost Search Placement with Social Media Optimization").
- 9 out of 10 buyers say that when they're ready to buy, they'll find you-since using social media helps your search engine optimization (SEO) and social media optimization (SMO), you will improve your ability to be found.
- Content marketing is a subset of social media marketing. Recent research by Econsultancy and Adobe found that marketers are more likely to agree than disagree that "content marketing is more important than advertising."7

From The 2012 Social Media Marketing Industry Report⁸

- The number one benefit of social media marketing is generating more business exposure (reported 85% of marketers), followed by increasing traffic (69%) and providing marketplace insight (65%).
- 58% of marketers indicated generating leads and developing loyal fans are benefits of social media.
- Those investing a minimum of 6 hours per week in social media marketing saw improvements in search engine rankings. Marketers selling to other businesses were more likely to achieve this benefit (59%) than those selling to consumers (50%).
- 58% of marketers who have been using social media for more than 3 years report it has helped them improve sales.

Social media marketing is very important in B2B marketing. While it sounds like a lot of work, don't despair; in Rule 39 ("Make Social Media Part of Your Job"), we'll show you how to use social media to replace some of your current workload.

blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/consumer/global-advertising-consumers-trust-realfriends-and-virtual-strangers-the-most/

5. http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-020

www.hubspot.com/Portals/53/docs/resellers/reports/state_of_inbound_ marketing.pdf

http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-0206 googleblog.blogspot.com/2012/01/search-plus-your-world.html

http://bit.lv/b2bmkt-0207

www.marketingpilgrim.com/2011/07/is-content-marketing-better-thanadvertising.html

8. http://bit.lv/b2bmkt-0208

www.socialmediaexaminer.com/social-media-marketing-industry-report-2012/

^{4.} http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-0202

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Integrate Social Media into Your Marketing Plan

Social media makes it much easier for you to put marketing assets in places where your customers and prospects can find them. Having spent the past two decades in various marketing roles, I (Peter) have found that starting with a solid marketing plan greatly increases the probability of a successful product launch, awareness campaign, or lead generation program. I generally start with the target audience and our goals and use those parameters to create a detailed plan. Social media does not change this process. It does, however, add some new activities. Social media makes it much easier for you to put marketing assets, which you were creating anyway, in places where your customers and prospects can find them.

Use Case

When I (Peter) create a new marketing asset, such as updating a datasheet to support a new version of a product, I:

- Post a status update with the URL on the relevant LinkedIn page.
- Tweet about it and include a link to the document.
- Blog about the benefits of the new version and include a link to the document.
- Upload it, related presentations, and white papers to SlideShare.
- Start an online discussion about why the new features are relevant to my audience and include a link to the document.
- Monitor existing online conversations and engage, quoting the content.
- Invite key customers to participate in the dialogue on social media.

A new customer success story provides you with lots of great content to leverage on social media. If your customer is doing a webinar to share their positive experience with your product, you can promote it using social media and engage with your online community to determine what they are most interested in learning about.

While traditional marketing assets (datasheets, solution briefs, white papers, slide decks) still play a significant role in the sales process, social media has shifted expectations about how people like to consume content. Now, people expect to find information in easy to digest chunks, in a multitude of formats, including video, and in places where they go to find information already, including search engines.

Marketers often make the mistake of viewing social media in isolation when they really need an integrated marketing plan. In this scenario, a social media strategy supports the overall marketing strategy and is not seen as a detached activity.

For campaigns, social media provides additional channels to reach your audience. In addition to direct marketing via email, traditional mail, and phone, you can put your offers and calls to action on social sites where people in your target market congregate. As with other digital marketing initiatives, you can track which sites, headlines, and offers deliver the best results. When you have to provide the return on investment for the time and money you have been spending on social media, you will have the information you need to create reports, analyze, and optimize your marketing spending.

Also consider doing a podcast (see Rule 11, "Podcasts are Easy") or a video (see Rule 20, "Exploit Video with YouTube"); it can be as simple as a 2-minute white board session recorded with a pocket video camera.

Social media provides an opportunity for dialogue with customers and prospects, enabling you to focus your marketing activities on what matters to them most. You can learn their priorities and challenges, allowing your product managers to fine tune product roadmaps as they learn new information about where their solutions fit into the overall market.

If your sales team is typical, they continually request new campaigns and marketing materials so they have a compelling reason to go talk to their accounts. Since you are building these assets anyway, why not leverage them on social media to build awareness and generate leads? Your credibility as a marketing professional, and probably part of your bonus, depends on it.

SlideShare Builds **Awareness**

I tried SlideShare a few years ago, uploading presentations from our annual user conference. In one week we had over 4,000 views.

As one of the top 150 sites on the Internet, Slide-Share may be one of the most underutilized resources for businesses to reach decision makers. Here are some additional statistics:

- Over 60 million visitors every month, 14 million registered users¹⁸
- Has five times more traffic from business owners than other popular websites like LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter¹⁹
- SlideShare was recently voted amongst the World's Top 10 tools for education & eLearning²⁰

As it sounds, SlideShare.net is a slide (think PowerPoint and Keynote) sharing site. It also allows document and video sharing. SlideShare has free and "pro" accounts. The "pro" accounts are reasonably priced and allow owners to brand the page, remove ads and receive leads (people who view or download the slides).

Use Case

I (Michael) tried SlideShare a few years ago, uploading presentations from a user conference. In one week we had over 4,000 views. Months later we added "lead tracking" and started receiving between 100 and 300 "leads" per month. I put "leads" in quotes because there is no qualification on these contacts other than they

^{18.} http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-1911

blog.slideshare.net/2011/10/04/five-years-of-slideshare/

^{19.} http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-1912 contently.com/blog/slideshare-content-marketing/ 20. http://bit.lv/b2bmkt-1913

showed some interest in the topic. But even with that limitation, you have a group who is self-selecting and can be put into a marketing funnel for more qualification.

Here is our suggestion for getting started with SlideShare:

- Invest some time looking around SlideShare. Look at your competitors and search on your keywords. Tip—after you get the results from an initial search, SlideShare will give you the option to filter results and search for users.
- 2. Set up a test account for experimentation.
- **3.** Pay to upgrade to a branded "pro" account and brand it. Slide-Share allows you to select a background image. Also fill in all the profile information.
- 4. Prepare presentations for uploading. SlideShare grabs all the text on the presentation slides AND the notes and puts them in a transcript that shows up after the comments. Unless your notes are for public consumption, remove them or upload as PDF. Make sure you have a call to action in your slides. We end every slide set with a short URL to a landing page or a blog related to the topic. Also consider having Twitter, Facebook, or other account information on the ending slides.
- 5. Upload the presentation.
- **6.** Fill in metadata; this is very important. Both SlideShare and search engines index the presentations. Your description and tags should be SEO rich. Also select the appropriate category.
- 7. Manage tags across presentations. Use a common term in the tags for presentations you want grouped together. SlideShare allows you to group presentations in boxes based on tags. We create event tags to group all the presentations given at an event or by a topic. Even if you don't use the box feature, a user can click on any tag and get a list of presentations containing that tag.

Viewers will only have the slide contents to get your message, unless you have put in notes. Another feature of SlideShare is called Slidecast that allows you to play any slide deck synchronized with an audio file you upload. This allows you to provide both the visuals and the explanation to your viewers.

SlideShare is a very effective way to get an audience for presentations, documents, and videos.

Pinterest CreatesReferrals

The more pictures pinned and repinned, the higher the traffic and SEO effect.

Pinterest has soared out of obscurity to become a top business referral source. As of March 2012, referral traffic from Pinterest was higher than from LinkedIn or Google+, but behind Facebook, StumbleUpon, Google and Twitter.26

The basic concept of Pinterest is to create topic boards. You then pin pictures and videos from the web, or upload pictures to your boards. Others can follow you, repin your items to their own board, comment on, or like an item.

This allows users to create online "catalogues" where every picture pinned from your B2B site becomes a referral URL back to your site. Consequently, the more pictures pinned and repinned, the higher the traffic and SEO effect. You can further add URLs and hashtags to the description area of each picture; a must when you upload instead of pin.

The majority of Pinterest users in the USA are women²⁷ with a relatively high level of education. ²⁸ The most popular topics are: home, arts & crafts, and style/fashion. ²⁹ In the UK, the majority of Pinterest members are male.30

^{26.} http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-2201

www.business2community.com/pinterest/pinterest-drivesmore-traffic-than-linkedin-and-google-plus-0130492

^{27.} http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-2202

totalpinterest.com/pinterest-why-its-not-just-for-girls/ 28 http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-2203 www.ignitesocialmedia.com/social-networks/pinter-

est-demographic-data/ 29. http://bit.ly/b2bmkt-220 mashable.com/2012/03/12/pinterest-most-popular-categories-boards/

Pinterest is a no-brainer for B2C but how can B2B companies leverage Pinterest best?

For B2B, the best approach is to create boards that convey company culture and values, like sustainability—think solar panels on an office roof—or company volunteering. Consider also posting pictures of what your product might help create, e.g. if it's software, post pictures of the car that gets manufactured using your software. To dazzle on Pinterest, you need crisp and impressive imagery.

A great use of Pinterest for B2B is to create a contest. Ask customers to take a picture with your product and post it with a particular hashtag to their boards, then Tweet or email you the link. The prizewinner could be the person with the most likes for their picture.

A measure of success is when pictures get pinned from your website, repinned, liked and commented on. While a person pinning from your site is already aware of your brand, a repinner might be an untapped opportunity; try to engage this person.

Free tools like Pinpuff and Pinreach provide statistics on followers, likes, repins, influencers, and most popular pins.

While it is unclear if B2B companies will be able to generate revenues from Pinterest in the long run, there is no doubt that the site provides opportunities for businesses to increase brand awareness.

Key tips on using Pinterest for B2B:

- Install the "Pin It" button on your website to encourage visitors to pin. Use
 pictures in your blogs that can stand alone; also consider creating Infographics and videos.
- Use thisURL: http://pinterest.com/source/<domain>.com to see what has been "pinned" from your and your competitors' site.
- To maximize success, keep pinning and become part of the community.
 Spread out your posts over several days vs. posting five pictures at once.
 Follow people and their boards, "like" their pins, and comment.
- Make sure "Hide your Pinterest profile from search" is turned off, but enable publishing to Facebook.
- Apps like "Share As Image" and "Pinstamatic.com" let you pin non-picture content like websites, dates and places.

Keep in mind that copyright laws apply. So don't pin proprietary pictures that you don't own, and watermark your own images. Be aware you are granting broad rights to Pinterest by pinning your content.

www.webanalyticsworld.net/2012/03/pinterest-usage-and-growth-us-vs-uk.html

^{30.} http://bit.lv/b2bmkt-2205

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Set Goals and Measure

Don't bite off more than you can chew, but experiment and fine-tune before you do more complex things.

Setting clear goals for your social media marketing activities prevents you from spending precious resources without delivering a clear business outcome.

Follow these three steps to define goals that create impact:

Be clear about your business

 Are you planning to become a thought leader in a certain market segment or generate additional revenue? Common objectives are awareness or lead generation. How will you measure success?

Define and locate your target audience

- Who is your target audience? What are their roles and titles? What geography are they in? Are they net new prospects or existing customers? Is your audience in distinct industries or horizontal?
- Identify if each audience requires unique messaging. For example, most business solutions have people who use the product and decision makers who approve the purchase. Very often, these two audiences do not overlap, have different pain points, and get their information from different places.
- Once you understand your target audience, you
 can identify the right "watering holes" for your
 social media activity. Watering holes are the
 places on social media where your audience goes
 to find information and potentially engage in conversations, e.g., on LinkedIn or Twitter. Your
 target audience and watering holes dictate what
 type of content you will need to produce.

Define your marketing and social media goals

- Marketing goals are generally a sub-set of a company's business objectives. Social media goals define how social media is used to support the marketing objectives. Pick just one of your marketing objectives to begin; for example, create thought leadership. Then define metrics to measure success. You may need separate goals and metrics for each channel.
- If you have multiple target audiences, this is the time to decide who you
 want to focus on first. Especially, if you are just getting started with social
 media, start small. Don't bite off more than you can chew, but experiment
 and fine-tune before you do more complex things.

Use Case

I (Natascha) was hired to provide social media consulting for a social media startup. It became clear pretty fast that the company had not set well-defined marketing goals yet. After completing that step, they needed to create personas and clear messaging for each target audience. Social media needed to be part of their integrated marketing plan instead of an isolated program.

The next step was to generate content for each audience that could be used to engage in appropriate social media channels. Fortunately, the company had a number of talented bloggers who were subject matter experts. They initially committed to 2–3 blogs per week to gain traction. After week three, the company was picked up by a Google Alert for the first time.

Creating content, maintaining a corporate Twitter handle, or participating in groups on LinkedIn was a bigger challenge. While it was clear from the marketing goals we defined that all these channels were valid watering holes, there were no resources to manage these channels on an ongoing basis. The client decided to hire a social media manager who could create an editorial calendar for their blog, manage their social media presence, and track metrics. Until the person started, the social media activities were limited to blogging. They tracked blog views and comments, as well as click-throughs from URLs in the blogs to information on their corporate website. So, one success metric might be reducing the cost per click by 30%.

The lesson learned was that one needs to be realistic about the objectives that can be achieved. Make your goals attainable.

About the Authors



Michael Procopio has more than 25 years' experience in high-tech organizations as a business leader and technology and marketing manager. As a social media strategist he consults with companies from small to Fortune 1000 on social media and social intelligence. Previously he managed HP Software's overall social media presence and direction where a social media lead gen activity yielded a 2500+% ROI. Michael speaks internationally about social media and is a member of the Society for New Communications Research, IEEE, and was in the HP Digital Marketing Council and is an HP trained Wikipedian. Michael holds a BS in Computer Science and Electrical Engineering from California State University, Long Beach. He resides along California's Central Coast. Learn more at http://mprocopio.com.



Peter Spielvogel has been a high-tech marketing executive since the early 1990s and a business-to-business social media practitioner since 2005. Peter uses social media extensively to understand market requirements, build awareness among current and future customers, engage in online discussions, promote events, and generate targeted leads. He leverages wikis to share fresh content among marketing, sales, product management, and various technical teams. In his current role at SAP, he provides product marketing and product management expertise to a customer-focused development group. Previously, at HP, he led a global product marketing team. Prior to HP, he held executive-level marketing roles at several startup companies. Peter's education includes an MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth and a BS in Engineering from Princeton University. He is based in Silicon Valley, California.

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Natascha Thomson has over 15 years' experience in B2B marketing with a focus on using social media to connect people for business since 2007. She is the founder and owner of MarketingXLerator, a B2B social media marketing consultancy. In this role, she is able to draw from her background in online community marketing, competitive intelligence, partner marketing, analyst relations, product marketing, and product management. Most recently, as an executive at SAP, Natascha provided social media consulting and training for SAP organizations, including strategy development and ROI measurement. She has worked in Europe and the USA at startups and large corporations, including HP and EMC. Natascha's education includes an Executive MBA from St. Mary's College of California, and a Master of Commerce and Arts from the University of Passau, Germany. She lives in Silicon Valley, California. Learn more at http://www.MarketingXLerator.com.

The authors are donating all their royalties to the Khan Academy, an organization committed to providing a free world-class education to anyone anywhere. The publisher is matching their contribution dollar for dollar.

Contributor:

Chad Summervill has over 10 years' experience in B2B digital marketing. He currently leads Enterprise Digital Engagement & Events for HP Marketing Strategy and Innovation. Chad works on digital programs including Enterprise Events Mobile Ecosystem which provides the vendor and its customers new ways to interact at large conferences and trade shows. Previously at HP, Chad has led B2B mobile programs and interactive marketing for HP Networking, Small and Medium Business, and the Public Sector. Chad holds an MBA from the University of Phoenix and a BA in Music from Western Washington University. He can be found in Boise, ID at a local coffee shop or at http://www.chadsummervill.com.

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Getting "42 Rules for B2B Social Media Marketing" (http://happyabout.com/42rules/b2bsocialmediamarketing.php)

42 Rules for B2B Social Media Marketing can be purchased as an eBook for \$14.95 or tradebook for \$19.95 at:

http://happyabout.com/42rules/b2bsocialmediamarketing.php or at other online and physical book stores.

Please contact us for quantity discounts sales@happyabout.info or to be informed about upcoming titles bookupdate@happyabout.info or phone (408-257-3000)

"A must-read for those responsible for digital and social program execution within progressive B2B organizations." Maggie Fox, Founder and CEO, Social Media Group

"'42 Rules' offers valuable, practical guidance for B2B marketers at all levels."

Mark Yolton, SVP of Digital, Social and Communities, SAP

"Whether you want to build your brand online or turn your organization into a social business, this book is a great resource."

Dave DeWalt, Former CEO and President, McAfee



MICHAEL PROCOPIO

consults with companies from small to Fortune 1000 on social media and social intelligence.



PETER SPIELVOGEL

uses social media extensively to listen to customer sentiment, build awareness, and generate targeted leads for SAP.



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