

ANALYZE AND REVISE

How to reach your buyers where they are,
from prospect to post-sale



INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital transformation and created a rapid adoption of remote employees and distributed teams that left many managed service providers drinking from the proverbial firehose of current customer needs and new customer requests. The changing business landscape is creating impressive growth in the MSP industry—by 2025 the global managed services market is expected to grow to **\$329.1 billion**, at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 8.1% between 2020 and 2025.

In the new normal of hybrid workplaces, MSPs are becoming an essential part of most business operations, with **75 percent of SMBs** already outsourcing some of their IT to a managed service provider. And it's easy to see why when you look at the numbers—it's estimated that managed services reduce IT costs by **25-45 percent** and increase operational efficiency by 45-65 percent.

PART 1

CREATING AN EFFECTIVE
MARKETING FRAMEWORK

PART 2

CONTENT AND MESSAGING
FOR EACH STAGE OF THE
BUYER JOURNEY

PART 3

USING DATA TO GENERATE
MORE QUALIFIED LEADS
AND CLOSE MORE DEALS

With service in such high demand, competition becomes stiff as more providers flood the market—in 2019 ConnectWise estimated there were 40,000 MSPs in the US alone—and MSPs looking to gain an edge are focusing on marketing and messaging that speaks to the unique needs of their target audience. And a more personalized approach to marketing your MSP can be powerful—in 2020, customer experience beat out product and price as the key brand differentiator.

But what's the ideal experience for your unique customers? In this three-part guide, you'll learn how to make your MSP stand out from the competition and build a marketing plan that covers the buyer journey from prospect through post-sale.



FROM DATA TO INSIGHTS TO STRATEGY

Analytics are key when trying to understand how your audience is responding to your marketing messaging. They can tell you what emails are converting the most leads, which content is driving phone calls, and which webpages get the most traffic.

For instance, if you notice that web traffic on your security services page has been increasing over time that could indicate an increase in security concerns from potential customers. You can then create ads, email copy, social posts, a blog, video or more to speak specifically to your MSPs security capabilities for your target audience. Your marketing strategy and plan should be a living document that is constantly being revisited, revised and optimized based on data and customer behavior and feedback.

Here are some of the things you should be tracking while marketing your MSP.



MSP MARKETING REPORTING CHECKLIST



Digital Marketing

- Search engine rankings
- Ad impressions and clicks



Website

- Total traffic
- Pageviews
- Time spent on page
- Bounce rate
- Backlinks
- Form fills



Social Media

- Audience growth
- Post engagement (likes, shares and comments)
- Performance by time of day
- Performance by day
- Performance by subject or topic
- Link clicks



Email

- Open rate
- Click rate
- Click-to-open rate
- Link clicks
- Performance by day
- Performance by time
- Performance by subject



Content

- Views
- Downloads



WHAT & HOW TO TRACK

WEBSITES, DIGITAL AND CONTENT

A content management system (CMS) is key when managing your web content. A CMS is a platform like Wordpress that allows you to manage pages, links and other information about your website. A lot of CMS platforms now are user-intuitive and don't take a lot of effort to manage, so they're perfect for making quick edits without needing coding experience or a dedicated website hire.

Typically, you want to analyze traffic and site performance using Google Analytics and Google Search Console because they're the industry standard and provide a wealth of helpful information. Ideally you want to track your visitors on a daily, weekly and monthly basis, the number of views on each page and the bounce rate (which are users who come to your site and immediately leave after one page view). Analytics will also tell you if you have any broken links on the site you need to fix, crawl errors. These are quick fixes to help improve the performance of your site.

For digital, you can monitor your paid ad (if you have them) performance via the search engine running your ads, and there are dedicated software platforms for monitoring your search engine optimization (SEO) efforts. Monitoring your SEO rankings will help you identify pages and content that are performing well and if your marketing efforts are resulting in a greater number of people trusting your site, your brand and your content.

ASK AN EXPERT

"Site assessment tools provide your site's overall health score. Now, what's interesting to me is that not all of them are the same. Some tools are going to score a website differently, depending on the philosophy it uses. If you can only pick one, I would recommend focusing on Google's concept of [Core Web Vitals](#), which measures the user's experience of page speed."

Miluse Vajdani

Director of Demand Generation, Liongard



WHAT & HOW TO TRACK**SOCIAL MEDIA**

There are tools in each platform for analytics, so you can always go there and look at how you're doing, but you'd have to go into each separate account to view your information. For a more centralized view, there are platforms like Hubspot or Sprout Social or Hootsuite that aggregate all of your data into one location. What you want to track are your followers, impressions (how many people your post reached), and your engagements (how many people like, comment and share your posts). And if you're trying to drive people from your social site to your website or other landing pages, then clicks are another thing you'll want to track.

ASK AN EXPERT

"Don't think the only way to get business is through events or email or phone calls. You can get the same type of leads through your social media accounts. You can find people on social media that maybe haven't seen your website or heard of your company and suddenly they're seeing your content and they become interested in your services and you want to make sure you're driving them from your social account to your website so they can fill out a demo request or lead form."

Alexandria Micek
Social Media Specialist, Liongard



WHAT & HOW TO TRACK**EMAILS**

For emails, whichever platform you use will give you basic metrics like open, click and click-to-open ratios. A lot of focus is put on open rates that, while important, don't tell the whole picture about your email performance. Much more important to track are clicks and click-to-open ratios. Clicks will tell you how many readers are interested in what your email is offering, and a click-to-open ratio will tell you if your subject lines are grabbing enough attention. You'll want to pay attention and track which subject lines, subjects and CTAs perform the best and, from there, you can revisit other emails and tweak them to perform better.

One other thing to monitor when you're sending mass emails is your sending score or sender reputation. If, all of a sudden, you notice a sudden drop in email performance, this could mean that your sender reputation has been damaged. Typically, this occurs when using old or purchased lists, so it's important to always cleanse your lists of old data and make sure you're only sending emails to people who have chosen to receive them.



REVISE AND OPTIMIZE

Once you've gathered all of your numbers, it's time to analyze and revise your marketing approach based on results. For instance, if you notice that web traffic on your security services page has been increasing over time that could indicate an increase in security concerns from potential customers. You can then create ads, email copy, social posts, a blog, video or more to speak specifically to your MSPs security capabilities for your target audience. Your marketing strategy and plan should be a living document that is constantly being revisited, revised and optimized based on data and customer behavior and feedback. Here are some helpful tips and best practices for optimizing your marketing program.



TIPS FOR DIGITAL MARKETING OPTIMIZATION

Pump up the volume! Increase your activity on social media and with your blog. Another thing you can explore is video. Get a YouTube or other video page. So many more buyers are interacting with videos as part of the purchase cycle these days that it's a no-brainer for MSPs that have the resources. Maybe you can get a current customer to do a video testimonial, or sit down with your marketing team if you have one and do an interview about cybersecurity and tips for working from home. Videos increase your reach and can be re-used in emails, on the website and in other marketing campaigns.

If you have the budget, you can increase your digital presence with paid search ads that will put your business at the top of search results. These things don't take a lot of time or effort, but they can have a big impact. Best of all, there are many things MSPs can do for free—websites, social profiles, etc.—that don't take a ton of marketing know-how.

ASK AN EXPERT

“In terms of website content, checklists and short tip sheets or guides are very click-friendly and a great way to get traffic to your site. This will help get your content online and indexed with search engines, which will increase your visibility to your prospects, and that's the whole goal behind digital marketing.”

Tonya Cardinali
Digital Marketing Manager, Liongard



TIPS FOR WEBSITE OPTIMIZATION

Always include your social buttons. It builds credibility with customers and gives them another avenue to find you online. Also, the more opportunities you have to include where your company is located physically will help your search results if you are targeting locally. In fact, make your contact information as easy to find as possible. You don't want your customers to have to work to find your phone number or email address, and you should definitely include contact forms if your site has that functionality.

And don't forget about the look and feel of your site. Make sure it resonates with the prospects you intend to target, so, for example, if you want to reach the healthcare industry you might use that type of imagery and colors on your site to make visitors feel like they're in the right place. It's always good to have a refresh of your look and feel periodically to review font and layout and make sure they reflect modern website design. And don't forget about your mobile design! Make sure everything is mobile-optimized because that's how everyone is doing most of their research these days, especially with the move to remote and hybrid workplaces.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LANDING PAGES

In addition to your main website pages, landing pages—single-purpose pages used mainly to collect leads—are an important component of your web presence. Landing pages are a great way to deliver value and targeted content to your prospects in order to get their contact information.

For instance, if you write an article about cybersecurity in hybrid workplaces, you can create a landing page that requires the user to enter their contact information to view the article. These pages turn your website into a lead generation machine and allow you to track prospects and learn their pain points so you can tailor your sales pitch to suit their needs.

TIPS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA OPTIMIZATION

Social media is important because it helps reach your target audience in your area, and it helps potential customers understand and connect with your brand. When it comes to being seen, pictures and videos will always perform better than a plain text post. Ninety-three percent of brands got a new customer because of a social media video in 2020. So, if you can add a video to a blog post, it's going to perform better than just a regular post and increase the chance for conversion.

THE POWER OF HASHTAGS

Look at trending content and build your content around relevant hashtags like #cybersecurity. Including hashtags in posts will also increase your visibility and reach to help grow your audience which, in turn, will elevate your social profile in search results and newsfeeds.

TIPS FOR EMAIL OPTIMIZATION

ASK AN EXPERT

"I'm personally a big fan of narrative in email content. It's all about telling a story and having something to engage your recipient to make them want to click a link or visit your website. And one piece of advice that I always live by, is: don't send anything you wouldn't want to open and read yourself."

Jorge Illich
Marketing Automation Manager, Liongard

For getting opens, the first thing people will notice is your subject line. It has to be something scannable; it has to be something catchy enough to make you want to click and open it. The second thing is that once you get them to open your email, you have a few seconds tops to get and keep their interest, so brevity is usually key and it's finding that balance between keeping it short and keeping your audience engaged that's tricky.



For engagements and clicks, personalization is great. There are many ways to do this but at its most basic can be something as simple as including a first name or company name somewhere in the email, like in the subject line or in the body of the email. Emails with personalized subject lines tend to have higher open rates, so that's another bonus. Your email provider and service level may limit your personalization options, but with the right data and platform you can build emails that are customized for each customer. But just getting basics like first name, last name and company in your emails is simple and effective.

It's also important to include calls to action (CTAs) in you emails. Multiple instances of CTAs linked in and email gives the reader multiple opportunities to click and engage with your email. They should be short, no more than a few words should be hyperlinked, and should tell the reader exactly what to expect when they click the link. Something like 'read more' or 'schedule a call' or anything that's going to get them to engage.

TIPS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA OPTIMIZATION

When it comes to converting leads, content is king. You should create content that speaks to your prospects at each stage of the buyer journey—Awareness, Evaluation, Decision—that targets your audience with the right message to grab attention and convert customers.

- **Awareness:** Buyers at the Awareness stage are searching for answers—they have a problem to solve and will give priority to sources that help frame their issue, contextualize it in terms of their job function, and provide possible solutions. Impactful content for this stage includes your website, blogs, social channels and videos.
- **Evaluation:** The next stage of the buying cycle is evaluation, where buyers have identified their finalists and will be doing a more in-depth review of your service offering. For this stage, case studies and other customer testimonials or reviews can give you an edge.
- **Decision:** When it comes to the Decision stage, peer reviews, testimonials and consultations will help sway your prospects, as they are looking for validation of their choice.



NEED HELP? OUTSOURCE!

Setting up a marketing program at your MSP can seem overwhelming, especially for teams that already have their plates full with current customers. If you don't have time or resources to create a marketing plan of your own, outsourcing your program to a third-party marketing agency may be your best bet. There are many marketing agencies, some specializing in MSPs and IT services, that will help strategize and implement a marketing program for you. Agencies can tailor their services to your budget and goals, track results and help you optimize your program for better results.



NEXT STEPS

POWER YOUR MARKETING PLAN WITH LIONGARD DATA

MSP marketing starts with understanding your customers and their needs. Liongard helps you gather insights about your clients you can use to demonstrate your value and differentiate yourself from competitors at every stage of the buyer journey. A personalized customer experience, from prospect to onboarding and beyond, is crucial to developing a partnership with your customers enabling you to go from vendor to strategic partner.

Liongard was founded by former MSP owners who understand the struggles today's firms face in attracting new customers, growing client relationships and scaling their business. We built our platform with MSPs in mind, offering unified visibility across all your customer systems—taking you from data to actionable insights as quickly as possible.

Standardize, secure and scale your IT Managed Services with Liongard, the only automation platform that delivers unified visibility across the stack. With a global partner base, Liongard is changing the way MSPs manage and protect thousands of businesses worldwide. Ready to manage modern IT with confidence? Learn more at liongard.com.

Discover how Liongard can support your MSP marketing strategy. [Schedule a demo today](#) for a custom walk-through of our platform.

