



Digital transformation: a guide for manufacturing marketers

Why you can't avoid the big data onslaught
(and why you definitely shouldn't)

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Executive summary



Digital transformation (DX) has fast become the buzzword for everyone, on every level, in any business that wants to compete in the modern era. Entire books have been written about it. Whole companies have been created to sell products and services that help businesses with their DX projects. But digital transformation is such a vast area — it's important not to get too weighed down with the details or allow the term to become completely meaningless. In this white paper, we break down exactly what digital transformation will look like in the manufacturing sector, as well as highlighting some of the key things you can be doing right now to make better, faster use of your marketing tools, and the data that resides in them.



What is digital transformation, and why is it so important?

It all comes down to one word: data. The amount of data in our world has been exploding and continues to grow every day. Analyzing large data sets — so-called big data — has become business critical. Digital transformation, then, is the integration of digital technology into all areas of a business, resulting in fundamental changes to business operations and the value they deliver to their customers.

“ But while digital transformation is forcing companies to change their business models and adapt to the new market reality, it’s not the companies that are driving this change. Instead, this change is being driven by the customer. ”



Put simply, it’s about changing the way businesses interact with customers — and how they can provide customers with a consistent experience, whenever and wherever they need it.

But while digital transformation is forcing companies to change their business models and adapt to the new market reality, it’s not the companies that are driving this change. Instead, this change is being driven by the customer.

In fact, when asked about factors that influence business’ decisions to implement a digital transformation strategy, nearly half of all organizations cited customer experience and customer satisfaction as their leading influences.

What are the numbers?

\$642.35

The global market for digital transformation in manufacturing will grow to \$642.35 billion by 2025.

175 zettabytes

Worldwide data is expected to hit 175 zettabytes by 2025, representing a 61% CAGR.

80%

of data will be unstructured by 2025 — on top of this, business documents, video and audio are adding new content to the mix, like social media, IoT, streaming and geodata.

99.5%

of collected data is never used or analyzed, and instead is languishing in data lakes or 'cold storage'.

47%

of companies haven't started digital transformation yet — while 59% are worried that it might already be too late for them.

45%

SaaS is growing in popularity, with 50% of companies citing automatic maintenance as a reason to adopt; 45% citing lower cost than in-house solutions, and 45% citing faster deployment.

¹Forecasts from Adroit Market Research | ²IDC, Data Age 2025 | ³IDC, as quoted by Data Management Solutions Review, "80 Percent of Your Data Will be Unstructured in Five Years". | ⁴Cisco study | ⁵Progress State of Digital Business Report

In a world of billions of sensors, machine automation and entire industries going digital, businesses will finally achieve the breakthroughs in productivity that technology has long promised and rarely delivered. We are on the cusp of Industry 4.0, or what some like to call “the 4th Industrial Revolution”.

For you, as a marketer, the game-changer will be using and analyzing data quickly and intelligently — enabling you to react in real-time to customer demands, create new business insights on the spot, predict customer behavior and get new products to market faster.



Why the manufacturing industry needs to catch up

A decade ago, manufacturing companies didn't need to worry about marketing. They produced the best possible products, hired the best salespeople to sell them, and made lots of money. And then they went home. And that was it.

Fast forward to 2020 and things couldn't be more different. Manufacturing marketing can no longer be an afterthought. A staggering 94% of B2B buyers are now doing their own research online before they even think about engaging with a manufacturing company's sales team.

This means your salespeople are no longer at the forefront of the industry — it's the marketers. And so, your marketing strategy will either make or break your business.



**Shorten your sales cycles,
generate new leads and
grow your sales pipeline.**

[Learn more](#)

What's holding us back?

OK, let's start with some numbers.

57% Marketing teams are often small.⁷

- And just under half (**46%**⁵) have only recently embarked on some sort of content creation project.

- Many companies still rely on dated practices that don't produce results, but also don't require a ton of effort.

- Nearly a third outsource at least one content marketing project⁶.

But the big problems; the ones that can't just be solved with a new survey or more flattering set of stats, run much deeper.

For those who struggle to fulfill the potential of marketing, the most common challenges are:

31%



About one third of manufacturing marketers say it is increasingly difficult to capture their audiences' attention⁸.

- For this reason, **77%** are focusing on building audiences and subscriber bases⁷.

- Fewer than half of marketers **47%** say their organization has realistic expectations about what marketing can achieve⁷.

55% say their leadership team does not give them enough time to produce results⁷.

⁶www.salesforce.com/blog/2016/06/selling-to-the-modern-b2b-buyer.html | ⁷www.info.mezzaninegrowth.com/blog/the-essential-guide-to-marketing-a-manufacturing-company#state-of-marketing | ⁸B2B - Content Marketing Institute Report 2017

The three biggest challenges for manufacturing marketers

Flawed Priorities

Put simply, it's a mindset shift. In an industry that's moving towards more automation and technology, it's surprising that marketing efforts haven't caught up. There's a big rift between the senior decision-makers and the marketing department in terms of what's important, how much resource marketing should get, and what the priorities are — especially when it comes to budget.

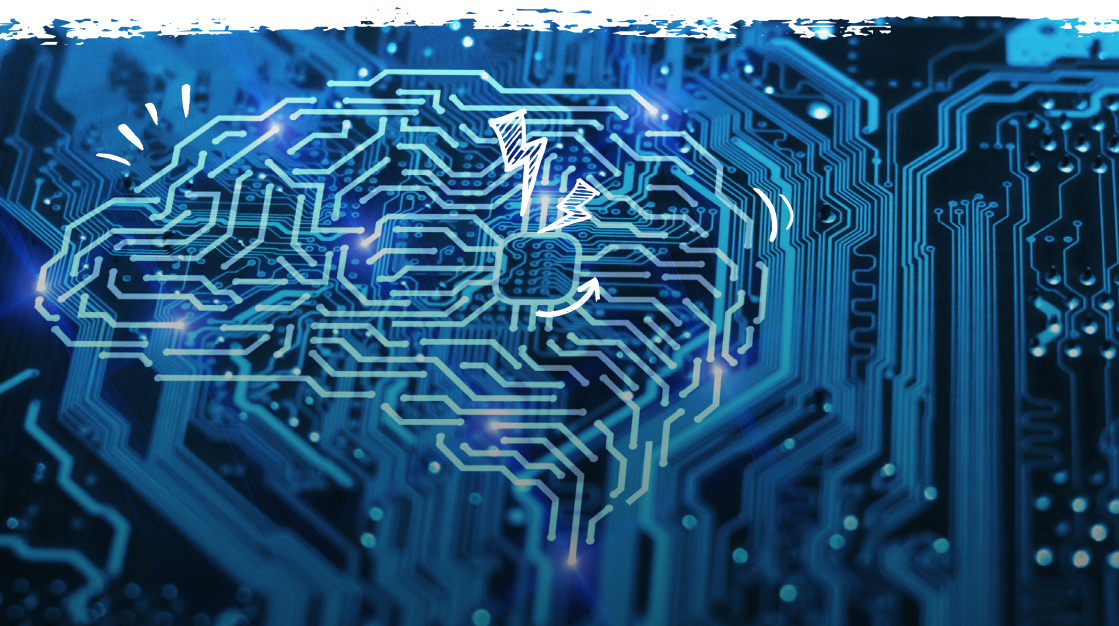
As we've touched on earlier, a lot of big manufacturing companies became 'big' before the advent of digital marketing. So, getting the green light on new investments can be difficult since the company has operated just fine without it before. To sell in the benefits of new investments, marketers need a new battle plan, unfortunately with limited resources.



Terrible Content

Think about that statistic from earlier: **94% of B2B buyers are now doing their own research online**. That's nearly all your customers. B2B purchases are usually big, complex and involve multiple decision-makers. They're on the hunt for tips and insight to help them select the right products and services. But, they're not getting what they want. Instead, the web is saturated with poor content centered around selling products rather than informing consumers.

Compelling content is your most powerful weapon in your tool-belt of digital and inbound marketing tactics. If you develop content that answers the right questions and addresses the concerns of your target audience, you can rise above the product-centered content on search engine results pages and start seeing an influx of leads.



Poor Visibility

Marketers often struggle to gain full visibility into their processes and contacts. Leads come in through multiple channels, and they have trouble keeping up with every touchpoint. As customers increasingly crave personalized engagements, this lack of insight puts manufacturers at a serious disadvantage.

Instead of looking through multiple systems to figure out where leads are coming in, marketers can utilize tools to analyze marketing performance and track prospects from beginning to end. These actionable insights show you instantly which forms, blog posts or email campaigns are generating the most leads, eliminating the guesswork from inbound marketing.



It's all in the strategy: changing hearts, minds (and budget allocations)

The good news is, there has never been a better time to build a great lead generation and content strategy. Why? Because organizations that did it a year or two ago are seeing fantastic results.

In their recently published 'Manufacturing Content Marketing 2020 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends' report, the Content Marketing Institute (CMI) and Content Profs found some eye-opening results.

- Manufacturers are embracing content strategy development much more than in previous years. In fact, **41% of manufacturers said they have a documented content strategy — a significant leap from 21% the previous year.**⁹

- Almost half (**48%**) of manufacturing marketers report their business has a small (or one-person) marketing/content marketing team serving the entire organization.

65%

of manufacturing marketers say their organization is much or somewhat more successful with content marketing compared to one-year ago.⁸

64% of manufacturing marketers outsource at least one content marketing activity; content creation is the activity they're most likely to outsource (87%).⁸

* Manufacturing marketers say **50% of the content they create is for audiences in the early stages of the buyer journey** (top-of-the-funnel)⁸. They create far less content for stages further down the funnel.

So, what does all of this mean for you? Your competition is recognizing the value, experiencing the ROI and starting to significantly invest in content marketing. And, we expect to see this trend continue.

If you're still wondering whether you need a digital marketing strategy, there's only one answer. And it's yes.

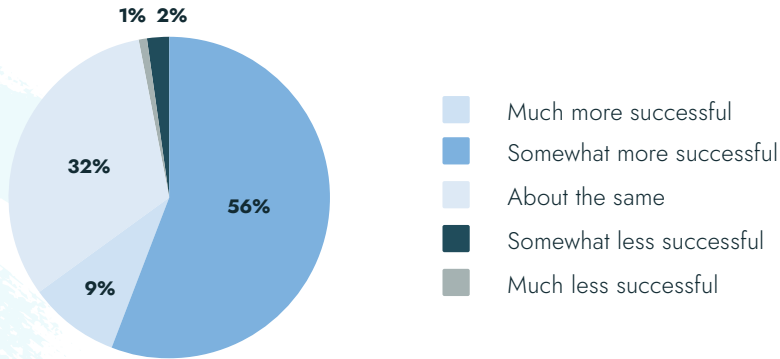


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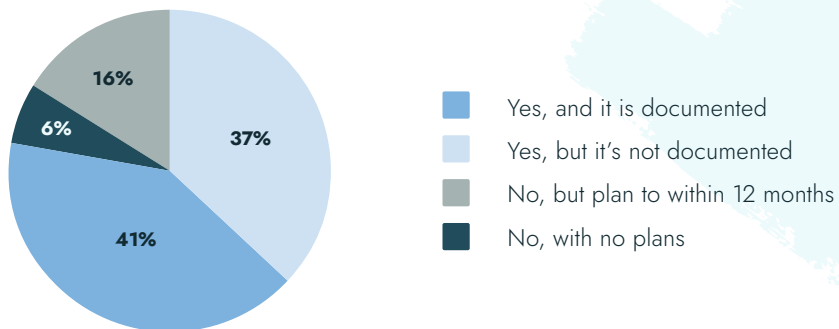
...in **real-time!**

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How manufacturing marketers rate their organization's content marketing success compared with one year ago



Percentage of manufacturing marketers with a content marketing strategy



Why your website could be your secret weapon

The reality is that most websites aren't living up to their potential as a powerful marketing channel.

They're often seen as a side project, with a "we'll get round to updating it eventually" mentality, convoluted with too much or too little information and no coherent user experience. 'Self-sufficient' buyers, who avoid sales conversations and prefer to do their research before even contacting companies, are getting lost, confused or quite simply bored while trying to sift through information.

To get ahead of the digital transformation curve, convert more leads and better your customer experience, website investment should be a key focus.



Web Insights, for example, is a world-leading automated lead generation SaaS — perfect for enabling digital transformation and turbocharging website potential. The true power of the software lies in its automation capabilities — instantly recognizing website visitors, matching them with accurate, enriched data, and routing opportunities directly to the most relevant team member for immediate action.

For manufacturing organizations with limited marketing resources, Web Insights cuts out the noise and delivers real-time insight, precisely when and where it's required.

10 steps to building a great lead generation strategy

While most industries jumped head first into using social media, email marketing, SEO, and other digital marketing tactics almost a decade ago, the manufacturing sector is finally coming around.

Unlike traditional print placement and ads, we all know that creating an online presence isn't a 'one and done' mentality. More and more companies in the industrial space are building up their websites and traffic — and the marketplace is quickly growing crowded. So, marketing is now more important than ever. Here's our guide to building a great marketing plan that puts you firmly on the radar in a digitally beautiful future.

1 Embrace marketing automation



A must-have for your manufacturing marketing tech stack, automation empowers you to contact your customers in real-time; personalize your communications at scale; effectively nurture leads, and keep track of interactions with seamless CRM integration. Automated lead generation software, like Web Insights, works in harmony with your marketing automation software to capture leads from your various, marketing activities and routes them instantly around your business; maximizing ROI and increasing revenue opportunities.

2 Conduct analysis



Now's the time to look at EVERYTHING; brochures, flyers, old posters, social media, even your company's old and forgotten MySpace page. If it's not serving you, it either needs to be removed entirely, or given some dedicated 'TLC'. This also means conducting a total audit of your data. You'll know you're done when you can answer these questions:

- What available assets do we have?
- What branding and materials need to be created?
- Which tactics have proven the most successful?
- Which approaches can we skip this year?

3 Identify audiences



Identifying your buyer personas is key. For manufacturers, this will involve going out and speaking to your top customers. You may come away with multiple personas, right from factory floor to boardroom. And that's great — because each of them will have different wants and needs. Use technology to segment your data — designing bespoke campaigns, strategies and key messages for every group with shared similarities; whether that's on an industry or individual prospect level as part of an account-based marketing strategy.

4 Improve your website



It's almost the end of 2020. Come on. If you don't have a clean, clear, navigable and mobile responsive website by now, you've fallen at the first hurdle. A lot of manufacturing companies are still stuck in the dark ages when it comes to mobile-friendly sites, and sadly, Google does not like that. Nor do your potential customers. Make every interaction enjoyable for your visitors, no matter the digital touchpoint that drove them there. And, consider intensifying the performance of your site as a lead generation tool with innovative website technology.

5 Deliver quality content



Create a plan to consistently add fresh content, blog posts, case studies, videos and product images to your website. Doing so provides added value to your audience, gives them a reason to return to your site, builds trust, showcases your authority, improves your Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and, in turn, how you rank on Google. Remember, regularly refreshing your website content and sharing it across the web makes you easier to find — as well as increasing opportunities to educate the market and capture leads.

6 Give digital advertising a try

Try it, test it, and see how powerful it can be. Google advertising is packing some serious punch. After all, the search engine giant knows more about most of us than we do ourselves. If you're not currently ranking on Google's first page; paid advertising (PPC) is the fastest way to get there. Since 75%¹⁰ of people never scroll past the first page of Google results, you want your business to maintain its presence there. Even if you have to pay until your SEO allows you to rank organically.



7 Email marketing

Set up email campaigns to let customers know you still exist, introduce new products, provide complimentary offers, and give customers the chance to upgrade. Email marketing allows you to nurture new members of your audience, build rapport, and stay top of mind. So, when they're ready to purchase, there's a stable foundation of trust. If you don't have an email marketing database at the ready, you'll need one to deliver exceptional results. Web Insights, for example, owns the largest proprietary database of business IP information, as well as offering a world-leading database of business, contact and firmographic data for the most advanced, accurate and personalized email nurture campaigns.



¹⁰<https://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/14416/10-Awesome-Marketing-Stats-Charts-Graphs-Data.aspx>

8 Use your analytics



The right analytics tool is key to converting opportunities. After all, accurate data is the fuel to the fire that is digital transformation. Whether you use tools like Google Analytics, or opt for more advanced, real-time data, like that provided by Web Insights — intelligent information and an understanding of your website visitor behavior is critical to generating sales. Look for gaps in your data and ensure you opt for a platform that delivers exactly what you need to know, precisely when you need it.



Fuel your marketing automation with engaged campaign respondents

[Find out more](#)

9 Manage success with a CRM

In case you've been living under a rock for the past two decades, your sales team needs to be utilizing a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to track and nurture leads. Viewing consumers as individuals and studying their behavior from the very first touchpoint, across every channel, and throughout the buying journey, brings to light the natural bond between famously misaligned marketing and sales teams. Nurture that bond, and magic happens.



Web Insights eliminates the need for manual lead management, and instead automatically and immediately routes engaged website opportunities, along with detailed analytics and enriched data, to the most relevant team members. Seamless integration with any CRM system; advanced automation, and a future-proof approach to lead management.

10 Social media



Love it or loathe it, social media is not going anywhere. It's everywhere — delivering news, providing entertainment, and building both brand and interpersonal connections. PwC recently found that 78% of consumers were influenced by social media during their buying process. And, nearly half said their buying behavior was directly affected by reviews and comments they came across on social. For manufacturing marketers, this is great news — with niche audiences, it's likely they're highly engaged.

¹¹ PwC Total Retail Survey 2016

Becoming a lead generation guru

For those who want to get ahead of the digital transformation curve, convert leads and create an outstanding customer experience, website investment is one of the key things you can focus on.

Imagine if you could take control of your lead generation activity and convert ready-to-buy prospects, before your competitors even get close. Picture the results you could achieve if your sales teams could instantly access the names, job titles and email addresses of key contacts that match your target profile, directly from the businesses that have been visiting your site.

This is not a digital transformation pipe dream. It's a reality; right now. In fact, thousands of B2B businesses just like yours are accelerating their lead generation with Web Insights. With the intelligent software powering your website, you can transform your sales funnel, intensify your lead generation, identify sales leads you never knew you had and amplify your marketing ROI.



Michael Classen | Virgin Experience Days

“ Since bringing Web Insights onboard, we’ve managed to generate a sizeable new business pipeline and already closed three large opportunities, from our previously unknown website visitors. ”

With Web Insights you can:



Web Insights cuts out the noise to deliver insight to B2B organizations, precisely where and when it's required. The high-end software solution is a world class business growth enabler, assisting brands to become more efficient and effective, capitalizing on every website opportunity in real-time. The technology instantly recognizes website visitors and automatically routes them to the relevant person within your business — the ultimate solution for marketers looking to optimize lead generation, embrace automation, and do so without disrupting busy, high-performing enterprise teams. Automated, intelligent lead generation, immediate website visitor insight and seamless integration — every time.



FUEL YOUR BUSINESS SUCCESS WITH:

Intelligent website visitor automation

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