



# Inbound Ideas

How Innovative Marketers Are Executing  
the 3 C's of Demand Generation

# Inbound Ideas

The B2B marketing space has evolved significantly in recent years. So much so, that it can sometimes feel futile to try to keep up with emerging trends. Why invest in a new channel or tactic if it's going to be obsolete by next year?

While it's tempting to stick to "tried and true" demand generation plays, those simply aren't enough to help you win in a crowded market.

To stand out, you have to try new things, but do it in a smart, controlled way. We're not suggesting you overhaul your entire marketing strategy overnight. But the best marketers are experimenting with new demand gen tactics on a smaller scale and then investing in strategies that work.

We were fortunate enough to sit down with three B2B marketing leaders to get their input on the current state of demand gen at their companies and the tactics they're using to execute on the three C's of demand gen: create, capture, and convert.

## Meet the Marketers



**Tyler Lessard**  
VP of Marketing &  
Chief Video Strategist



**Pete Lorceno**  
Director of Demand Generation



**Bennett Sung**  
Head of Marketing



# Creating demand

Demand gen has come a long way since 2003 when **Eloqua hit the market** and changed the way people thought about marketing.

For those unfamiliar, Eloqua was the original marketing automation and revenue management platform. Before Marketo, Pardot, and ABM platforms, there was Eloqua. It was the first time marketers started using data to inform their demand gen strategy, and it served as a springboard for B2B demand gen as we know it.

In the years to come, it's clear that demand gen will change a lot more as we emerge into the **"post-cookie" world**. Without relying on third-party data, marketers will have to get creative with how they broadcast their messages into the world.

But the goal remains the same. Generate interest amongst target buyers. But how does one capture the attention of buyers in the oversaturated B2B marketplace?

Turns out, more and more marketers are turning to "dark funnel" channels where attribution is tricky, but influence and engagement are potentially much higher.

Put simply, the dark funnel refers to content consumed by prospective buyers in third-party channels that you have no way of tracking. This creates a blindspot for marketers as they have no visibility into who is interacting with their content, making it hard to sniff out buyer intent. Hence, the "dark" funnel.

**Refine Labs'** Chris Walker has **spoken extensively on this subject**, and other marketers, including **Humanly's** Head of Marketing, Bennett Sung, are warming to the idea.



*“This notion of a dark funnel, it includes things like a podcast and written content that’s not gated. It’s like, ‘how are these people coming in, this is dark funnel.’ But it’ll all show up when you start to see those high intent leads come across,” says Sung.*

While the dark funnel presents significant challenges for attribution, marketers like Walker and Sung would argue it’s vitally important to distribute content in these channels because that’s where modern buyers go to consume content.

They don’t go directly to your site to make a buying decision. They’re on LinkedIn and YouTube or they’re talking to their peers in private chats – all things you can’t track but that are vitally important to the decision-making process.



***Don’t be afraid to promote content in third-party channels where attribution is tough or even impossible. This doesn’t mean you have to publish everywhere. Choose a channel that you know your audience is active in (LinkedIn, Github, etc.) and start publishing frequently there.***

Don’t worry about optimizing for search or plugging your product. Produce content that is genuinely interesting or helpful. This will build brand recognition and trust within your target audience.



# Capturing demand

Traditional demand gen strategies involve driving leads to your website, hoping they will immediately convert.

But operating this way means missing a huge opportunity.

Your site is an excellent qualification tool for inbound leads.

Content is a great way to educate prospective buyers. But the reality is, by the time modern B2B buyers make it to your site, **they've already done the majority of their research** on third party sites and social media.

Content on your website then becomes an opportunity to figure out exactly which part of your solution the buyer is interested in, and tailor your interactions with them around that.

A good way to think about this: you want to generate demand but capture intent.

That's exactly what VP of Marketing & Chief Video Strategist Tyler Lessard and the team at Vidyard are doing on their site.

*"We have online demo videos [on our site] that people can watch. We've segmented those out into a series of three minutes. People can self-select which one of our products or services they're most interested in and watch those videos," he said.*

*"And those become great qualifiers because we not only know they're leaning in and watching, but we know which types of videos they're interested in, which helps us identify their topical area of interest."*



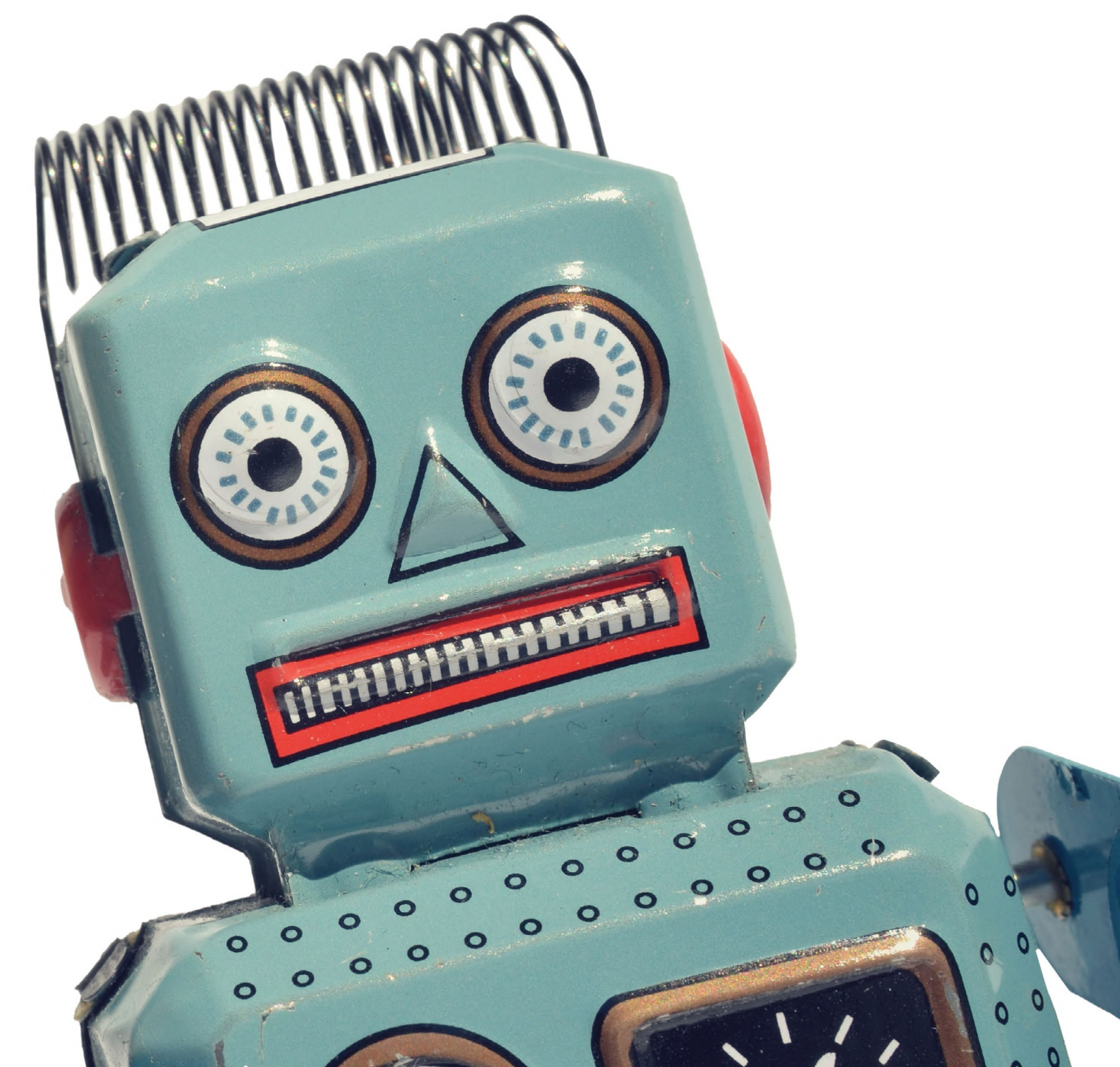


**Hot Tip**

***Get creative with how you use content on your site. This could mean offering chat as a way to help users navigate your site or it could mean offering short demo videos to better understand which part of your product someone is interested in.***

There are a lot of ways to get creative with content on your site. Don't miss an opportunity to learn more about your prospect and help them self-educate. The information you gather there will help you qualify leads more organically than in a traditional sales discovery call.

***What up, Karen?***



# Converting demand

## Speed to lead

You did it. You've successfully gotten someone to your site, they've consumed content there, and now they're ready to reach out.

They submit a form and then get redirected to a thank-you page that says, "someone will reach out soon!"

*Womp-womp.*

They're gone before you've even had a chance to put them in touch with a human.

Luckily, there are tools like Chili Piper's **Concierge**, that allow prospects to automatically book time with a rep from a form or even connect with an available rep on the phone in real time.

Speed to lead is just one aspect of achieving higher inbound conversion rates though; channel has become increasingly important, too.

## Channel

Pete Lorcenno, Director of Demand Generation at **Alyce**, had this to say about inbound channels:

*"First and foremost, my belief is that my job as a marketer is to provide the mechanisms of communication preference that someone has. What I mean by that is if someone's preference is to be able to chat with you, you should have that. If someone's preference is to be able to pick up the phone and dial – which some of those people still exist – that option should exist."*

Chat has become increasingly popular as an inbound channel in recent years.

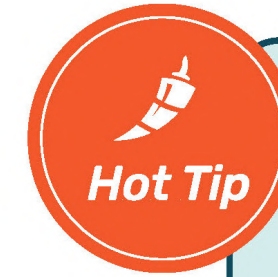
*According to Lessard, "The percentage of people engaging with us through a chat-based interaction has continually increased. We are seeing more and more of a preference for that for people on our site. It's become certainly one of the top lead qualifiers and lead sources for us across the team."*

For Lessard though, providing chat is less about generating qualified leads (although that's certainly an added bonus), and more about providing a human element to Vidyard's site experience.

*"Our chat bot on our website is designed to be able to engage people in more natural language conversation no matter where they are across the site and to help us identify what they're interested in,"* says Lessard.

At the end of the day, the chat vs. form debate isn't really about which channel is better. Best in class marketers are offering both options to their site visitors and constantly looking for ways to make user's interactions with them more personable and human.

For more content on emerging demand generation strategies, check out **Demand Gen Chat**, a Chili Piper podcast.



***Be mindful of your buyer's communication preferences and try to offer different options that cater to these preferences.***

Keep in mind there's no one size fits all approach here, and the more options you provide, the easier it will be to identify the channels your buyers tend to gravitate toward.

Remember that your first priority as a marketer is to provide a good experience for your potential customer. If you do that, the conversions will follow.





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