



## Lead Generation Using Digital Automation for the Lighting Industry



### INTRODUCTION

Growing your lighting manufacturing or distribution business has gotten more difficult since the COVID-19 pandemic. Digital marketing automation can be the solution. This short guide will help you understand the latest in digital marketing automation and how it can help lighting manufacturers and distributors, to drive faster business growth, despite the pandemic. Simply put, to scale up your business, scale up your lead generation, using the latest digital marketing automation.



### PANDEMIC CHALLENGES

Perhaps business was good before the pandemic, utilizing trade shows, conferences, as well as sales managers & reps crisscrossing the country, for face-to-face meetings. Unfortunately, that ended during the pandemic and all of those sales techniques are expected to be less effective, after the pandemic is over, due to lingering health concerns, work from home, and reduced travel budgets.

Your business needs to reach hundreds or thousands of new prospects with multiple messages across multiple digital platforms. What's more, the messages need to be personalized to increase response rates. Sound impossible? It can be easy, with digital marketing automation.



### TARGET MARKETS

Your business can reach distributors, contractors, specifiers, OEMs, facility managers in specific vertical markets, or other target audiences. The best lead generation (lead gen) results come from narrowing your target audience and then tailoring the messaging to be directed exactly at that audience. This makes the messaging more relevant for the audience, driving up response rates and sales.

Our firm typically generates about 1,000 new, highly-targeted contacts for each of our clients' campaigns, for a specific audience that our client wishes to reach. Digital marketing automation software then drives a sequence of messages to each contact, resulting in many dozens of hot leads, in a well-planned campaign.



### GET CLEAR ON YOUR GOALS

Start with a strategy session to clarify your sales and marketing goals, whether it's:

- Generating hot leads?
- Reaching thousands of new prospective customers?
- Demonstrating your company's thought leadership, through white papers, award wins, presentations at industry events, or webinars?
- Introducing a new technology, product line, or entering a new channel of distribution?
- Promoting new marketing collateral?
- Or all of the above?



Our firm has seen the greatest success combining a sequence of automated LinkedIn messages with a series of automated emails, to the same list of contacts. Reaching out through both LinkedIn and email feels more genuine, and is more attention-grabbing, for higher response rates.



## EVALUATE YOUR CURRENT MARKETING TECHNIQUES

Make a list of what worked for your business before the pandemic, what marketing techniques are working for your business now, and which techniques are no longer working. Be honest.

Typically, any marketing that relied on face-to-face interaction with customers hasn't worked during the pandemic and will likely be less successful after the pandemic, than it was before. We suggest experimenting with proven digital marketing automation techniques to accelerate your company's sales growth, including: email automation, social media automation, improving your website, and more.



## AUTOMATE MARKETING

With the latest marketing automation software, a single sales executive can send personalized emails and social media messages to thousands of prospective customers in highly-targeted campaigns, generating many dozens of hot leads and online video demonstrations, booked directly into your sales exec's calendar.

Never done it before? Don't know how? You'll likely need to partner with a digital marketing firm that specializes in lead gen, using marketing automation software. Better yet, find a firm that also has experience in the lighting industry, so that they understand the market actors, channels, and lighting terminology, to create compelling messaging for the target audience.



## MOBILE OPTIMIZATION

A growing number of people do their work from their mobile devices (phones & tablets), a significant percentage of the time. For the target audience, this means making your company's website and marketing collateral mobile-friendly. For your company, this means better equipping your sales executives that manage digital lead gen by integrating their calendar automation software, calendar program, video calling service (Zoom, MS Teams, etc.), and CRM. They can then make great progress on their lead gen campaigns whether in front of their computer, or stuck waiting in a doctor's office.



## MAKE IT EASIER FOR CUSTOMERS TO REACH YOU

Some best practices that we recommend, include:

- Website contact forms
- Have sales execs automate calendar appointment setting, with programs such as Calendly.com or similar. Stop having sales execs spending time scheduling appointments and **let the customers do it**, at the customers' convenience, online. Sales execs can then shift their time from endless scheduling of sales demos, to actually delivering online product demonstrations. If your sales & marketing team adopts marketing automation to thousands of new contacts, automated appointment scheduling becomes more than a good idea, it becomes an absolute necessity to manage the new volume of inbound, hot leads.



## USING THE RIGHT TECHNOLOGY

All of this automation is achieved through integrating numerous software programs. There are dozens of them out there, and who has the time to learn and evaluate all of them, let alone integrate them?

Select a digital marketing firm that has already developed an integrated platform that enables email and social media lead gen to combine, driving new leads, efficiently scheduling appointments, and auto-schedule video-call product demos. For example, combining email automation, LinkedIn messaging automation, automated appointment scheduling that books Video-calls / demonstrations. As you increase the quantity of inbound leads, you must increase the efficiency of managing inbound leads, or the responsible sales execs will become overwhelmed, with poor outcomes.



## SECRETS TO HIGHER RESPONSE RATES

It's one thing to send out a sequence of messages to a 1,000 contacts, but it's another to get positive responses. Here are proven strategies to higher campaign response rates:

1. Create the most **narrowly targeted audience possible**, that still provides you hundreds to thousands of quality contacts. The more narrow the audience the more you can target the messaging exactly to that audience, increase relevance, value, and response rates.
2. **Distill the value proposition** to be clear, concise, and compelling for the target audience. The more concise, the better. The point is making them want to know more, not telling them everything in the message.
3. **Personalization with automation.** Sounds impossible, but it's not. Seek a digital marketing firm that personalizes social media and email messages, by having the software insert the contacts': name, company name, LinkedIn photo, company logo, screen shot of their company's website, and even auto-personalized videos. All of this auto-personalization makes the messages feel more genuine and shows greater effort has been taken to initiate a conversation.
4. Create **simple call-to-actions** for the sales prospect, whether that be self-booking a Zoom demo appointment with calendar automation, downloading a white paper or spec sheet with a weblink, or instructing simple YES or NO replies, to instantly qualify the prospects.
5. **Use "throttled" campaigns.** This slows the rate of messages to 50 or 100 going out per day, to avoid spam filters and having your domain negatively identified as a spammer. Some also call this a "drip" campaign. Automation software should be capable of doing this, and it can also keep the daily inbound leads more manageable for the sales exec fielding the inbound leads.
6. Add some **highly relevant images** and/or video links showing your lighting products and ideal applications. Pictures increase interest and assist the reader in evaluating the relevance of your messages.
7. **Hit each contact through multiple platforms.** Try combining automated LinkedIn messages simultaneously with automated emails, to increase response rates.





## MEASURE YOUR PROGRESS

The old saying is “you can’t manage what you can’t measure.” One of the big advantages of digital marketing automation is that there is a great deal of data and metrics to evaluate the success of your campaigns, even while they are underway. You should be able to monitor open rates, click rates, response rates, demo appointments set, and even revenue.

These metrics can be monitored in real time, allowing for nimble adjustments to messaging, use of A/B message testing, modification of contact lists, and retargeting of contacts that engaged in some way (i.e. clicked links) but stopped short of completing the call-to-action. Most of all, learning how to continually improve your digital marketing strategy and execution, in each subsequent campaign. If you want to test a hypothesis, try A/B testing of two different messaging approaches.

It’s also critical to have the sales executive track inbound hot leads for progress and results. This can be done in an existing CRM or a simple spreadsheet. Tracking which contacts express interest enables analyzing their profiles to improve and expand the target audience list, even in the middle of a campaign.

## LEARN MORE

Book a free, no-obligation, 15-minute consultation to discuss your lead gen goals and challenges, at the time that’s best for you, here:

<https://calendly.com/lightingsold/15min>

To learn more about our services: [www.lightingsold.com](http://www.lightingsold.com)

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