

The Complete Guide to B2B Technology Lead Generation 2023

Navigate Through the Smoke & Mirrors to Uncover
Powerful B2B Technology Lead Generation Strategies

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The Question of Quality

The way decision-makers are buying technology is changing. With more people and departments now involved in tech purchases, and buyers looking to complete almost all of their research independently (with 2022 being coined 'the age of the self-serve buyer' by [TrustRadius](#)), marketers need to adapt the way they reach their target audiences.

As a B2B marketer, quality lead generation plays a vital role in building your pipeline and reaching the right technology influencers and decision-makers. Year after year, HubSpot report lead generation as the top priority for B2B marketers.¹ It's therefore no surprise that Statista forecasts digital lead gen advertising spending to grow to \$3.24bn in the United States alone by 2023.²

However at the same time, the majority of B2B technology marketers (61%) say generating high-quality leads is their biggest challenge.³

Unfortunately, lead generation is increasingly being seen as a dark art within the industry. This is because there is such a wide variety of methods and tactics being employed by some suppliers to generate those much-needed leads.

As a marketing professional, you know the importance of trusting the data you receive. Many B2B technology marketers find themselves questioning the quality of their leads, because their suppliers aren't transparent about their methods and tactics.

61% of B2B marketers say generating high-quality leads is their biggest challenge.

With questionable suppliers, you can't be sure your leads are genuine or if they will ever translate into sales opportunities.

Lower cost leads are a false economy, with inaccurate data and poor-quality leads costing technology companies millions. Whether you use a lead generation provider or employ your own methods, **remaining in control of the process is paramount.**

In 2023, you'll need to spend your marketing budget wisely and showcase your ROI now more than ever. That means focusing your budget on proven, ROI-driven marketing strategies with suppliers you can trust.



¹ Source: <https://www.hubspot.com/marketing-statistics>

² Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/190328/us-online-lead-generation-spending-forecast-2010-to-2015/>

³ Source: B2B Technology Marketing Community via [Marketing Insider Group](#)

Chapter 1

Cutting Through the Noise In 2023

B2B marketers can generate leads in several ways, including PPC, telemarketing, LinkedIn advertising, and of course through working with lead generation providers.

Each method varies in terms of cost, quality, and effectiveness, which is why choosing the right lead generation strategy bridges the gap between getting your message to the right prospects and getting lost in the crowd.

Is Telemarketing Relevant In the Digital World?

Telemarketing can be effective when combined with other marketing tactics. However, this method tends to work best when used further along the funnel, to contact leads you have already generated.

Even marketers who have seen good results from telemarketing in the past are now experiencing a decline in lead quality, and lower response rates as many prospects have moved to working from home or hybrid working. This has rendered office contact details less relevant, and in some cases completely unnecessary.

Another consideration with telemarketing is that it doesn't provide you with a digital trail to authenticate the lead. As a result, it becomes more difficult and time-consuming to track and validate that lead.

The Pros & Cons of LinkedIn Advertising

Although LinkedIn advertising can work very well for B2B marketing, it has several significant drawbacks.

Let's start with the positives. Senior executives are receptive to advertising on LinkedIn because it's a business-to-business network. The platform also offers some targeting options which can help you to reach the right audience.



That said, the potential downsides are substantial:

- 1 It's a very crowded platform.** LinkedIn's advertising revenues have increased by 50%⁴, so there is now more competition to reach your target audience on the site.
- 2 LinkedIn costs are relatively high.** The average cost-per-click is around \$5.74, and the cost-per-conversion is estimated at \$90.⁵
- 3 You have no guarantee of how many leads you will generate.**
- 4 Limited campaign reporting.** LinkedIn doesn't offer the level of granularity you need to investigate the causes of ineffective or under-performing campaigns.
- 5 Targeting limitations.** While there are some targeting options, LinkedIn can't automatically recognize all the possible variants of job titles. This means you could potentially miss many of the prospects you need to reach.

These factors can limit your success when using LinkedIn whilst also making it difficult to budget effectively.

Working With a Lead Generation Specialist

A lead gen provider will often agree a cost-per-lead (CPL) with you while scoping out your campaign, allowing you to budget with confidence. These providers typically generate leads via content syndication.

Content syndication is the method of publishing your content, such as a white paper, research study, report, etc. – on platforms you don't own. In B2B marketing, the content is usually gated, so readers must enter their professional details to access it.

Once they enter their information, and if they match your criteria, they'll become a marketing qualified lead (MQL).



As a responsible marketer, you need to know exactly where your leads are coming from. There are several questions you must ask of any lead gen provider using content syndication, as the quality of leads can vary significantly. Key questions include:

- 1 Where will your content be hosted?** Does the provider show you exactly which websites will host and share your content? And do you have any control over this?
- 2 Do they own the websites your content is hosted on?** Or are they using 3rd party 'networks' or 'partners'? If the latter, will they show you who these 3rd parties are and where they are located? If not - why not?
- 3 Who owns the data generated?** If they are using 3rd party external networks and partners, are you confident they own the data being supplied?
- 4 Can they provide you with full visibility into the reader journey?** Can they show you where and how the reader downloaded your content? As well as how and when your leads gave consent to share their information with you directly?

You should always choose a lead generation provider that:

- Hosts content on their own website(s).
- Can show you a clear reader journey from start to finish.
- Owns all the data generated.
- Can verify and validate that data to a high standard.
- Never outsources your lead generation campaigns to unknown 3rd party suppliers or networks without your consent or knowledge of who those companies are.

You should only work with lead generation providers that can do all of the above. This approach gives you complete visibility and control over your campaigns, leading to higher quality leads that are more likely to deliver better long-term business results for your company.

⁴ Source: [Social Media Today](#)

⁵ Source: [Disruptive Advertising](#)

Chapter 2

Connecting With Your Target Audience

To generate high quality leads, you must target the right audience in line with your goals. There are several ways technology companies can do this effectively.



Account-Based Marketing

Account-Based Marketing (ABM) is one of the most common methods used to generate more targeted leads, with 92% of B2B marketers reporting that they have an ABM program in place⁶. Targeting campaigns based on individual companies or accounts allows you to improve strategic prospect and customer engagements.

To run an ABM campaign, you need a target list of companies to work with, and you'll need to consider how many people in each company you'd like to reach out to.

If your ABM list is small, or feels too targeted, you might want to expand it with 'lookalike' accounts that are similar to those on the list, or to your existing customers.

You might also use an ABM list to rule out certain accounts, for example to avoid targeting competitors, or to avoid re-engaging existing customers – a method known as exclusion.

⁶ Source: Salesforce, via Hubspot: <https://www.hubspot.com/marketing-statistics>



Leveraging Intent Data

Intent data is company-level behavioral data that can identify whether a company has recently expressed desire or interest in your type of product or solution.

As a B2B technology marketer, you know your prospects are likely to research extensively before they're ready to be contacted. They might have visited competitors' websites, comparison sites, review sites, and downloaded several pieces of relevant content.

All of this activity leaves a digital trail that you can use. By leveraging 3rd party data from reputable providers, and combining with your own, or that of your lead generation provider, you can ensure you are reaching the right prospects, at the right time. Accessing this intent data allows you to find out which of your prospects are already researching solutions like yours, making them higher-quality leads, that are much more likely to convert.





Detailed Profiling

If you don't have an ABM list, you'll need to set the parameters for your target audience.

Most target groups will include characteristics such as job titles, location, and company, but you should also consider going deeper, for example by profiling according to seniority or by company size.

If one goal of your lead generation campaign is to learn more about your target group, you could add more questions to the form they need to fill in to access your content. This will help you to gain a better understanding of their needs and motivations regarding your services.



Install Based Targeting

Install based targeting is a great way of finding prospects who are already using a specific technology solution.

You could use install based targeting if you want to find prospects that are already using a certain technology which is compatible with your solution. For example, many vendors can integrate with platforms such as HubSpot or Salesforce, and therefore would benefit from targeting existing customers of those platforms.

On the other hand, you might want to target users of competing brands, where you have a similar technology solution. Targeting competing vendors in this way can help you to tailor your marketing communications, by focusing on the benefits of your solution compared to theirs. For example, you may choose to highlight features your solution has over your competitors.

Global Reach, Local Relevance: the Benefits of Geotargeting

Targeting by geography may sound obvious, but it's important to get it right. You will want to target by geographical location if you have a presence in multiple territories, and targets for each specific location.

Geotargeting is a great way of personalizing your content according to where prospects are based. This allows you to offer content in your prospects' own language and to tailor your messaging to make it more relevant.

For example, if you offer financial reporting software, you may want to tailor your content in different territories to reflect the differing regulatory frameworks that apply.



Chapter 3

Data Usage & Consent in the Modern World

Data privacy and consent are key priorities for marketers everywhere. The EU's GDPR is not the only data protection law of its kind. Similar regulations also apply in 13 other countries and jurisdictions all over the world, including Brazil, Thailand, and California.⁷

When outsourcing your B2B lead generation, you need to feel confident in the data quality and levels of compliance in line with regional regulations.

One key factor is to ensure that each lead generated has agreed to share their information via a manual opt-in checkbox. Some B2B lead gen providers may not use a checkbox within their campaigns if it is not a legal requirement in the territories they are working within.

However, we only recommend working with specialists that advocate the use of manual opt-in checkboxes. This gives you peace of mind that each lead has consented to share their information. Furthermore, it helps you feel confident in the quality of your data, as only prospects who have actively agreed to hear from your organization directly will be delivered as a lead. In addition, working with lead gen providers who will amend the consent statement to your required wording will also show that you are working with providers who take data usage and consent seriously.

When your marketing goal is to generate high quality and highly engaged leads, **how your lead generation providers engage with their data is key to building trust with their audiences.**

⁷ Source: <https://insights.comforte.com/13-countries-with-gdpr-like-data-privacy-laws>



The Importance of 1st Party Data

Data comes in two types; **1st party and 3rd party data**. 1st party data comes from sources and channels you own, such as people signing up for your e-newsletter, or downloading content from your website directly.

In comparison, 3rd party data is any data which has been collected from an outside source. It can come from a myriad of sources, such as social media activity, Google searches, websites visited, and content downloaded from websites you don't own.

When it comes to lead generation, working with a provider who can deliver 1st party data, which they have generated via channels they own, is important. You will want to ensure the specialist you're working with is reputable and can provide full traceability of the data you receive.



Data Validation

Put simply, data validation means checking the accuracy and quality of source data before importing or using it. With lead generation, this means knowing that the leads you get are:



Accurate: Does that person still work at the company? Is their job role or title up to date? Does your lead gen provider communicate their source of truth for their accuracy checks and data validation activities?



Timely: Have they signed up recently? Are they currently looking for the type of solution you sell?



Consenting: Have they given their permission for you to contact them? Does this comply with the data privacy and consent laws in the country or region they operate in?

You need to feel confident that your **lead generation providers have validated the data before delivering it to you**. Are you confident that they have pre-validated the leads? Are they transparent about their validation process – or whether they even have one?

You need to know the answers to these questions before you can be confident enough to use their data.



Digital Traceability

When you buy eggs from a grocery store, that store can trace them back to the farm where they were laid. If anything is wrong with those eggs, the grocery store can work backwards to check other eggs from the same farm. They have a full, traceable record which allows them to investigate any quality issues.

The same needs to be true of any leads you receive from a lead generation provider. Any good provider should have full digital traceability of the lead, including:

- 1 When they signed up
- 2 What they signed up for
- 3 The level of consent given
- 4 Any other relevant online activity

This helps you to ensure the quality of the lead, but it also means you can troubleshoot if your leads convert at a lower-than-expected rate.

Furthermore, if a prospect questions their consent to receiving communications from you, full visibility of their digital journey should be available to you, helping to pinpoint when they signed up, what for and the level of consent they provided when downloading your content.

Customizing the Experience

When using content syndication to generate leads, customizing and tailoring that content for local audiences helps you to better focus on your target readers.

The Benefits of Translating Content & Using Country-Specific Websites

If you're targeting prospects in several countries, readers in those countries may be used to receiving content in English. German speakers and those based in Scandinavian countries will tend to respond more positively to English-language content than Spanish or French-speakers, for example.

That said, even prospects in countries that are used to reading English content will respond better to content in their own language.

Offering your content in multiple languages and on country-specific sites shows that you are serious about a specific territory. Therefore, taking this approach is likely to increase your engagement with a wider audience who are interested in B2B technology solutions like yours.

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Experience-Led Customization

An experienced content syndication specialist can advise you on the appropriate level of customization depending on your target market. This experience goes beyond translation; there are also nuances in how you pitch and target your content.

While most markets respond better to content that educates rather than sells, different cultures have different interpretations of what this means.

For example, German-speaking audiences respond less positively to content that leads with benefits; to them, this can come across as pushy. For such markets, it is better to rely on communicating facts and then mentioning benefits later, rather than the other way around.

Even when targeting English-speaking markets, local subtleties can make a huge difference. For example, HR technology content might talk about 'human capital' in the US, a term not yet common in the UK and Ireland, where they use the phrase 'human resources' instead.

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Job titles can also differ on both a local and company level. It's essential to consider the different title variations a role may have when creating a customer-led experience for two main reasons.

Firstly, to ensure your lead generation efforts reach the right decision-makers involved in a purchase decision, and secondly, so your content resonates with that audience.

For example, suppose you want to target Senior IT professionals responsible for purchasing IT technology solutions. In that case, the person or team of people you need to reach might vary depending on several factors.

Considerations such as a company's location, size, structure, and the industry they operate within will all impact the job titles of their Senior IT team. For example, the Vice President of Information & Technology may be the right person to target in one US-based company and an IT Director in another, compared to the Chief Information Officer or Head of IT in a UK-based organization.

These differences are both country and industry-specific, and an experienced lead gen provider can help you navigate these differences to ensure your content targets the right people at the right time.

Conclusion

How to Retain Control of Your Lead Generation

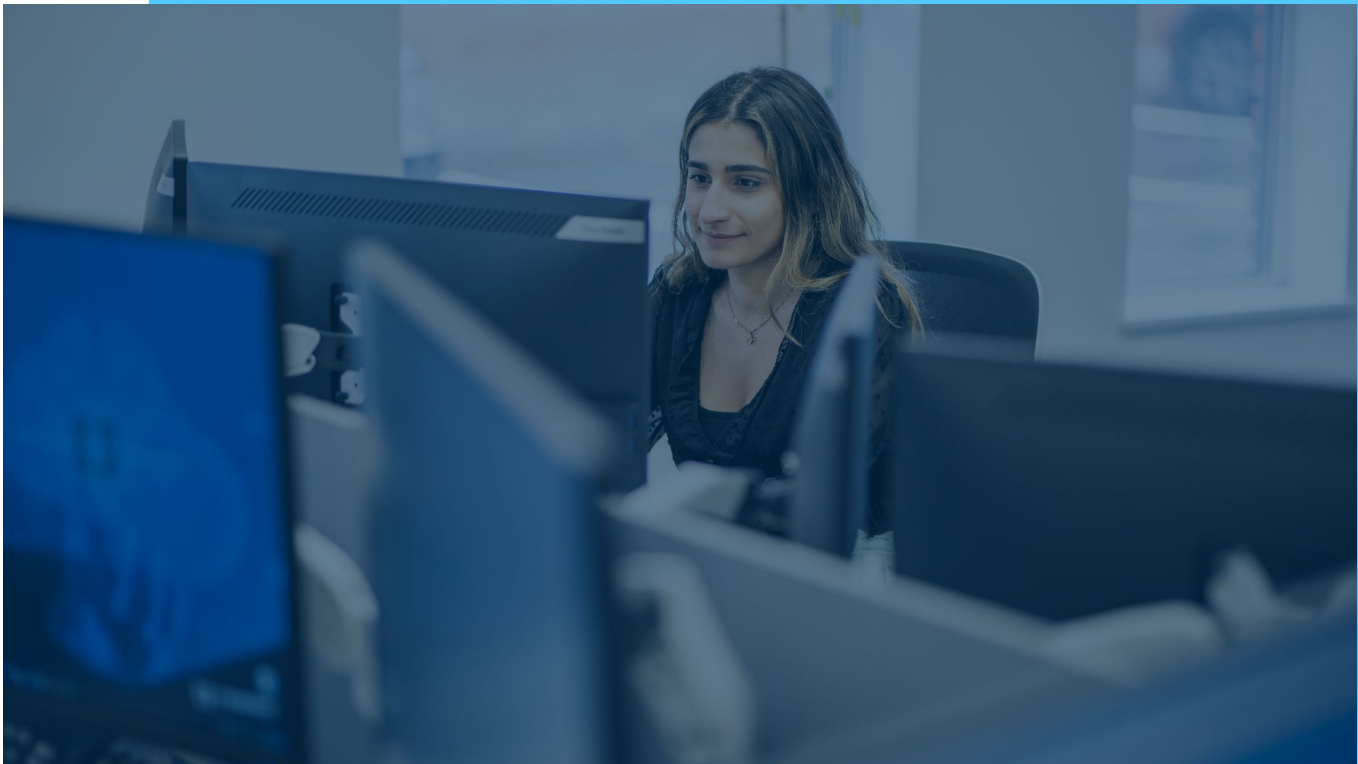
The main messages of this eBook are clear. Lead generation is a priority for most B2B marketers, but generating quality leads that convert is becoming more challenging than ever. To get a healthy ROI from your leads, you need to trust the quality of the data you receive and the lead generation providers you work with. You need complete visibility of where, how and who your leads have come from and the ability to control the processes and parameters of your campaigns.

We've put together this checklist to use when working with a lead gen provider:

- Do they generate your leads via their own websites and channels? Or do they subcontract your marketing campaigns to unknown 3rd parties for fulfillment?
- If they do generate leads for you via channels they own, can your providers show you an end-to-end reader journey? And can they offer a transparent and traceable digital footprint for a lead?
- If they outsource your lead generation to anonymous 3rd party sources, like many large lead providers do, can they still show you a full reader journey for each lead?
- Can they target your desired audience and manage campaigns that resonate, to guarantee content downloads from relevant prospects?

- ✔ Do they have the market insights and local expertise that allow them to effectively target audiences in different countries, regions, and industries?
- ✔ Are they able to guarantee they comply with data protection regulations in all your target markets and handle lead data securely?
- ✔ Do they offer a measurable and predictable ROI? For example a pre-agreed cost-per-lead (CPL) ?
- ✔ Do they care about your brand equity and reputation?

Lead generation partners who can answer all these questions to your satisfaction will be best placed to offer you the control and transparency you require.



About Headley Media

Headley Media is a specialist lead generation provider for B2B technology vendors, connecting you with the decision-makers who influence technology purchasing decisions in key markets around the world.

We engage with technology buyers through content syndication across our **six media brands**, across 262 websites offering content in 60 countries and 32 languages.

By promoting a wealth of educational, subject-specific content on behalf of leading technology companies across our brands, we have built a global database of readers who are already interested in technology solutions like yours.

Our six key brands and target audiences:



For Senior IT and Business Professionals



For Senior Cybersecurity and Business Professionals



For Senior Finance Professionals



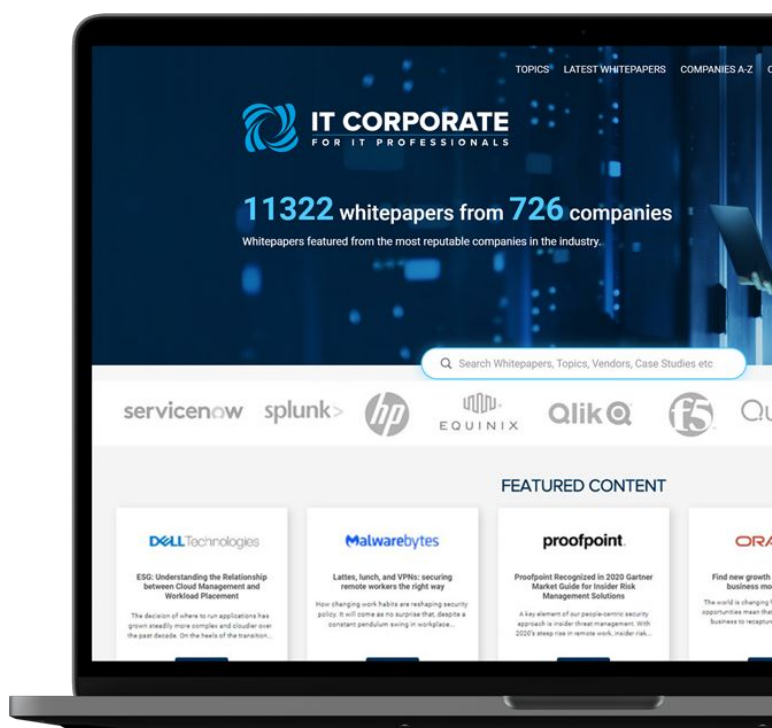
For Senior HR Professionals



For Senior Sales and Marketing Professionals



For Senior Electronics Engineers



Our lead generation campaigns can be as specific and targeted as you need - you're always in control. You get the benefit of our experience and advice, and you set the parameters, working together with a single, dedicated, in-house Account Manager.

Your leads are pre-validated using your targeting criteria, and because we only use 1st party data to run campaigns, those contacts are already part of the Headley Media readership.

To qualify as a lead, not only must they provide up-to-date professional details to access your specific content, but they must also agree to receive further communications from you.

After all this, we then apply another two-step AI and manual validation process to ensure you get the highest quality leads possible.

Because we blend our 1st party data with 'intent' intelligence, you can access an unparalleled level of insight along with full digital traceability of every lead.

To find out more, visit: www.headleymedia.com

Get in Touch

We'd love to hear from you! To find out more about Headley Media, or to discuss any upcoming campaigns you have, please contact our friendly, in-house team. For all inquiries, email info@headleymedia.com, or phone one of our global offices:

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