

What is Lead Scoring?

How to Build a Sales System
To Consistently Generate
Sales Ready Leads in 60 Days

A Guide for SMB Owners and Executives
to Decide if Lead Scoring Makes Sense for Their Business

In 2017 we witnessed the near universal embrace of content marketing with 93% of B2B “marketers” claiming that they have at least tested content marketing in some part of their sales and marketing efforts.



Buyers now complete two-thirds of their purchase journey online before ever contacting a vendor or seriously engaging with sales

(Forrester Research)

90% of B2B buyers say online content has a “moderate to major effect” on their selection process

(Marketing Sherpa Survey)

91% of the most successful content marketers agree that marketing automation is “very important” to the overall success of their efforts.

(Ascend2 “ Strategies for Sustaining Success”)

However the C-Suite and owners of small to medium sized business remain skeptical going all in because:

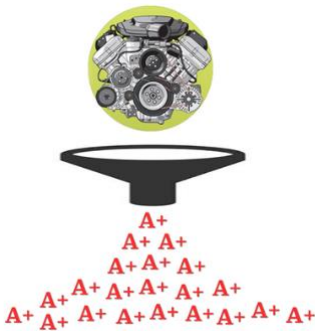
- 82% want to be able to correlate content marketing to sale opportunities
- 52% want to ensure they can measure the ROI of their investment
- 35% claim lack of budget

This eBook will:

- Answer the question - “What is lead scoring?”
- Questions to ask to decide if lead scoring is right for your business
- Outline the basics of a lead scoring program

What is Lead Scoring?

Over the past several years we have experienced a major shift in buyer behavior. 90% of buyers prefer to learn about product and services digitally first as they short list solutions. Sales still requires sales conversations. However, over the past several years buyers have stopped picking up the phone. Call-to-connect ratios have dropped from 18%-22% to 5%-10%. This means every connection you make now needs to count so it makes sense to educate buyers with digital content first and focus your calling and sales efforts on buyers most interested in buying.



Lead Scoring is an objective ranking of one sales lead against another. Leads are ranked to prioritize which buyer targets are most likely to buy to determine where sales should focus their efforts first.

Until recently most companies did this at the front end of the sales cycle by identifying which decision makers had budget authority and which verticals and industries had the greatest need. A company would then buy this list, hand the list to sales and cold call.

But with the rise of automation software and content marketing, you can now engage a buyer with your online content and measure and analyze a buyer's digital footprint. You can use this analysis to predict a buyer's level of interest and where they are in their buying cycle. Combined with targeting the right buyers, you can now prioritize leads based on a buyer's propensity to buy.

Lead Scoring Identifies Sales Ready Leads

Action	Title	Company	Lead Score	Lead Status	Phone	State/Prov...	Email
Edit Del +	Vp Regional Sales	ctvmedia.com	59	Open	5000000	OH	clocke@ctvmedi...
Edit Del +	VP of Marketing	Texas Classic Prod...	104	Open	866-9...	TX	michelle@texascla...
Edit Del +	Vice President, Dat...	Triad Retail Media	108	Attempted 3x			daniel.a.kelman@q...
Edit Del +	Vice President of S...	Advanced System...	215	Open	303-3...	CO	psmith@virtual.com
Edit Del +	Vice President Of ...	Exhibit Concepts, Inc.	81	Open	93753...	OH	jkorchinski@exhibi...
Edit Del +	Vice President Ne...	Burns Marketing	80	Open			melissah@burnsm...

Lead Scoring ultimately gives your sales team a prioritized list of leads based on:

- Right Vertical Fit and Company Size
- Buyer Title
- Their level of interest based on their engagement with your digital content

How to Decide if Your Business Needs (or is Ready) for Lead Scoring



While 99% of both the B2B and B2C Fortune 2000 is fully committed to content marketing, lead scoring, and automation systems, small and mid-sized businesses remain skeptical.

The fact is that lead scoring and automation is not a must-have for all businesses. To evaluate if lead scoring is right for your business, you need to ask yourself the following questions:

Do I spend money on leads monthly and then abandon them after I get a fresh set of leads?

Is your business spending money on fresh leads every month? Does your sales team attempt these leads a handful of times and then wait for the fresh leads and stop following up with last month's leads? If you are in a business where deals typically close in 30 days or less from initial interest you may want to continue doing what you are doing. If first touch to close is 30 days or more lead scoring may have significant benefits.

Do I have the minimum-sized database and content to get started?

Because 70% of buyers now prefer to learn about new products and solutions by email (sharing educational content) most companies have at least tested content marketing. In fact, 90% of B2B companies have now started content marketing, in at least a small way. But content is not enough. At a minimum, you also need a database of at least 3,000 to 5,000 buyers to get started. You also need to create enough basic educational content to touch these buyers at least 2 times per month for B2B sales and slightly more for B2C sales. If you do not have enough leads you will need to invest in a leads database first. The same goes for content. Content can be as simple as blog posts and short videos. Gabriel Sales offers cost effective packages to help with both.

Is my sales team educating buyers that don't buy?

Is my market so large that I can target and sell to hundreds of thousands of buyers? Have I generated so many inbound leads that my sales team cannot keep up? Is my product so disruptive that everyone would be willing to take a call on the topic? If you have a broad market with lots of tire kickers you should have been scoring leads 5 years ago.

Is my product/solution not an "If" but "When" decision?

Professional Services and software in areas like accounting, compliance, HR, IT, BPO and marketing, printing are not "If" but "When" decisions. Timing is everything. Staying top-of-mind

with buyers is critical so your sales team calls when the window is open. Automation and lead scoring make this possible.

Does my sales team complain about the quality of leads I send them?

Do your sales reps always complain about *bad* leads? Lead scoring will solve this problem, but not on its own. Before launching your lead scoring engine you need to have both sales and marketing agree on what a scored lead is with concrete criteria. Once you agree to these criteria lead scoring will work. It is also a way for you to objectively and subjectively evaluate if you have a sales issue, as opposed to a lead quality issue.

Are my sales engineers and senior sales team educating buyers that don't buy?

Do you have a great deal of leads that hit the early stage funnel and go through an introductory meeting and/or product demo that never transact? Chances are you have one of two problems. First, your business development reps are not qualifying correctly. Or tire kickers are going straight to senior staff because you don't have the content necessary to do this initial early-stage buyer education. Lead scoring and some basic content that demonstrates your solution can save you tremendous time, money and resources. If a buyer is not interested enough to educate themselves online prior to meeting with your senior resources, the prospect is probably not worth their time yet.

Is there more than one buyer involved in purchasing my solution?

If your sale requires a champion on the buyer-side, then that champion will need content to educate themselves about your solution, so they can move the deal forward. They will also need to share that content with other people on the buying committee. If there are multiple buyers involved in the buying decision, they will engage with content more frequently and have a larger digital footprint. Do you have more than one buyer?

Do you have a pricing page, case studies, product pages, demos or demo registrations online?

If these pages are not part of your website or content marketing strategy you should probably consider them. If a buyer hits any of these pages, they are strong predictive indicators that your buyer is ready for sales engagement. Notifying your reps when buyers hit these pages can put your team at the front of the line.

If you can answer "yes" to a majority of these questions, then there's a good chance your business could benefit from lead scoring and it makes sense to read on.

The Basics of Lead Scoring for Companies Just Getting Started

Lead scoring requires a systematic approach, but it does not need to be complicated (especially if you are just getting started). But it is important to understand this will be a marathon and not a sprint. Here are the tools and steps required for initial lead scoring success. These steps will help to generate a return in the shortest amount of time while simultaneously setting you up for long term success.

Step 1 - First you need an automation technology with 6 basic features:

- The ability to send emails
- The ability to see what emails are opened and clicked
- The ability to embed forms
- The ability to capture which pages on your website a buyer visits
- The ability to score these pages and content differently
- The ability to share this score and information with your sales team

Email tools like Mail Chimp and Constant Contact have the email capabilities, but little else.

Robust marketing automation tools have all these features and more. But they typically start at over \$25K per year and require annual agreements. And most companies don't ever need all the bells and whistles these software's provide or have enough contacts in their current database for the expense to make sense when they are just getting started. That's why we developed Digital Demand Center™ and Lead Scoring Center™. They are two simple-to-use tools that have all these required features and more at a fraction of the cost without the annual upfront commitment.

Once your database is big enough and your needs increase, you can quickly transition the same processes below into a more robust system.

Step 2 - Build your initial target list

First decide what title, business and functions you want to target and build that database as fast and cost effectively as possible. Once you have acquired these targets, simply load them into your system. To build this database you will need to get them to opt-in to email marketing. To do this you can:

- Cold call these targets and ask for permission to send them an email (most expensive)
- Rent an opt-in list from a vendor to build a list of 3000 to 6,000 leads quickly (preferred method)
- Use your existing lead list (preferred method)

Step 3 - Program your Automation System to Score Your Existing Content

Now that you've identified who you want to target and loaded the list, you need to come up with a point system to start assigning point values to your content in your automation system. You can set any point value you'd like, but typically, **you'll want to stick to a 0 to 100 scale** and weigh the points in relation to how telling the content is in relation to a lead's readiness to talk to a sales rep -- and buy.

Don't over complicate this. If a buyer is interested they will do some research and browse on your website. Lead scoring is simple if you keep it basic using the following best practices content framework we recommend. All you need to do is embed code on your website to track the buyer with cookies and then score content based on what buying stage a buyer is indicating. Your automation system will then do the rest.

Outbound Marketing, Sales Automation and Lead Scoring Content Framework

Buying Cycle

If Your Buyer	Doesn't Know Who You Are	Has a Problem You Can Solve	Wants to Evaluate Their Alternatives	Want to Commit to You
Buyer Journey	Make Them Aware You Exist	Prove You Understand Their Needs	Make it Easy to Understand How Your Solution Solve Their Problem	Share Your Credentials

Sales Cycle and Lead Scoring Prediction

Sales and Marketing Job :	Peak Their Interest	Start to Build Trust	Prove a Solution Fit	Close
Your Team Needs to Provide	Marketing Videos & Compelling eMails with Educational Content Offer	Short Thought Leadership Videos and Blog Articles and Checklists	Demo Videos, Substantive Educational Videos & Case Studies	Customer Testimonials, ROI & Pricing Info
Points	5	10	30	100

You don't need all the different types of content in the framework above to get started. You just need enough to cover every quadrant.



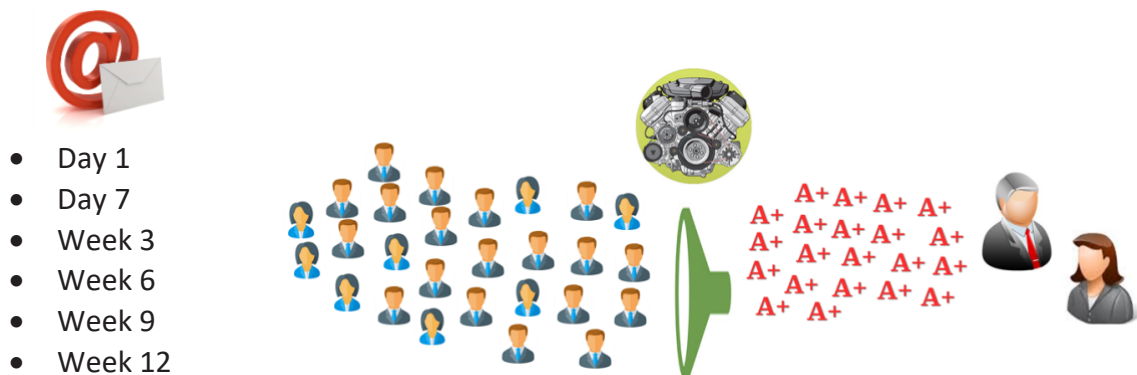
If you don't have enough content ready, our partners can typically create what you need in a one to two-day workshop.

Step 3 - Put Your Engine in Motion



With your database ready and your content scored, you can now start using your engine. Be prepared to share 6 emails over a 12 week period focusing on educational offers. This will drive buyers to your website and build trust simultaneously. As buyers become interested, they will start engaging with more and more content and move deeper into your website looking at your services page, your pricing page and your 'about us page. This digital conversation will be captured, scored and shared with your sales reps. Just having this level of insight is more than enough to give companies who are just getting started the lift they need to dramatically improve calling performance.

We typically run at the following cadence for the first 3 months:



About Gabriel Sales and What We Believe

Gabriel Sales, an outsourced sales and marketing company, was founded in 1999 in Silicon Valley to help accelerate sales for aggressive, high-growth companies. Since that time, we have executed thousands of campaigns for hundreds of products and services, successfully launching B2B solution sales efforts for multiple startups, SMBs and divisions of Fortune 500 companies. We have helped generate millions of dollars in Annual Recurring Revenue and 220M in equity exits for the executives and founders with B2B solutions.

We believe that the business to business market is in the middle of a massive disruption, that most solutions are first “bought” by making it easy for the buyer to self-educate, and then “sold” by customer service-oriented business development reps. Success requires telling your story in an honest and authentic way through the seamless integration of content marketing, marketing automation systems, a buyer education content management system, and sales reps that know how to use these tools as part of their calling efforts.

How Digital Demand Center Can Help

Digital Demand Center™ and Lead Scoring Center™ are the most affordable tools on the market designed specifically for B2B companies to modernize their approach to sales and marketing operations. These tools will provide all the systems you need to help your sales and marketing team sell the way buyers now buy.

How Gabriel Sales Can Help

Gabriel Sales builds repeatable sales automation engines and refines existing lead scoring programs in a fraction of the time most companies can do it on their own. We can help:

Craft Your Strategy – This includes, how to tell your sales story powerfully to as many buyers as possible and the tools, content and processes you need to support your inside sales reps with a consistent flow of sales-qualified opportunities.

Design and Implement Your Infrastructure - Integrate the technology required to automate your process, score leads, and measure the success and ROI of specific tactics

Thought Leadership and Sales Automation Content Production - Help you tell your story simply, authentically and powerfully with half-day and full-day content production workshops.

Run Your Initial Campaign - We can staff the marketing coordinators and sales staff you need to cover gaps in your existing team.

Transition Your Engine - Once a sales engine is launched and proven, 80% of our clients pull all or some of the functions in-house. We can help you train and build your own internal team, or continue to run your sales engine operations for an extended period of time.

