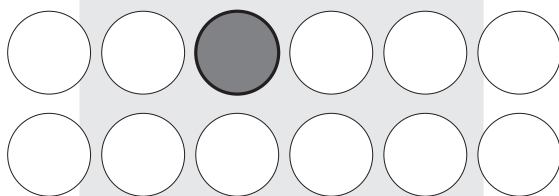
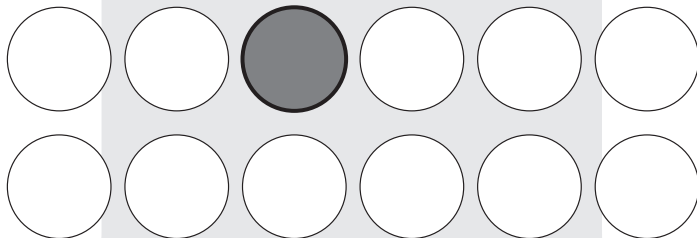


AN AUDIENCE OF **ONE**



AN AUDIENCE OF **ONE**



**DRIVE SUPERIOR RESULTS BY MAKING THE
RADICAL SHIFT FROM MASS MARKETING
TO ONE-TO-ONE MARKETING**

JAMIE TURNER & CHUCK MOXLEY

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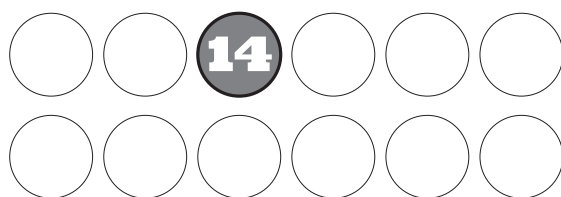
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YES, B2B MARKETERS CAN ALSO BE 1:1 MARKETERS

To be successful and grow your business and revenues,
you must match the way you market your products with
the way your prospects learn about and shop for your products.

—BRIAN HALLIGAN, COFOUNDER AND CEO, HUBSPOT¹

If you're a B2B company, you're probably wondering if 1:1 marketing is even a possibility for you. A lot of the examples used in the book are B2C case studies. And let's face it, if you've been working in B2B for a while, you realize that the quantity and precision of data for businesses is not like the seemingly limitless data available for B2C marketers.

Don't worry. Both authors of this book have worked for and with numerous B2B businesses over the years. (In fact, Chuck has headed marketing for multiple B2B software as a service [SaaS] companies over the past couple of decades.)

B2B marketers can absolutely leverage 1:1 marketing.

Sure, 1:1 marketing in a B2B world is approached differently than in the B2C world, from the data you use to basic concepts like how purchase decisions occur. But not only is it possible for B2B marketers to use ele-

ments of a B2C approach; we also believe every B2B marketer should be leaning into the 1:1 marketing movement and applying these techniques to their campaigns. In some ways, 1:1 can be even more valuable for B2B marketers than for B2C marketers.

UNDERSTANDING THE FACTORS THAT SEPARATE B2B 1:1 MARKETING FROM B2C 1:1 MARKETING

How business purchases are made is distinctly different from how consumer purchases are made:

- **More people.** Consumer purchases often are made with just one or two decision makers involved, but that's rarely the case with business purchases. Most business purchases involve multiple decision makers, influencers, evaluators, and negotiators who must all come to agreement before a purchase can be made.
- **More risk.** That's because consumer purchases generally affect only a person or at most a single household. Bad consumer purchases, such as choosing not-so-tasty bargain brand mac 'n' cheese, generally result in short-term, relatively minor problems (trust us, we've made that mistake). Business purchases, on the other hand, impact entire departments or companies, and can significantly impact business outcomes. Making a bad purchase decision in the business world can result in the loss of people's jobs or entire company fortunes.
- **Bigger investment.** Most household purchases involve small amounts, often less than \$100. Businesses routinely make purchases costing thousands, hundreds of thousands, or even millions of dollars.
- **Considered purchase.** Consumers often make impulse purchases, such as which fast-food restaurant to grab lunch from or buying a clearance-priced blouse while browsing in a store. Few business purchases are impulse purchases. Nearly all business purchases

require extensive research, evaluation, and even reference checking before they can be completed.

These differences result in far-longer purchase processes for businesses, often lasting many weeks or months. Decisions can take circuitous routes, stall, suddenly increase in speed, and sometimes end unexpectedly without a purchase. It's not surprising then that the role of marketing and how 1:1 marketing techniques can be applied are radically different from consumer marketing.

IN A NUTSHELL

While there are many differences between how businesses and consumers make purchases, there are a few similarities, especially since people are involved in both. B2B marketing can benefit from 1:1 marketing, perhaps even more than consumer marketing.

However, not everything about business purchases is different from consumer purchases. They do share some commonality, including:

- **B2B is people, too.** In the end, businesses don't make purchases; people do. They may be spending the company's money and purchasing products and solutions that impact the corporation, but it still requires that the people involved make the decision to buy.
- **Emotional purchases.** Despite the rigor around business purchases, in the end, the people involved can still buy for emotional reasons and justify their purchases with logic, just like they do when making consumer purchases.
- **Personalized experiences.** Business buyers and influencers prefer personalized experiences and conversations, based on their specific business, industry, and the role of the person involved, instead of being blasted with mass marketing messages.

In the end, smart B2B marketers realize that their customers, just like consumers, represent a lifetime value that can be far greater than what they gain from the initial purchase. And just like with B2C selling, it costs far more to acquire new customer than to get current customers to spend more, buy more frequently, refer friends, or remain a customer longer. And that's why 1:1 marketing is just as important for B2B marketing as it is with B2C marketing.

Ultimately, though, how you implement 1:1 marketing in a B2B world is radically different. Let's use the same Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How framework to examine how 1:1 marketing can be applied to marketing to businesses.

WHO YOU ARE TARGETING

Targeting prospects in the business world requires a two-step process. To know which people to target, you have to first determine which companies to target, since the decision makers and influencers ultimately are making purchases on behalf of the company they work for. And while more people are involved in B2B purchase decisions than B2C purchases, there are far fewer businesses than there are consumers in the United States. In fact, the US population in 2019 was 328 million people,² but there were only 32.5 million businesses.³

And while millions of consumers could buy a single company's products, very few businesses market a product that is purchased by millions of businesses. Businesses are generally limited either by geography (e.g., a local company that provides office cleaning services) or because the product's or service's value proposition applies to only a subset of companies (e.g., a company that sells industrial steel shelving).

Smaller companies purchase far fewer products and solutions than large enterprises. In fact, 76 percent of the 32.5 million US businesses have zero employees,⁴ meaning they are sole proprietorships or single person LLCs. This leaves fewer than eight million businesses in the United States purchasing the majority of B2B services and products.

But targeting the businesses your company would sell to can narrow even more, since few solutions apply to businesses of all sizes. Take accounting software. The accounting software that a business with \$3 million in sales uses is not the same accounting software used by a company with \$100 million in sales. In the end, it's not unusual for a business to have a solution or product that would be of interest to just a few thousand companies, or in some cases, a few hundred companies.

This is why many B2B marketers have transitioned from traditional broad marketing approaches to a concept called account-based marketing (ABM). In ABM, prospect targeting is organized around accounts (or businesses) that are likely to buy a particular product or service. Marketers start by identifying the ideal customer profile (ICP)—what are the characteristics of a business that make it a particularly ideal prospect? Characteristics may be firmographic, such as the revenue, number of employees, location, or industry. They may also be more situational-based, such as companies that sell a particular type of product, have a certain average purchase amount per customer, or compete with many other companies.

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ABM is the application of 1:1 marketing to B2B selling, starting at the business (account) level and working down to the individuals at the business involved in purchase decisions. By first identifying the prospect accounts that match your product's ICP and the roles/titles involved in the purchase decision, a B2B brand can identify the audiences of one—the decision makers and influencers involved in the purchase decision—to target with messaging that results in 1:1 conversations.

Once you identify the hundreds or thousands of ideal businesses that are prospects for your company, you then need to determine what roles within the company are likely to be involved in the purchase decision. It

could be people within a business unit (e.g., solvents), in certain departments (e.g., marketing or engineering), at a certain seniority level (e.g., vice president and above), or with certain titles (e.g., chief financial officer).

Once you have your target companies and people/roles defined, you can begin to practice 1:1 marketing. Many companies compile information about businesses, including firmographic, technology solutions the companies currently use, products people inside the company are currently researching, budgets for certain categories of products, and more.

Similar to 1:1 marketing to consumers, it's critical for B2B marketers to compile a master database of the companies they wish to target, and ideally the people in those companies that will be involved in the purchase decisions. And because purchases are more complex, involve more steps and people, and last longer with many conversations and meetings during the purchase process, most B2B companies use customer relationship management (CRM) software, such as Salesforce or Nimble. This allows them to collect additional information with each interaction and conversation, to better understand the needs of the buyers, the purchase process, and the current stage of each purchase opportunity.

All of this information is inherently collected on a 1:1 basis, associated with each company and the person at the company involved in the purchase process. And because a single company's purchase process can last for weeks or months, it's not unusual that during the process some of the people involved leave the company and replacements are hired. When this occurs, the seller may have to restart the process with the new people involved. Thus CRM solutions are critical to effective 1:1 B2B marketing, tracking all of the information and history of interactions with business contacts, ensuring that the right information is delivered at the right time to the right person.

WHAT APPROACH TO USE

Because B2B purchases can last much longer and involve a far more complex process than consumer purchases, messaging tends to be more complex since the type of information needed varies by person/role as well

as the stage of the purchase. Treating each purchase maker and influencer as an audience of one enables you to create personalized messages that create conversations with all of the people involved and at every stage in the purchase process.

For example, the message and language included in an email, letter, or ad to a CEO, CFO, a manager in the information technology department, and a director of marketing *should* be dramatically different to be effective. They each have different priorities, value different aspects of a product when considering a purchase, and serve in different roles within the buying process. Each purchase decision may have researchers, evaluators, negotiators, purchase managers, influencers, and decision makers.

Furthermore, the information buyers need during the initial awareness and knowledge stages will be different in later stages in the purchase process, such as the liking and preference stages. Early-stage messages are likely to be focused on driving awareness of a specific brand or product and helping prospects understand the problem your product can solve. Later-stage messages need to provide more detail and information, including information such as technical specs, capabilities, and pricing.

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When approaching B2B marketing with 1:1 marketing approaches, identifying the message to send to prospects is driven by a combination of the prospect's role in the company and the current stage in the purchase cycle. B2B marketing technology solutions make it possible to customize hundreds of different messages for everyone involved in the purchase process.

With the additional complexity, numerous people involved, and extended length of B2B purchases, a common approach is for B2B marketers to create a library of informational content that helps educate people throughout the purchase process. The goal of the B2B marketer is to pro-

vide the right information they need at each stage in the purchase. Content can be packaged as emails, infographics, comparison worksheets, eBooks and guides, technical white papers, webinars, and more.

And because most of these are delivered and accessed via digital means such as websites, landing pages, and emails, engagement data and signals are collected along the way by marketing automation software, such as Marketo, Eloqua, and HubSpot. Marketing automation software syncs with the company's CRM and enables marketers to send targeted emails to prospects and track what content they engage with and for how long. Capturing this information at a 1:1 level helps marketers and salespeople know which prospects are engaging with content, evaluating solutions, and at what stage they are in the buying process.

Another technology that has gained popularity in B2B marketing is chatbots. Chatbots, from companies such as Drift and Intercom, are placed on B2B websites to intercept visitors and engage them in conversations. Known as conversational agents, chatbots employ natural language processing and artificial intelligence (AI) to interpret responses from prospects visiting the website. Once they understand what the prospect wants, they can provide answers by accessing information from the company's knowledge base.

With information synced to CRM and marketing automation solutions, playbooks can be developed to create different conversations and paths for different customers. They can even identify people returning to a website and refer to the visitor by name or mention their company. The playbooks can also determine how to direct the prospect, connecting them to a human being to further facilitate a personalized, one-to-one conversation.

Thanks to a multitude of B2B technology solutions, sophisticated B2B marketers can truly create and manage thousands of 1:1 conversations with customers to move them through the purchase process. Buyers receive the right information and education at just the right stages and can complete a complex purchase transaction highly satisfied. With the advent of technology, business buyers often prefer to control the process

and conduct research and information exchanges without actually talking to or visiting with a salesperson.

The same technology can be used after the purchase to help ensure the customer is successfully onboarded (which can be a challenge with technology purchases, where implementations can take weeks or months), remains satisfied, and continues learning about additional features and solutions available. In the same way a consumer marketer increases the lifetime value of customers over time, B2B marketers can employ 1:1 marketing techniques and messaging to cause current customers to spend more, increase frequency of usage, refer other businesses, extend the lifetime of the customer, and even bring back past customers who left.

WHERE YOU REACH AND ENGAGE WITH PROSPECTS AND CUSTOMERS

Options for B2B marketers to reach decision makers and influencers used to be limited. Broadcast and print methods were available to larger advertisers, but to target business buyers, they would typically choose television networks watched by businesspeople, such as CNBC and Fox Business. Print advertising would target business publications, like the *Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune*, and *Forbes*, or more niche industry trade publications for the industries being targeted.

The only 1:1 options were direct mail and cold-calling, whether in person or by phone. While you can still use those today, many more options are available for the same reason there are more consumer options for 1:1 marketing: the growth of internet usage on laptops and smartphones. You can now digitally target the specific people you are looking for by using platforms that can match business data to digital signals. For example, you can use the IP address tied to a router specific to a particular business to reach people accessing the internet from that business location.

With the increasing popularity of ABM, a number of advertising and marketing solutions have been developed to reach the right decision makers and influencers in B2B purchase decisions via digital advertising.

With ABM SaaS solutions from companies like Demandbase, Terminus, and Metadata.io, B2B marketers can reach prospects with ads via social networks (e.g., LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook) and via DSPs that serve ads across thousands of websites.

And much like 1:1 audience targeting in consumer marketing, these solutions allow B2B marketers to reach specific buyers or select roles, functions, and seniority level in targeted companies, regardless of the website or app the person is using at the time the ad is delivered. So instead of purchasing a print ad in the *Wall Street Journal* because it's read by business buyers, brands can instead deliver ads to the right people or roles within the specific companies that match their ICP. It's equivalent to B2C 1:1 marketing where you can target specific households based on their previous purchase behaviors.

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Numerous B2B marketing technology solutions enable 1:1 marketers to reach all of the people involved in purchases with the right message, using a combination of email, digital ads, phone calls, social media networks, and direct mail.

You might be wondering if streaming or connected television options would enable targeting of business users. In theory, it could be done. At minimum, advertisers can purchase ads on business networks such as CNBC and Fox Business, but limiting impressions to a much more precise location, such as just certain cities or even just specific zip codes. While in theory it would be possible to link data to specific households to target business buyers, the challenge lies in the fact that few if any B2B data sources tie a business user to their home address. They are far more likely to be able to tie the user at an office address, but few people stream television programs from their offices.

WHEN YOUR MESSAGE IS DELIVERED

The timing of messages with businesses may be impacted by seasonality and/or sales processes. But in the business world, seasonality has less to do with the weather outside or holidays; rather, seasons are based on periods of times when businesses budget and make purchases. Most businesses establish budgets at the beginning of the year, which means sellers often want to be in contact with decision makers and influencers early in the year as they begin spending their budgets, or even during the previous quarter when budgets are being established. Some businesses require departments to use their entire budget before the end of the year or lose any unspent dollars, which can result in last-minute purchases at the businesses' year end.

Outside of seasonality, timing of messages is driven by where in the sales cycle the purchase decision is at the time the message is delivered. And since every prospect's purchase process could be at a different stage, employing 1:1 marketing and mapping messages to current stage by prospect enables you to deliver the right message at just the right time to hundreds or thousands of prospects. As long as you have a system and method for tracking each prospect's current position in the sales funnel, you can make sure you're delivering a relevant message that will answer the questions they have at that particular stage and help advance the process to the next stage.

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Timing of 1:1 messages in B2B selling is dictated by a combination of budgeting cycles and where in the sales process each message occurs. Marketers can use B2B marketing technology solutions not only to capture the signals that will identify where the prospect is in the sales funnel, but also to deliver the right message during each step.

B2B marketers often employ sales enablement solutions to more precisely time and personalize messages that create 1:1 conversations with B2B prospects. Sales enablement solutions help the sales organization understand their buyers, communicate with buyers, adapt messages, and ideally engage in conversations that help answer questions and address concerns buyers have, ultimately moving the purchase to a successful close.

Solutions such as Outreach.io and SalesLoft help sellers engage consistently throughout the buying process using a sequence of touches by phone, email, direct mail, and social messages. Because many interactions occur digitally, signals such as an email being opened or a recipient clicking on a link to a website can be used to personalize and even change the next step in the sequence. And in situations where the purchase is delayed or cancelled, these sales enablement solutions allow the marketer to place prospects into a “nurture” sequence that periodically sends an email from the sales rep or sales development rep (SDR). Sequences can also trigger the SDR to periodically touch base via phone. When the purchase process resumes or the prospect begins a new purchase process, it helps ensure that prospects recall your business and have someone reach out to pick up the prior conversation.

WHY YOU ARE MESSAGING A PROSPECT

Much like consumer 1:1 marketing, the Why can be answered by looking at the goal for that message. But with many more buyers and steps in the purchase process with B2B marketing, you will set specific goals or objectives for the communication at each step in the process. For example, a cold-call email or phone call has the objective of making the prospect aware of your product or service. If they happen to be in market for such a solution, the prospect will engage with your sales team to learn more. Meanwhile, a follow-up email thanking the prospect for meeting to demo your solution and pressing for next steps has the goal of moving an opportunity forward toward the close.

Additionally, you want to have a number of ongoing marketing programs to maintain awareness with all prospects, positioning your

company as a leader in your respective market. For example, you might produce a monthly email newsletter or periodic webinars to make people aware of new products, features, and case studies from current customers successfully using your product. These campaigns may have fewer specific objectives, although since you are still delivering communications via 1:1 marketing, you will know how many and which customers are engaging with the content, including reading the email and clicking through to additional resources on your website.

In the end, most marketing departments practicing 1:1 marketing develop playbooks with a specific set of communications and steps for each prospect. It's common to develop personas for each of the roles involved in the purchase decision. A persona describes a fictional character with specific characteristics of the people in that role, describing their challenges, pain points, stressors, and desires when purchasing products in your category. You can then develop playbooks for each persona you will engage with during the sales process, with a preset sequence of communication and engagement steps that will be executed using your marketing technology stack to deliver the right message at the right time in the most effective format.

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B2B marketers often identify different objectives for each communication in each step, as well as overall objectives for entire campaigns. In the end, all of the steps are working together to drive more sales at the highest velocity possible.

Finally, like consumer marketing, even businesses that practice 1:1 marketing will still employ some marketing practices that aren't 1:1 in nature. For example, running ads or conducting a webinar in partnership with a trade publication is inherently not a 1:1 form of media, since targeting is merely limited to the readers of the publication. And that audience will likely include some people who aren't prospective buyers or influencers for your product.

However, with the ability to use technology to implement 1:1 marketing with prospects once they become known to you, B2B marketers place even greater emphasis on using mass marketing methods to drive people to download a piece of content or participate in a webinar the marketing team develops so the person will provide personally identifiable information (PII) that lets you begin a 1:1 conversation with the prospect.

HOW YOU MEASURE CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

Given the number of various touchpoints in 1:1 marketing campaigns for B2B marketers, there are multiple ways to measure campaign success. Of course, in the end, like consumer marketing, success ultimately equates to revenue: How much revenue did the campaign result in compared to the cost to obtain that revenue? With the previously mentioned technology solutions available to B2B marketers, all of the activity is easily tracked back to the people involved in the purchase decision and linked to the opportunities that close as won business.

The problem in B2B marketing is that with the sheer number of people involved and multiple touchpoints, it can be challenging to tie a specific touchpoint to an opportunity closing. In other words, it's the culmination of the many touchpoints and 1:1 engagements that ultimately results in closing sales. The most sophisticated marketing organizations apply multitouch attribution (MTA) to try to determine the relative impact of every engagement, but it's not easy and requires a certain amount of guesswork. Most organizations simply calculate a customer acquisition cost (CAC), based on the cost of marketing and sales attributed to driving sales.

Additionally, 1:1 B2B marketers will also use metrics such as open and click rates to measure effectiveness of specific communications at each step in the process. The more sophisticated sales enablement and marketing automation solutions enable A/B split testing of messages at each step, allowing marketers to isolate variables such as headline, image, and copy length to identify which performs better.

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In the end, a B2B company's 1:1 marketing will be judged on how efficiently those efforts drove closed sales opportunities, most often by calculating CAC compared to the cost of the marketing effort. But metrics are also evaluated at every step to continuously optimize marketing efforts.

The most sophisticated solutions, including Outreach.io, use AI to determine the sentiment being expressed in every interaction, allowing for more precise analysis and optimization. For example, instead of just identifying that the prospect responded to an email, Outreach will decipher the difference between the prospect writing “tell me more” and “please stop emailing me, I’m not interested.”

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Here are some things to keep in mind as you reflect upon the concepts in this chapter.

- **1:1 is for B2B.** 1:1 marketing is a powerful technique for both B2C and B2B organizations, although differences in how business purchases are made versus consumers purchases will dictate different approaches.
- **Account-based marketing.** In B2B marketing, where a finite number of companies are likely buyers of a particular product or service, ABM is employed. With ABM, marketers start by identifying the prospective businesses, or accounts, that match the ICP for the product being marketed. They then identify the roles involved in the process and that provide a starting point for identifying the audiences of one they need to reach with 1:1 marketing efforts.

- **Target market.** Messaging in 1:1 marketing for B2B marketing is driven by who in the purchase process is being targeted and what stage the purchase process is in at the time of the engagement.
- **B2B solutions.** Technology solutions enable targeting of each persona involved in the purchase process with digital ads, emails, direct mail, and phone calls. Most B2B marketers also use mass marketing approaches to drive prospects to engage with the brand and provide their contact info, enabling ongoing 1:1 exchanges.
- **Timing is important.** Timing of messages in a B2B 1:1 marketing campaign is most often driven by budgeting cycles. Technology solutions make it possible to time the ideal message to arrive at the ideal time, based on where the prospect is in the buying process.
- **Purchase cycle.** Objectives for B2B 1:1 marketing efforts ultimately tie back to sales, something that often is easier to do in a B2B selling situation versus consumer marketing, thanks to a slower, more involved purchase process involving multiple people.
- **Metrics.** Similarly, 1:1 campaigns in B2B are ultimately measured by how efficiently they drive customer acquisition, by taking the revenue generated and dividing it by the CAC. Additionally, metrics can be evaluated at every step in the process to continuously optimize each step.