Software Company Leveraged SharpSpring for Generating New Leads

Background:

TechStart is a software company that implements an all-in-one technical support system (e.g. support calls, email cases, internal support document creation, etc.) for large businesses. They have been in the software space for less than 3 years, but began struggling with generating leads, due to competition from well-established companies and limited marketing funds. TechStart software has great reviews, however they weren't capturing enough leads to sustain their company for the future, and roughly half of their leads were unqualified.

In spite of these issues, when the sales team was able to give a demo to a qualified lead they were successful, therefore TechStart began to generate revenue. In order to continue to see growth and expand their offerings to new markets, their marketing agency recommended creating a content marketing strategy integrating content and their previous email-blast and paid search tactics with SharpSpring marketing automation.

Industry:
Technology

B2B/B2C/Channel:
B2B/B2C, low volume,high RPU

Goal:
Lead Generation
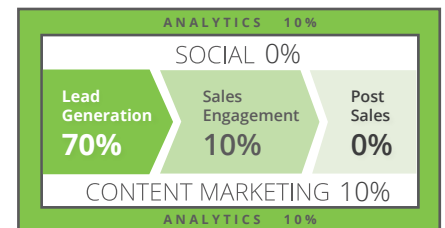
Gross Revenues: $1.07MM   Units Sold/Month: 9   Revenue/Unit: $9,900   New Leads/Month: 72

Goal/ Challenge:

TechStart implemented marketing automation to accomplish the following goals:
1. Generate leads through content marketing
2. Pre-qualify leads in order to help the sales team become more efficient
3. Maintain contact with new leads to decrease unengaged time in the sales process.
4. Increase the conversion rate for leads that have filled out a form, but have not attended a demo.

Tactical Philosophy:

TechStart and their marketing agency determined that generating high quality content was the most effective way to drive potential customers to the website and obtain their information. Through gated content, they were able to increase the amounts of leads they received per month. With forms, they pre-qualified those leads to remove companies that did not meet their minimum revenue/number of employees, and segmented the leads that did. Personalized drip campaigns provided targeted content to these segments, and automated notifications for sales reps allowed TechStart to provide relevant and useful information and keep leads engaged/moving through the sales funnel.

Recommended Tactics:

1. **Gated Content to Capture Leads:** TechStart worked with their marketing agency to create a content marketing strategy with gated content, allowing them to capture lead information. Examples of their content marketing efforts include:
    a. A monthly thought-leadership blog published by TechStart that was sent via email to leads that opted-in.
    b. Customized landing pages focused on conversion for each of their marketing efforts.

c. Downloadable white papers that required a name, company name and email address before being able to access.
d. A social media strategy that pushed out high quality content and drove people to site.
e. Quarterly webinars on important industry topics.
f. Customer surveys on site and via email that gather lead information, as well as valuable information about what features people would like to see, what support features their company uses/finds valuable, etc.

2. **Determine Effectiveness with Campaigns:** Because of a limited marketing budget, each dollar spent needed to be highly efficient. TechStart set up Campaigns in SharpSpring in order to determine which content marketing tactics are performing effectively and delivering positive ROI, in order to focus their efforts and spend.

   a. Through Campaigns, TechStart was able to see end-to-end metrics for each of their marketing efforts. They were able to know where each lead came from, track the cost of lead generation, and see which drove the most sales.
   b. TechStart was also able to tag each campaign to better understand the effectiveness of each type (ie: social media v. paid search).

3. **Empower Sales with Visitor Information:** TechStart used SharpSpring's capability to track the Life of the Lead through VisitorID in order to empower its sales team with information about their most valuable leads.

   a. Through VisitorID, anonymous visits these leads made prior to filling out a form were tracked, then assigned to the lead after they identified themselves (by filling out a form/requesting a demo/etc). The sales people were then able to use actionable data about the lead's anonymous visit history to provide more targeted, valuable information to the lead.
   b. For example, when an IT company with 8,500 employees and $85MM in revenues filled out a form, the sales person was able to identify that prior to filling out the form they had been to the TechStart website 3 times, each time visiting the page related to the software calling support aspect of their software. The sales person then reached out to them asking if they would like a demo highlighting the benefits of software calling, since they knew that was a hot button issue for the lead.

4. **Segmentation Using Dynamic Lists:** TechStart used Dynamic Lists to segment their leads into unique groups. This allowed them to effectively communicate with each lead based on their qualifications. Leads were pre-qualified based on certain parameters, which increased sales team efficiency and led to higher conversion rates. They were separated into the following segments

   a. Company size and revenue
   b. Likelihood of conversion based on lead score

Once set up, these Dynamic Lists automatically sort customers and add/remove them from segments as needs change, creating a permanent growth engine for TechStart.

Low Lead Score List (<75)

Employees	1,000	1,000-5,000	5,000-10,000	10,000+
<$1MM	12	2	2	0
$1MM-25MM	6	6	7	1
$25-50MM	1	4	5	1
$50MM+	0	1	0	0

Medium Lead Score List (75-150)

Employees	1,000	1,000-5,000	5,000-10,000	10,000+
$1MM	8	2	0	0
$1MM-25MM	4	4	6	0
$25-50MM	2	2	1	1
$50MM+	0	1	1	0

High Lead Score List "Hot List" (150+)

Employees	1,000	1,000-5,000	5,000-10,000	10,000+
$1MM	5	4	0	0
$1MM-25MM	3	9	4	0
$25-50MM	7	6	2	0
$50MM+	0	1	0	0

The segments in grey were deemed by TechStart as being unqualified, due to low revenues/number of employees. Thanks to segmentation, they are automaticaly able to segment these leads and focus their sales team on pre-qualified companies.

5. **Targeted Marketing Content through Drip Campaigns:** A custom email drip campaign was designed for each segment. Each campaign delivered highly personalized content, built around the specific needs of each segment. For example:

   a. A lead fills out a demo request form and identifies that they work for a company with 7,500 employees, and $37MM in revenues. They filtered into a "hot list" campaign that set them up with a demo, provided information about the company, and statistics about the productivity increases due to technical support systems.

   b. Another lead works for a company with over 10K employees, and has downloaded multiple white papers and visited the pricing page 3x. However, because they have not attended a demo, they were added to a drip campaign. They were sent emails asking if they would like to view the software in action, sent information about the ROI of the support system and provided a discount based on their company size.

6. **Proactive Sales Engagement:** Lead tracking and notifications were used in order to alert the sales team when leads performed a specified action that TechStart placed importance on, so the sales team was able to follow up with the lead immediately. This resulted in higher conversions and personalized interactions. For example:

   a. If a lead was prequalified based on company size and revenue, and signed up for a webinar, the sales team received both an email and text alert letting them know about a potential hot lead. They were then able to reach out personally to the lead to provide information, and were added to a nurturing campaign that continued to provide statistics, pricing and valuable content.

   b. Reminders were created for the sales team within lead profiles to ensure that they reach out and keep track of upcoming demos, which included emailing corresponding calendar events.

In the future...

Though marketing automation, TechStart has created a permanent growth engine that they will continue to use as they expand to new markets and launch new software and system upgrades.

The results that TechStart achieved using SharpSpring are not possible with traditional ESPs and a basic CRM system. Integrating all of its marketing efforts into a single marketing automation platform allowed TechStart to have near one-on-one communication with customers in a high-converting process. The end-to-end tracking ability allowed TechStart to see the ROI of each of their efforts, allowing them to effectively allocate resources to the highest performing.

Customer Segment	Tactic	Sales	Revenue
All Segments	**Content Marketing -** Generate and push out high quality content, and gate the content in order to obtain lead information.	**Supports All Tactics**	
All Segments	**Analytics and Campaigns -** Implemented to track the ROI on each Campaign run, to determine the most effective methods of marketing and focus their efforts on these.	**Supports All Tactics**	
All Segments	**Visitor ID -** Use after a high-value lead fills out a form, in order to enable sales people with actionable data on the anonymous visits to the site the lead made prior to filling out the form.	**Supports All Tactics**	
All Segments	**Sales Team Engagement Notifications** - Send text messages/emails to sales team to notify when qualified leads perform an action that TechStart placed high importance on (i.e. sign up for a webinar, visit pricing page 3x), that way they could reach out with targeted content.	**Supports All Tactics**	

Segmented Drip Campaigns:

Key Segments were chosen by TechStart. to begin targeting with highly relevant campaigns. Once the segments were set up, Dynamic List automatically update customers as their needs change, becoming a permanent growth engine for TechStart.

Unqualified Segments: <1,000 employees, <$1MM Revenue	Send out an email informing them that due to limited resources, currently TechStart software is not available for a company of their size. Inform them that software for smaller businesses is in the works and give them an option if they would like to be informed when it is and receive a 20% discount off it.	No incremental leads, however of the 58 leads, 26 opted-in to more information and the sales team was free to spend their time reaching out to leads that were more qualified.	No incremental revenue
1k-10k employees, $25MM+Revenue, Medium List	Email members in this category that have not requested a demo asking if they would like to see more software in action.	Of the 5 leads in this category, 3 attended a demo and 1 purchased the software for their company.	$9,900
5k+ employees, $25MM+ Revenue, Low List	Campaign that offered a 10% discount for this size company if they signed up within 2 weeks after receiving their demo.	Of the 6 leads in this category, 2 attended a demo and both purchased software.	$19,800
All (Qualified) Segments	"Where did you go?" campaign that targets users that have attended a demo more then 3 weeks ago but not purchased the software.	There were 16 leads in all segments that had attended a demo and then lost contact. After the campaign, 4 requested a second demo or more information, and 2 purchased software.	$19,800
5k+ employees, $1MM+Revenue, High List	Dedicated sales rep nurture campaign that sets up weekly calls and bi-weekly emails to answer questions as the lead moves towards purchase.	Of the 6 leads in this category, 4 leads purchased software.	$39,600
1k+ employees, $1MM+Revenue, Low List	Incentivized customer survey that requests more information on what they are looking for in their software, offered a 10% discount on TechStart users that completed.	Of the 25 leads in this category, 15 took the survey to provide information to TechStart. Of those, 3 purchased software.	$29,700

Net Impact	Revenues increased **$118,800** an **11%** lift due to marketing automation