White Paper

The Push/Pull Marketing Program: Proven Results for Today's B2B Online & Social Media Driven Markets

By Joy Scott
Scott Public Relations
21700 Oxnard St, Suite 1840
Woodland Hills, CA 91367
(818) 610-0270
joy@scottpublicrelations.com

The Push/Pull Marketing Program: Proven Results for Today's B2B Online & Social Media Driven Markets

Businesses today are all seeking to develop a cohesive, integrated marketing campaign that will capture leads, drive growth and foster trust in their company or brand. The challenge is taking the right marketing and communications approach in today's online and social media- driven marketplace.

Scott Public Relations, a full service public relations and marketing agency specializing in healthcare, insurance, technology and professional services industries, arrived at a solution that we call the "Push/Pull Marketing Program." It is a content-focused, integrated marketing campaign that brings together traditional, online and social media channels to build businesses in the B2B space efficiently, cost-effectively, and with measurable results.

We know that a theory is just a (potentially) good idea until it is proven. Therefore, we made our own agency the "beta site" to test the Push/Pull Marketing Program. This white paper presents both the components of the Push/Pull Marketing Program and the measurable results that were achieved with it here at Scott Public Relations.

The Push/Pull Marketing Program Approach

Imagine…A smoke-filled room, middle-aged men in porkpie hats pound furiously on their typewriters, pausing only to take a call from a valuable PR "contact." Hold the presses – the contact has an idea for a story. A quick lunch meeting solidifies the deal between the contact and the journalist. In a day or two, the story about the contact's client appears, complete with photos. Everyone is ecstatic.

No, it's not a scene from the "Front Page" on Classic Movie Night. This scenario is most people's idea of how news making or PR functions. However, this idea is as outdated as the Edsel.

It's true that the "secret sauce" in media relations for garnering story ideas used to be, in large part, contacts. Sadly, some PR people still boast of their "contacts" as if this were the value they are providing a client. However, while human relationships and connections are and will always be important, the value of the PR expert today is multidimensional: it's determining what is a sellable or newsworthy story, it's developing the content that tells that story, and then it's getting that story read (or viewed) in multi-media channels, that changes perceptions and creates awareness.

Why should a business executive care about this shift in emphasis? Don't you just want the results without needing to know how PR works? Of course, but in order to be sure you are

getting the results you want from your PR efforts, there are a few facts to understand that will save you enormous time and frustration later. Bear with me.

There are three main differences in the marketplace today that have transformed how communication and marketing work. These changes are why we created the Push/Pull Marketing Program.

1. <u>Online and social media</u> is the primary source of information today. While mass media still retains incredible power to influence and inform, online and social media platforms have overtaken its ability to create "buzz" and more importantly, to get information in front of people when they are interested in making a buying decision and in front of journalists when they are thinking about a story or looking for sources.
2. <u>Opportunities for traditional media coverage have shrunk</u>. Due to the demise of many traditional media and tremendous attrition among journalism staffs, most journalists are doing the work of three people today. They are under strict instructions only to cover "news"- not features or stories about companies which are now considered to be marketing rather than news. It doesn't matter if a PR contact is their spouse, they cannot risk their jobs by ignoring these instructions. That's why you see less feature journalism, and variation after variation on the key news of the day in different outlets. That's why todays' journalists and news outlets rely more heavily on wire services and even social media, as they can't afford to do as much original reporting as they once did.
3. <u>With online and social media, no intermediary is necessary</u>. In order to get information out to a target audience, it's not necessary to do this via media coverage. Online and social media resources make it possible, and have raised the expectation that someone with a story to tell will tell it to the individuals directly. For example, a news release used to be written for the news media as an article they could run, or an idea that they could take and create an individual story about. Now, a news release is a communication that goes directly to the consumer or decision-maker who collects the news of the day in their inbox or visits a news site. Media no longer print releases and for the most part, they don't cover the news that is in them.

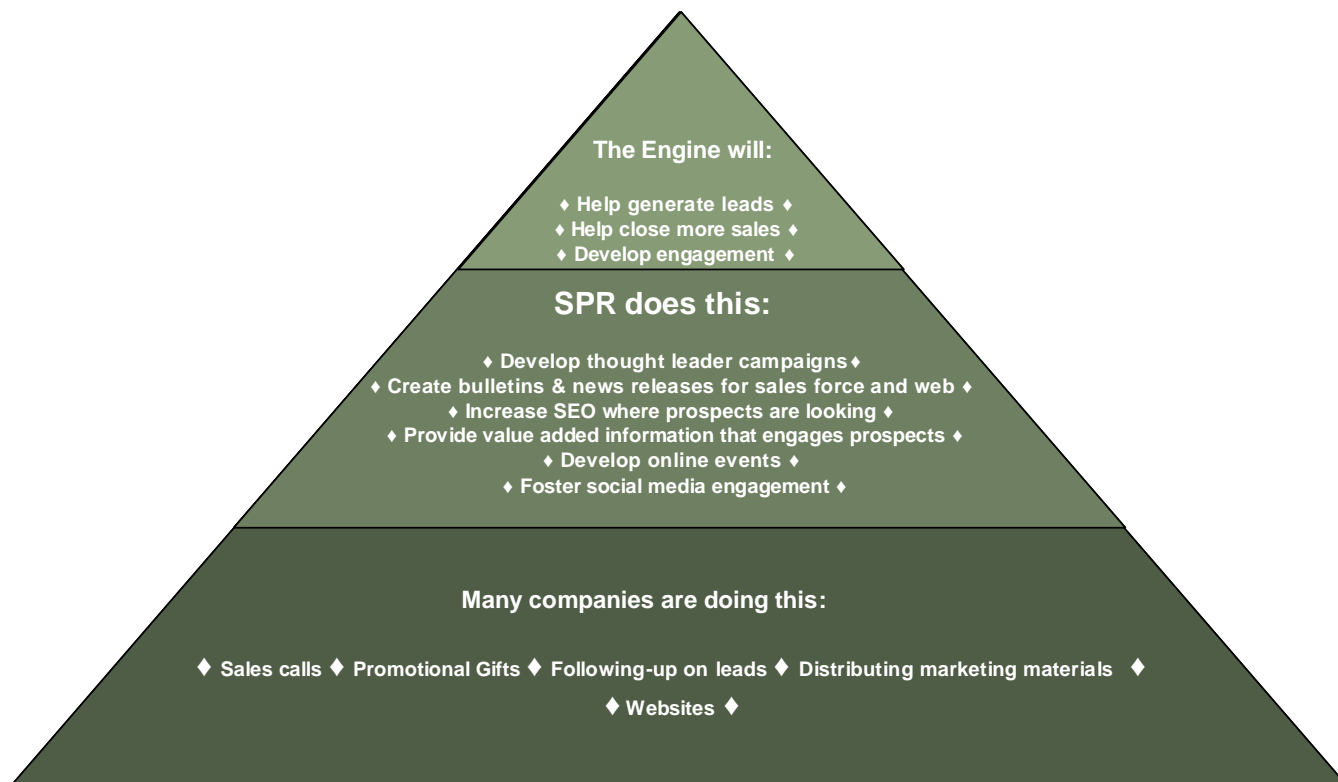**It's About <u>Content</u>, Not Contacts**

So are we saying that PR has no value today? On the contrary – the value is greater than ever before because of these differences that have occurred in the marketplace. Where that value lies is the core of the Push/Pull Marketing Program:

- Define the story
- Tell it yourself
- Reach your target audience directly with value-added content
- Use all of these elements to craft a story that will be of interest to the news media

Today, media coverage is the sauce, not the steak. The main course of PR is an on-message, compelling story, told well and in the right channels that piques the interest of buyers, influencers, and the news media.

SPR implemented the cutting-edge Push/Pull Marketing Engine in order to position its client companies as thought leaders and also to generate new leads. So how does this Push/Pull

Marketing Engine work? By taking the various tactics below and strategically "pushing" information out while "pulling" in prospects, influencers and channel partners. This marketing engine is not only effective, but delivers results that build business and reputation while generating more leads.

The Engine will:

♦ Help generate leads ♦
♦ Help close more sales ♦
♦ Develop engagement ♦

SPR does this:

♦ Develop thought leader campaigns ♦
♦ Create bulletins & news releases for sales force and web ♦
♦ Increase SEO where prospects are looking ♦
♦ Provide value added information that engages prospects ♦
♦ Develop online events ♦
♦ Foster social media engagement ♦

Many companies are doing this:

♦ Sales calls ♦ Promotional Gifts ♦ Following-up on leads ♦ Distributing marketing materials ♦
♦ Websites ♦

Here are the essential elements of the Push/Pull Marketing Program, why it works, and how it works as demonstrated by Scott Public Relations.

Step 1: Develop & Distribute Press Releases Via Top Wire Services

As we've noted, the role of the press release is no longer to interest journalists in doing a story. Here's the value of the press release today:

- About 80 million people get their news from online sources every day. A press release that distributed on one of the top wire services and that is properly search engine optimized will land in the inbox of your prospects who are "Googling" for key words related to your news and/or your company.
- The press release is also going to be picked up by many online news sites that your prospects visit.
- It can also be picked up and featured in the multitude of daily online newsletters and news feeds that your prospects read.
- It lives online forever; years from now when people are searching your key terms or company name, your release will pop up.
- It is also new content for your company's website - driving SEO, and demonstrating that you are a progressive and dynamic company.

Step 2: Create Blogs & Content

Blogs are an incredibly powerful tool for increasing SEO and driving website traffic. However, many companies are frightened about the idea of starting a blog, primarily because of two concerns:

- How much time will it take?
- What if someone responds to a blog with a negative comment?

In the Push/Pull Marketing Program, we can lay these fears to rest. While originally envisioned as being highly interactive, blogs today are primarily "thought leader" channels. In our model, blogs do not take as much time as companies may think. Our research has found that they are highly effective even if posts occur only once a week. Secondly, all comments in response to blog posts are screened before they are posted publicly. This eliminates the possibility of damaging reputations due to the "rants" or negative comments by others, or even spam.

The thought leader blog is really the heart of the Push/Pull Marketing Engine. It creates a constant stream of new content for the website, and drives SEO. Blog posts can be "merchandised" directly to the news media, to customers, and to potential customers. In addition, an RSS feed can be set up that will allow people to follow the company and automatically receive news and new online content, including blogs.

Blog content can be drawn from information the company issues, comments about external events and other articles, or comments on industry trends. Identifying content is not difficult. With the Push/Pull Marketing Program, we find it, package it, and publish it for you.

Step 3: Publish White Papers, Case Studies and Metrics

Publishing a white paper is still an effective marketing tool to communicate results for your own company, or to provide a solution or perspective on an industry problem. Requests for white papers can be tracked, and they can be used in lead generation campaigns.

Case studies are an incredibly valuable asset to your marketing program. Third party testimonials and real stories about how you solved customers' problems add credibility to your value proposition. And, your prospects love to read about "people like me" who have solved the same problems they have.

Step 4: Videos

Videos are becoming the dominant form of content in digital marketing. A visual and audible story about a client or customer experience helps an audience connect on multiple levels while demonstrating professionalism with in-demand services like video production. They come equipped with ready-made engagement tracking through views, and they can be easily shared across multiple platforms and websites.

Step 4: Initiate a Social Media Campaign

Many CEOs question the value of utilizing social media for business, primarily because they themselves may not be using it personally. Forbes recently highlighted an IBM study that documents only 16% of CEOs participate in social media. But the IBM study also finds that this percentage is likely to jump noticeably to around 57% within five years[1].

---

[1] Forbes.com. http://www.forbes.com/sites/markfidelman/2012/05/22/ibm-study-if-you-dont-have-a-social-ceo- youre-going-to-be-less-competitive/

Here's more evidence of the value of social media in B2B marketing:

- According to [Omobono](#), a survey of 115 B2B marketers in 2018 concluded that 79% of respondents said social media was their most effective marketing tool—and 38% would spend extra budget on social media if they had it.
- The [2016 B2B Buyers Survey Report](#) found that 53% of B2B buyers said they turned to social media about making buyer decisions.
- [Social Media Examiner](#) conducted its 10th annual study, the 2018 Social Media Marketing Industry Report, and surveyed more than 5,700 in different industries around the globe. Some of the metrics they compiled include:
    - 78% of marketers who used social media for at least two years reported experiencing increased traffic to their website.
    - 87% said greater exposure for their business had been the primary benefit of social media activity.

The Push/Pull Marketing Program's approach to social media views it initially as a channel for company content and focuses on getting your content in front of individuals who are on social media sites. We start with LinkedIn and the many special interest groups that are active there, and then YouTube – the second most-used search engine. We expand out into Twitter and then Facebook, as well as other social media platforms that are relevant for a particular company.

Step 5: Establish Online Speaking Forums

Online speaking forums are a controllable, inexpensive yet high profile way to garner visibility for your messages. As attendance at conferences has shrunk, online webinars have replaced them as an easy, accessible and more affordable way to get information.

Advantages of online speaking forums are:

- By creating your own forum, you control the content.
- They are quick and relatively easy to do and promote. You don't have to wait a year for a committee to determine whether or not you will be a speaker at their conference; you take your message directly to your prospects and influencers.
- You create a communication tool to use across multiple channels. Webinars can be turned into videos as well as podcasts, to live on your site and to be viewed on other platforms.

Step 6: Search Engine Optimization

Perhaps the most powerful connection you can make is to be in front of a prospect's eyes when they are looking for information and solutions. That's the power of search engine optimization. Your prospect starts the search the way we all look for information today: on the Internet. Put in the search terms, and you or your company pops up, with content that answers their questions, a website that engages and informs, comments from "people like them" who validate your worth, and that offers a way for them to connect with you to engage further.

SEO is the "piece de resistance" of a successful push/pull marketing approach. The goal is for your company's website or content to come up in the first page of results when people are searching and seeking information, are trying to engage with others, or are ready to buy a product or service.

The Push/Pull Marketing program accomplishes this goal by providing continuous, relevant, and optimized content on your site and throughout the Internet and appropriate social media sites.

These six steps are the components that make up the Push/Pull Marketing Engine. Now, let's look at the

results we achieved with this campaign, right in our own backyard.

Scott Public Relations specializes in public relations and communications for firms in healthcare, insurance and technology.

For more information contact Joy Scott:

Scott Public Relations
21700 Oxnard St, Suite 1840
Woodland Hills, CA 91367f
(818) 610-0270
www.scottpublicrelations.com