



THE EASY 9-STEP GUIDE TO

Creating Your 2020 Marketing Strategy



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Introduction

With 2020 fast approaching, you may find yourself split between reviewing the year so far and strategising for the year ahead. January feels too late to start your planning, and you don't want to miss out on Q1 because you've yet to get off the ground. But at the same time, you want to make sure you get a full look at how 2019 has performed before making any big decisions.



In this step-by-step guide, we'll share our 9-step process for putting together your next year's marketing strategy. If you start now, you can get the planning out of the way and start hitting your goals straight away in 2020.

The 9-Step Guide to Creating Your 2020 Strategy

Step 1:

Assess 2019's performance

It's difficult to plan for 2020 without knowing how 2019 went, so you will want to pull a few KPIs to look at when planning for next year. Using a combination of your marketing automation platform (like HubSpot) and Google Analytics, here are the reports we recommend you run:

- Best performing website content from 2019 by traffic, conversion rate and attributed revenue
- Best performing email campaigns from 2019 by CTR, conversion rate and attributed revenue
- Acceptance rate from MQL to SQL
- Number of Leads, MQLs, SQLs, Opportunities and Customers by original source
- Revenue by original source
- ROI for each source, including internal resource costs
- Breakdown of new Leads, SQLs and Customers by persona

Once you have this data, you can look at what is working best and what needs improvement. You'll also be able to see a clear indication of the type of content most desired by the people who ultimately become customers. This will help you select your content for 2020. Similarly, the revenue and ROI by source will help you create your budgets for promoting that content.



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Step 2:

Fine-tune your personas



You probably already have personas

(if not, check out this blog post about their importance), but it's important to revisit them at least once per year. Is the split between them in line with your expectations? Are there personas you're neglecting, or ones who have begun to dominate?

If you're unhappy with any of the answers you uncover, it's time to take another look at your personas in detail. Make sure any learnings about their behaviour are incorporated into their descriptions, and adjust them where needed. Your personas will drive your content strategy, so it's important to flesh them out as much as you can.

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Step 3:

Identify & prioritise your goals

Based on what you've learned, what are your marketing goals for 2020? Do you want to increase the number of inbound leads? Improve conversion rates? Reduce CPA? List out all of your goals, and then prioritise them in the order you think would make the biggest difference. Try to be more specific than "increase revenue," as all of your KPIs should be assisting that ultimate goal.

If you're stuck on which KPIs should be at the top of your priority list, start by finding a metric you're happy with. For example, maybe you know that your web traffic is at a good level. From there, you can deduce that in order to grow revenue you'll need to turn more of those visitors into leads, so you can prioritise conversion rate as a KPI you want to improve, meaning user journey and ungated web content should be improved. Or, if you know your sales team is great at closing deals but they're not accepting most of your MQLs as SQLs, then your lead quality needs to be improved and your lead scoring addressed.

Once you've outlined these goals, make sure you quantify them. Make them SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely. Take your top 3 as your primary KPIs for your 2020 plan.



Step 4:

Audit and plan your content

Now that you know what you want to achieve and the audience you're speaking to, it's time to plan your content. We recommend that you start with an audit of the assets you already have. It's much easier to tweak an older piece of content than to create a new one, so knowing what you already have in your arsenal is crucial. Here are some points to consider as you audit your existing content:

- Which persona is this content for?
- At what stage of the buyer journey would someone want this content?
- Am I happy with the quality of this content?
- How much of my audience has already downloaded this content?
- Is there a specific time of year or situation for which this content is most appropriate?

For existing content that's up to scratch, put it at the beginning of the year to give yourself some time to create high-quality content on down the line. If there's something that is almost there but needs a bit of work, go ahead and book in the resources needed to bring it up to the standard you've set.

Once you know what you have, you can start to fill in the gaps. Brainstorm as many ideas as you can, and get your team and your sales team to help as well. They may have insight into questions your customers and prospects have that you can answer with your content. Then organise the content ideas into categories, including gated content, ungated content and sales-only content. Arrange them into a content calendar so that you have the entire year planned out, with the ungated content supporting the gated content to create a cohesive user journey.



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Step 5:

Incorporate your industry/promotional calendar



Your business or industry likely has set dates in the diary that you have to work around, like big events or seasonal demand. While we recommend creating a full content calendar before considering these things, they will need to be accounted for in your plan. First off, see if any of your content already fits with the themes associated with these. If so, you can move things around a bit for better alignment. It's likely you will be able to find these links if you've been focusing on the right personas.

However, if none of your already planned content aligns with your promotional calendar, first you should examine why that is. It could be that something happening in the year seems unrelated to your content, like awards or conferences. However, even for these things it's likely that there's a theme attached to them that you could work into your content. If your audience will be paying attention to these events, they'll be thinking about those themes already, so content that aligns with those subjects will be likely to catch their eye.

However, if you've realised that none of your content aligns to your promotional calendar despite everything on the calendar being highly relevant, you may need to revisit your personas and make sure you understand what they're actually looking for.

Once you've repurposed and rearranged what you can within the existing content plan, add in content for any promotional times not yet covered, or for any that may necessitate extra attention. Don't be afraid to go above and beyond on the amount of content you create. There's no actual rule that says you need to create one ebook a month, one blog a week, etc. If the promotional calendar necessitates it, seasonal peaks in your content production can be a good thing.



Simplicity is the ultimate
form of sophistication
- LEONARDO DA VINCI

Step 6:

Audit and plan your media campaigns

After you've created your content calendar, you can start to develop your media campaigns to promote the content. Rather than splitting up a paid search budget equally or assigning the same strategy to everything, look at each campaign individually and ask yourself and your team what type of media plan would best support the content. Look at 2019's results and how well different types of campaigns performed for different types of content, and build your strategy from there.



Step 7:

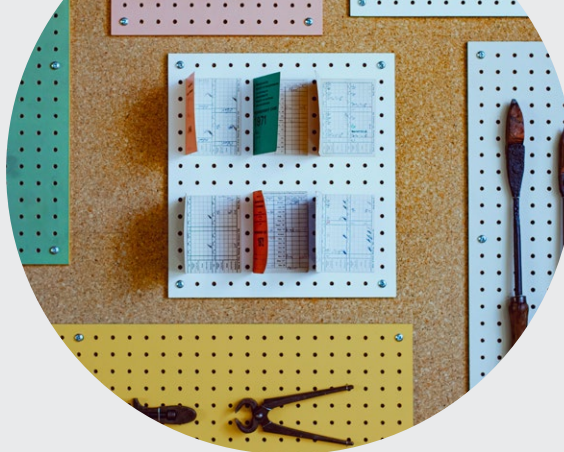
Assess your sales enablement strategy

All this marketing content is great, but what about your sales team? If they don't feel prepared to follow up on the leads you're generating regarding the subjects you're covering with your content, then it won't lead to closed deals, no matter how good the content is.

Once you have your content calendar sorted, bring in your sales manager or even a few sales reps. Walk them through what you've created and what your promotion plan is, and let them share insights about how it fits in with the conversations they're having. Make notes of any resources they might need or be able to provide for you, and make sure they're excited about the content you're creating.



Lastly, you'll want to make sure that your sales team is able to see how people have interacted with your content. If they're speaking to someone who's downloaded Resource A, their approach might be different than if they were speaking to a lead from Resource B. And if someone has downloaded both \ A and B, that's a different conversation altogether. Most marketing automation platforms (like HubSpot) will display this information in a contact's Activity Timeline, so make sure your sales team has access to that information.



Step 8:

Choose the tools that will help you reach
& measure those goals

Speaking of marketing automation platforms, now that you have your marketing strategy planned out, it's time to make sure your current tools are up to the task. You need a software that can organise content into campaigns, create visibility for sales teams, manage paid media and run KPI reports, at the least.

If you're looking to get even more advanced with your marketing strategy in 2020, consider looking for a platform that lets you create automations based on behaviour and properties, not just list membership. This will allow you to create nurture strategies and user journeys that shorten your sales cycles and help you reach your goals faster.



Lastly, you want to make sure that you have the ability to integrate your marketing platform seamlessly with your website. This means creating pop-ups and chatbots, hosting landing pages, and more. An all-in-one platform like HubSpot will allow you to do all this and more.

Step 9:

Put your plan into action

Once you have your goals set, your plan in place and the right tools in your arsenal, you're ready to start implementing everything you've done. Here is a quick checklist for each of your campaigns:

- Make sure you have the right team in place to help you bring your plan to life
- Send briefs and set deadlines as soon as possible
- Assess each piece of content by how well it aligns to your business values, your personas and your goals
- Send all content to your sales team so they can utilise it throughout the sales process
- Analyse performance on a regular basis and make adjustments to the plan as you go

If you follow these steps, starting with your audience and your business goals and building from there, your 2020 marketing strategy will be your best year yet. A focused, purposeful marketing strategy will help you hit your goals and win customers more effectively than ever before.

To learn more about how BBD Boom can help you create a winning marketing strategy based on your business and your customers, [click here to get in touch.](#)



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