

How to Reach and Engage Human Resource Buyers and Convert Them to Leads

A Three-Step Guide to Achieve Increased Publicity,
Web Site Traffic, Improved SEO – and More HR Sales Leads

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publicity. traffic. leads.



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I also welcome your feedback.

Thank you!

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How to reach human resource buyers and convert them to leads

I've spent the last sixteen years focusing on this challenge. And I'm going to try to share what I've learned in the following eBook.

The model I am going to present is called the "Marketing PR Lead-Gen ProcessSM." It's essentially a three-step process, focusing on Infrastructure, Content and Promotion.

It works.

I've personally witnessed its success with hundreds of human resource suppliers who subscribe to HRmarketer.com. In fact, when followed correctly, I have not seen a single instance when it has not worked.

But you have to work at it. There are no shortcuts and there exists no software that will automate the process for you.

Oh, I want to share something else.

Beginning on page four (you are on now page three) there will be nothing promotional in this eBook and I promise I'm not going to try to sell you anything. I'm just going to give you a ton of really great information.

But this is page 3. So, a word from the sponsor. I would love it if you purchased a membership to HRmarketer.com. It makes implementing what I am going to discuss a lot easier. You can also hire the HRmarketer Services Group to do the work for you. We're really good at this stuff.

But if you decide otherwise, that's OK – because none of what I am about to discuss is difficult and will likely not require you to increase your marketing and PR budget – in fact, you may end up cutting your budget – if you are willing to do a little work.

Ready? Read on!

The Marketing PR Lead-Gen Processsm

The remainder of this eBook will guide readers through the following process for gaining increased publicity, Web site traffic and leads – and improved SEO.



Introduction

The Web has had a huge impact on how people research human resource product and services. Companies used to rely on consultants, trade shows and print magazines for information. But now, second only to peers, the Web is the primary resource where human resource professionals go to find and research human resource products and services. Even if a buyer learns about your company offline, they will likely go online to find out more about your company.

Because of this shift, you must have:

A strong online presence in order to be seen and attract prospects to your website.

A "marketing" Web site that is search-optimized and clearly and quickly tells the buyer who you are

A Web site that converts visitors to sales leads.

Fact: [In a recent HRmarketer.com survey of HR buyers, 41.2% of HR professionals said they go to the Internet when beginning their search for HR products and services, second only to asking a peer.](#)

Internet Becoming Primary Information Source

For more than half of American Internet users, the Internet is their primary source for information about products and services they purchase.

- Over 30 million Americans a month use Yahoo! News or Google News
- 84% of Americans use a search engine to find information, products and services.
- 72% of Americans use a search engine to get news.

If you have high online visibility, you will likely have more brand recognition, higher site traffic, increased sales leads and improved search engine rankings. But it all starts with online visibility.

This eBook will provide a step-by-step process to achieve higher online visibility, increased Web site traffic, increased sales leads and improved search engine rankings.

Step One: Strategy, Messaging and the Search-Optimized “Marketing” Website

Strategy and Messaging – Precursors To Any Effective Marketing Initiative

Before engaging in any marketing, you need to have a strategy – a long-term plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal. When formulating your strategy, businesses should be able to answer some basic questions:

1. Who are your buyers (by title)?
2. What are the typical demographics of your buyer?
3. Who are the purchase influencers?
4. What are your buyers’ major pain points?
5. What events do your buyers attend, what media outlet do they read and what HR websites and blogs do your buyers visit?
6. How do the above questions differ by target company size or sales channel?
7. Who are your top five competitors?
8. How do your competitors position their solutions?

9. How are your solutions different from your competitors’?
10. When looking at your solutions portfolio, which are in a growth mode versus a decline mode? What potential substitutes are threats to your offerings, and how will you deal with this?
11. How can you increase your share of customer (up-sell opportunities)?

Once your strategy is in place, you need clear and concise messaging. Don’t make people have to think about what you do. This is sometimes called a value proposition, positioning statement or an “About us” boilerplate (i.e., what you place at the end of your press releases).

In other words, what makes your company unique versus all the other companies that sell the same product or service? This is different from simply stating the generic benefits of a product or service. It is assumed that the buyer has already determined they need the service your company is selling. Now, explain why the prospect should be contacting you.

Effective messaging will answer the following questions in 3–5 sentences:

- Who are you?
- What do you do?
- Why should your prospective buyer care (what pain point does it solve)?
- What makes you unique?
- Why should anyone believe you (credibility)?

Well-written messaging should be written in language everyone understands. We call this “Street Speak” which is different from “Industry Speak.” Industry Speak includes a lot of jargon, and it has a place when talking shop with company peers or other industry insiders. But it should not be used when talking with customers or the media. For these interactions, use Street Speak, the language and tone you use in everyday social and business interactions. In other words – how we talk with one another.

Example: *Industry Speak:* COMPANY is a comprehensive business-management solution built on a highly scalable and affordable platform of Microsoft technologies. We offer a cost-effective solution for managing and integrating manufacturing, project accounting, field service, customer relationships, and human resources.

Example: *Street Speak:* Since 1984, COMPANY has helped organizations decrease medical costs and

increase productivity by supporting individuals in changing behavior. We do this by assessing and triaging high-risk individuals into highly personalized health coaching programs.

Once created, your key messaging should be consistently applied with your corporate ID to all your marketing and sales communications (customer contact points) including collateral, proposals, ads, promotions, presentations, business cards, stationery, e-mail footers, signage, on-hold messaging and, **most importantly, your website.**

Search-Optimized Marketing Website

The first impression a potential customer has of your company is often formed after viewing your website. For this reason alone, you need a great website and a strong online presence. In today’s world, your website is your primary lead acquisition source. It should invite prospects in and give them a reason to give you their contact information (lead acquisition) in exchange for something of value (white paper, research report, newsletter sign-up, demo request, etc.). Make sure your “marketing” website has the following:

- Prominent branding/messaging
- Intuitive and inviting GUI (easy to navigate)
- Description of your services and tables that clearly list your features

- Management team with bios
- Company news
- Information-based content, like white papers and research reports
- Customer testimonials and case studies/ success stories
- Flash demos and screenshot tours (for HR software products)
- Pricing
- Calls-to-action (lead-capturing landing pages, integrated with your CRM) for your content offers and demo requests
- Contact Us page (with phone numbers and address)

Suggestion: Make sure you have a process for quickly updating your Web site. Rule of thumb – if whoever is in charge of updating or maintaining your web site cannot get a simple request implemented (e.g., uploading a press release or new landing page form) within 24 hours, find another system because yours is broken. Having a process for quick Web site updates is a very important part of your online marketing and PR.

The rule I like to adhere to is this: A visitor to your Web site should be able to understand what you do and how you are unique **without leaving the first page**. Visitors to your Web site should also be able to subscribe to your newsletter, request a demo, sign up to receive news updates (preferably via RSS) or request more information directly from your welcome page. These **calls-to-action** should also be clearly visible on **every page** of your Web site.

Once your “marketing” Web site is developed, you must search engine-optimize (SEO) the site. Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of improving the volume and quality of traffic to a Web site from search engines via natural (“organic”) search results.

Fact: Organic search results drive a higher percent of traffic and revenue than paid searches.

Fact: Approximately 80 percent of clicks on search engines are clicks on organic search results; of those, 90 per cent occur on the first page of the results.

Good SEO starts with selecting the right keywords. It is the most important component to your SEO efforts. But don’t settle on just the obvious keywords. Adding keywords beyond the most popular ones taps into search marketing’s “long tail,” – the thousands of low-cost keywords that generate few searches independently, but collectively represent a large audience.

Cool SEO Tools:

Keyword Research Tools: These are the foundation of any SEO work, as knowing what keywords are being searched on will help your visibility. Examples include: www.keyworddiscovery.com/search.html, www.wordtracker.com, www.blogpulse.com/trend (common terms used on blogs) and www.adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal.

Analytics: Analytics can help you discover what is working and what isn't on your Web site and provide valuable information to help drive marketing and business decisions. Examples include Google Analytics and VisiStat. Also check out Google Website Optimizer, which allows you to easily test what combination of site content will be most effective at achieving your Web site's goals.

WebPosition Software: These are tools to monitor keyword ranking and links and monitor keyword ranking over time, all of which help to identify strengths and weaknesses in your SEO program. A good one is Webposition (<http://www.webposition.com>), which is a part of WebTrends (<http://www.webtrends.com>), a major player in the analytics space.

In addition to keyword selection tools like Wordtracker and studying your own Web site analytics, remember that paid search (e.g.,

Google Adwords) is an excellent means of selecting keywords and testing "keyword" effectiveness. Once you identify your keywords, do (or, don't do) the following:

- Update your page titles and METAs: Don't use the same page description, title and keywords on every single page of your site. Each page needs a unique title, description and keywords – and make sure the keywords are well-represented in the body copy of the respective page. The use of relevant keywords in the title tag was rated as the most important search engine-ranking tactic by a panel of 37 SEO experts. This isn't as easy as you may think. Spend some time studying this art.
- Many Web pages use IDs and long query strings in their URLs (ASPX pages or CFM pages are notorious for this). Don't do it. A natural-language URL not only improves relevance to search engines, but catches the buyer's eye when viewed on a search results page (e.g., yourcompany.com/products/background-screening-software.com).
- Don't use images in place of text. And avoid all-Flash sites. Some search engine crawlers ignore them.
- When creating a site map (a critical part of your SEM), make sure to adhere to the site map protocol supported by Google, Yahoo! and other search engines.

- Never use the hyperlink "click here." It's a wasted opportunity. Always use your keywords as hyperlinks.
- Get reciprocal links. Having many links to a page from other pages, both within a site and in the wider Web, continues to be a major factor in organic search rankings. But links from bad sites (what search engines consider link spammers) hurt your rankings. The best way to get reciprocal

links is through ongoing search engine marketing (SEM), which we discuss later.

- And finally, SEM/SEO never ends. It is ongoing. You might think of it like your own fitness, which is either improving or diminishing based upon your activity level. If you spend thousands of dollars search-optimizing your site and then do nothing after it's launched, your rankings will eventually fall to where they were before your investment.

Step Two: Content. Content. Content.

A primary goal of your Web site is to convert visitors into leads. But without site traffic, you have no lead. In addition to SEO, the best way to drive traffic to your Web site is by providing great content

Fact: Good conversion rates for a Web site will range between 5-25%. However, the more specialized your target market (e.g., HR decision makers for Fortune 500 companies), the lower your conversion rates because many of the visitors to your site will not be in your market.

HR decision makers are looking for sources of information they can trust to help them make sense of the marketing cacophony. They are increasingly searching for information and tools to help them do their job better and more efficiently. To find these, they turn to the Internet.

But HR buyers rarely navigate the Web by entering a specific Web site URL or Web address. As searches continue to grow in popularity, companies must continue to increase their online presence. It's easy to see the importance of having great content on your Web site and incorporating the content in your marketing and PR.

Having this content on your Web site increases the likelihood of your company showing up on search results – and prospects finding you first. But placing

the content on your Web site is not enough – you need to leverage the content in your marketing and PR. A well-integrated marketing and PR campaign (discussed in Step 3) uses strategies involving direct online marketing, press releases, blogs, RSS feeds, white papers and other online content to attract attention. All these are distributed via online media so that when your prospects are searching for information relevant to your product or service, they find you first. Another benefit of online content is that it includes keyword links back to your Web site. This helps to increase your search engine rankings.

What to Write About?

- What are your buyers' pain points?
- What are your recent client success stories?
- What are hot trends and issues in your space (and in the news)?
- How can your company solve problems created by timely events?
- What kind of interesting trends can you uncover through data-mining your own call center, Web site analytics or other company information?

Here's a brief list of the kinds of content you can provide:

- Internet news release – Distribute search-optimized “educational” releases about timely topics of interest to your target buyers.
- Bylined articles – Submit articles to online or print publications that are written by executives of your organization, or hire a freelance journalist to write an article about a problem that can be solved by your product or service.
- White papers & reports – Assemble useful information into a brief package that prospects can download, print and share.
- Video/audio presentations – Record a training session, product explanation or interview with an expert in video or audio format. Put it on your Web site and post to YouTube.com.
- Blogs and Podcasts – Forty-three percent of HR buyers listened to a podcast in 2007, and 52% visited a blog. Blogs and podcasts are also a great way to enhance your brand and increase your Internet visibility.
- Webinars – Give a seminar online and reach more people with a single event than you could by

traveling around the country giving the seminar in person. And place the archive on your Web site.

Remember to always integrate and recycle your content into your marketing and PR activities in order to capture sales leads. For example, a white paper can be the basis for a webcast and several search-optimized press releases announcing its availability, promoted via direct e-mail marketing, condensed into a bylined article, published to your Web site, mentioned in your blog, etc. And always connect your content back to your Web site or some other vehicle for capturing your prospects’ contact information.

Tip: While some prospects will call you, the majority of leads will come through your Web forms. And the fewer fields you require, the more likely a prospect is to complete the form. I recommend, at a minimum, to collect the prospect's e-mail and name. You may also request a company name. However, going beyond this will reduce the likelihood of a prospect completing the form. Your Web forms are not intended to qualify a lead – this is the job of sales – so avoid fields like title, industry and company size.

Step Three: Promotion.

OK. You have a winning strategy, powerful messaging, and a great Web site that is search-optimized. And you have lots of content and processes in place to generate fresh content on a regular basis.

Now you're ready to promote and distribute that content to generate leads.

As a marketing or professional in the human resource industry, you may have many pain points – slow growth, trying to stand out in the crowded marketplace, launching a new company, product or service, etc. In my experience, most marketing and PR challenges can be overcome by addressing four key pain points:

- **Publicity:** getting noticed by your potential customers.
- **Traffic:** driving more people to your Web site.
- **Leads:** generating more quality sales leads.
- **Search engine rankings:** showing up on Page One search results for the keywords relevant to your product/service.

And my experience also shows that by spreading marketing and PR across a variety of tactics, both

traditional and Web 2.0, companies will achieve the four metrics of publicity, traffic, leads and improved SEO. Remember, this assumes you have the strategy, powerful messaging and a search-optimized "marketing" Web site.

Why these four metrics?

1. Most marketing pain points cannot be solved without achieving these metrics.
2. They are easily measured, making it easier for companies to monitor the effectiveness of their campaigns.
3. Research supports it. HR buyers are more likely to respond to e-mail than a phone call. HR buyers increasingly rely on the Internet as a trusted source of information when making purchasing decisions. And finally, HR buyers are increasingly participating in the growing popularity of blogs, podcasts and webcasts as sources of information.

If you have high online visibility, you will likely have more brand recognition, higher site traffic, increased sales leads and improved search engine rankings. But it all starts with online visibility.

Building the “Content Promotion” Marketing Plan

Most leading HR suppliers do not rely on any single marketing or PR tactic for more than 25% of their

sales leads. This statistic indicates most suppliers have an integrated, multi-channel, and robust approach to marketing and PR that incorporates online and offline, traditional and Web 2.0 activities.

HR Buyer Behavior	HR Supplier Reaction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More likely to respond to suppliers’ e-mail than a phone call, trade show contact, or a print ad. • Increasingly rely on the Internet as a trusted source of information when making purchasing decisions. • Participating in the growing popularity of blogs, podcasts and webcasts as sources of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of direct e-mail marketing and devaluation of print advertising. • Growing importance of search engine optimization (SEO). • Growth of “Web 2.0” tactics like blogging, podcasting and social networking as a means of lead generation.

Your content promotion plan, while also supporting other tactical marketing such as advertising or trade show exhibiting, should include at a minimum the following core activities:

- Monthly press releases
 - Traditional (media-focused). Sent to journalists.
 - Search-optimized (buyer-focused). Distributed online.
- Media Relations
 - Personal journalist outreach
 - List management

- Editorial Calendar monitoring (including editorial query services)

- Direct e-mail marketing

Let’s look at each of these tactics in detail.

Monthly Press Releases

Not long ago, marketing and public relations professionals were at the mercy of the news media when it came to press release pick-ups. Traditional PR tactics called for writing and distributing a release solely to secure media placements, and few would see the announcement beside reporters and editors.

Journalists were the gatekeepers who decided which messages were worthy of print. The business rewards for such exposure included increased visibility and potential sales leads for companies that made the cut. All others had to pay for their exposure through advertising dollars.

No more. The Internet has changed everything. Marketers can now bypass traditional media outlets to accomplish goals such as search engine visibility, demand generation and brand support. The chief weapon of choice is the press release.

We recommend sending both "traditional" press releases (sent to individual media contacts as a core part of your media relations initiatives) and search-optimized releases (distributed online with embedded keyword hyperlinks, images, etc).

Try to generate at least one of each per month. Search-optimized releases regularly appear on the

news sites of major search engines like Yahoo! and Google, and it's not uncommon for them to continue propagating through the Internet to appear in other relevant news sites. It all adds up to a cumulative effect that increases your company's online visibility, Web site traffic, sales leads and search engine rankings.

Unlike traditional media releases, the newsworthiness standards are relaxed, and frequency is encouraged for search-optimized releases. The number of releases distributed is crucial to elevating a company's Internet profile. And, it's easy to measure successes of search-optimized releases – you either increase your publicity, traffic, leads and organic rankings or you do not.

The figure on the next page provides an example of a search-optimized release.

FIGURE: Search-Optimized Press Release

Press release distributed in partnership with 

nowHIRE.com and Edge Information Management Provide Integrated ATS and Pre-Employment Services

Companies collaborate to seamlessly integrate background and drug testing services into the recruitment and hiring processes.

Detroit, Mich. (PRWEB) January 24, 2008 -- nowHIRE.com, the premier provider of [applicant tracking](#) and [hiring management systems](#), and Edge Information Management, Inc., a prominent provider in background checks and drug screening services, announced they are providing integrated applicant tracking and pre-employment services to numerous industries nationwide.

“As we continue to enhance our services to meet our customer and prospect expectations, we recognize nowHIRE as a valuable partner,” said Joe Langford, president and chief executive officer of Edge Information Management, Inc. “Our selection of vendor partners targets service-centric organizations with a commitment to end-user satisfaction.”

The nowHIRE and Edge collaboration offers background and drug testing services that are smoothly integrated into the [recruitment and hiring processes](#). Integration runs in the background so that the process is seamless and eliminates double entry for the user.

The applicant's information is entered into nowHIRE's database and the user selects the preferred candidate for the background check. The information provided to us the user is then extracted and efficient.

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 [nowHIRE.com and Edge Information Management, Inc. Provide Integrated ATS and Pre-Employment Services](#)
PR Web (press release), WA - Jan 24, 2008
Edge Information Management, Inc. has announced that it has integrated its background and drug screening services with nowHIRE.com's applicant tracking and pre-employment screening services to numerous industries nationwide.

Keyword-rich links point to relevant content on your Web site and help with SEO.

Images add dynamic visual interest and allow you to highlight your brand or product. The images also stand out in Google searches.

Media Relations and Editorial Calendar Monitoring

With all this talk about Internet marketing, why worry about traditional media? Because it's still really important (journalists can be very influential people) and it all starts with media relations. The key to effective media relations is to identify and build your journalist lists. The hard work involves becoming a resource and developing a relationship with the contacts that make up that list. To increase your media coverage when sending out press releases, we recommend that you create and maintain at least four different types of media distribution lists.

1. **Master Distribution List.** The comprehensive list that will receive all press releases you distribute. This list should not include every single media contact you come across – that can get you blacklisted from the media outlets that feel your release was inappropriate for them. Select only those journalists who are specific to your industry, your products and/or your services.
2. **Targeted Media Distribution Lists.** Includes a selected pool of media contacts that you want to build relationships with. You will send appropriate press releases to these journalists with a personalized e-mail. But don't overdo it – just provide them with enough information to

highlight your news, no more than a few sentences.

3. **Local Media Distribution Lists.** Includes local business publications (e.g., Crains) or newspapers in the area your company is based in– that typically want to receive news only from local businesses. When sending your press release, make note of the fact that you are local.
4. **Personal and/or Vertical Contacts Distribution Lists.** These may include prospects, customers, business partners, etc., that you want to send releases to. You may also have journalists who cover a specific vertical that your release relates to (e.g., Logistics, Food Services, etc.).

Tip: Writing search-optimized press releases

Things to consider:

- The ideal length for your press releases (traditional or search-optimized) is between 300 and 500 words.
 - Always select the best keywords for your press releases and don't assume the keywords you used for the last release are appropriate for this release.
-

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- Use the most popular keyword phrase in your headline, which carries the most weight with search engines. This may require you to use a different headline than you did on the release you sent direct to your media list ("traditional" press release). That's OK.
 - Pick one to three relevant keywords and repeat them at least three times in the release.
 - Do not over-hyperlink keywords; in fact, services like PRweb (our favorite), limit the number of keywords you can use to one per every 100 words.
 - Make sure the pages your keywords link back to on your Web site include the same keywords – in META tags and body copy.
 - Include rich media content such as images, webcasts, videos or podcasts in your release. And be sure all content is appropriately tagged with keywords.
 - Place a copy of your press releases on your Web site in a "news" section

Sources: HRmarketer.com Services Group

Most journalists these days expect to receive press releases by e-mail and don't like phone calls. But to

not call risks consigning the release to the editorial dustbin. So consider making selective follow-up calls to the dozen or so journalists from the "targeted" media list. And follow these tips:

- Make your follow-up calls early in the day, and early- to mid-week.
- Be crisp and to the point.
- Limit your follow-up to a single call.
- If the writer shows interest, make sure to deliver the interviewees on time.

Another great way to build relationships with journalists is to meet them in person at trade shows and conferences. Most major events have a "media room" where writers and editors can work on stories; however, most would prefer you locate them at their publication's booth. Take the time to simply introduce yourself (don't pitch them).

Oh, a word of caution. No matter how many advertising dollars you sink into a particular publication, NEVER insist on commensurate editorial coverage. First, there are clear lines of demarcation between advertising and editorial departments. Second, editors take their editorial mission seriously and view any suggestion of linkage between coverage and advertising as an insult to their professionalism and editorial independence.

Another component of effective media relations is editorial calendar tracking. Editorial calendars are schedules of what topics a media outlet plans to cover for a particular timeframe. If you feel that you can contribute to a particular topic, call or e-mail the media outlet's editorial department and find out which journalist has been assigned to write the article. You can then contact the journalist and explain how you can contribute. You may get coverage if the journalist determines there is a fit.

Patience. Persistence. Consistency. Media relations is about developing a core message, communicating that message creatively and consistently, and understanding that success comes over time. Neither Rome nor relationships are built in a day.

Direct Marketing Campaigns

Direct marketing online, where every campaign can readily test a variable such as personalized content offers or different calls to action, continues to validate findings of the well-established direct mail industry that prospects respond better to personalized and highly relevant and contextual messages. The advantage of direct marketing is its

ability to segment prospects and personalize marketing messages for prospects within those segments.

Consider at least one direct marketing campaign per quarter to at least 5,000 prospects (preferably more), whether it be to your house list and/or other list rentals. Repetition is key as not every buyer is at the same purchasing stage. The key is to stay on their radar screen so when they are ready to buy, they think of you.

Fact: The open rate for "flat" print direct mail is on average 2.73%, and for e-mail it is 1.12%. Direct e-mails that offer a compelling content "offer" in the form of a free downloadable white paper or research report are significantly more likely to generate a response than promotional offers. Save the promotion offers for your print campaigns.

There are seven key components to your direct e-mail marketing campaigns. The following table discusses the key points in each step.

1. The list	There are many list sources you can buy targeted e-mails from. Wherever you get your lists, I suggest you send your campaigns to a list size of at least 5,000 people once per quarter. Expect to spend between \$0.25 and \$0.50 per e-mail.
2. The offer	Direct e-mails that offer a compelling content "offer" in the form of a free downloadable white paper or research report are significantly more likely to generate a response than promotional offers. Save the promotional offers for your print campaigns.
3. The e-mail	Keep it short. Study your own behavior when it comes to which e-mails you open. Tell what's

subject line	inside, don't sell what's inside. If possible, test versions of your subject line to get an objective view of what actually works.
4. The HTML creative template	Your campaign creative should match your Web site identity and offer a single call-to-action. For example, don't offer a free white paper download and a demo. Also avoid words like "free" and other words that a spam filter may catch. Use rich text in the body of your e-mail, not an image file with text, so that your cursor can select and scroll across each word. Finally, to track your online campaigns, place a tag at the end of your referring links which identifies the campaign from which the visitor originated (e.g., "?source=campaignXYZ").
5. The landing page on your Web site	The branding should match your HTML creative that matches your overall ID on your Web site. Whatever appears on your landing page should reinforce the original call to action from the e-mail. The look, feel, and tone of the language should be congruent with the e-mail message. Images should reinforce the value of the offer.
6. The lead acquisition form	Many CRM applications provide custom code to integrate the fields on a Web form to fields in the company CRM. Other form scripts can generate an e-mail. In choosing fields for the form, at a minimum, collect the prospect's e-mail and name. You may also request a company name. However, going beyond this will reduce the likelihood of a prospect completing the form. Web forms intended to qualify a lead will invariably reduce overall response. So choose your strategy accordingly. Add fields like title, industry and company size with the knowledge that requiring this information will cause some prospects to abandon the process. For some companies, this is a worthwhile trade-off and allows for lead scoring and prioritization of follow-up. Tip: engage your sales team in this decision. What qualifies as a lead should be a matter of agreement between those generating and those receiving leads.
7. The lead	The best time to follow-up a Web lead is within 24 hours. A lot depends on the nature of your sales process, but the simple things like ensuring the sales team is ready to act on new leads are often missed. No form can replace the discovery and qualification process of a sales discussion and your sales team has a short window of opportunity to capitalize on the interest expressed by your prospects.

Integration With Other Marketing Activities

So far, this eBook has spent a lot of time discussing SEO, search-optimized press releases and direct e-mail marketing but it is important not to abandon

your other marketing and PR tactics. Instead, focus on integrating these core marketing and PR activities with your other marketing activities. Let's take a

closer look at a few tactics that should be a part of any company's marketing and PR.

- Event participation
- Advertising: print, online, pay-per-click
- Webinars/Blogs/Podcasting

Event Participation

Trade show participation continues to be a popular lead-generating activity, as it remains the best way to meet prospects face to face. You should attend at least one or two key events per year in order to maintain an industry presence and credibility. I also recommend that senior marketing and/or company executives attend. While sales professionals, not marketing, should always staff the exhibit, marketing executives should attend HR events in order to talk to buyers and understand their pain points, study competitors, and attend sessions to keep current with the discourse of the industry.

When deciding how to allocate your marketing and PR budget, realize that a relatively small percentage of HR buyers attend any given trade show – and even fewer will come into contact with you at the event. So, if your annual marketing budget is \$100,000, think twice before spending \$20,000 (exhibit space, travel, food, hotel, shipping, promotions, etc.) on an event where you may reach 50 qualified buyers (cost of \$400 per qualified lead).

You may be better served by investing in a few white paper download campaigns that include some search-optimized press releases and a direct e-mail marketing campaign.

When exhibiting, consider implementing other marketing tactics around the event. For example, you may do a direct mail campaign prior to the event, inviting attendees to your exhibit; advertise in the conference program guide, sponsor's magazine or other industry magazine that has increased distribution at the event; place a promotional "door drop" in attendees' rooms (if permitted) at the hotel during the show; and do a follow-up direct mail campaign using the attendee list (if available).

Advertising

The marketing and PR activity suffering the most budget cuts these days is print advertising. While it still has a role, many experts place print advertising as a key to brand maintenance. Once companies obtain a well-known brand status, they will forever spend money just to keep that position. For large suppliers, advertising is used for maintaining brand dominance but advertising does little for lead generation.

Fact: Google's search ads (Pay Per Click) deliver click-through rates of just over 5% according to Nielsen Online, compared to 0.2% for banner and classified ads.

To use advertising for lead generation and SEO, suppliers should focus on **online advertising**.

There are three major online advertising pricing models: CPM (Cost Per Thousand Impressions), PPC (Pay Per Click) and PPL (Pay Per Lead).

<p>CPM (Cost Per Thousand Impressions)</p>	<p>This is how TV and newspaper ads are priced. On the Internet, Banner ads are often priced on a CPM basis. These ads carry the greatest risk because you pay each time your ad is shown on a particular Web site with no guarantee someone even saw the ad, let alone clicked on it. An "impression" simply means the ad has been delivered. And you cannot accurately measure these campaigns.</p>
<p>PPC (Pay Per Click)</p>	<p>This is how programs like Google AdWords operate. Pay Per Click pricing eliminates the risk of paying for an audience that does not see or interact with your ad. You are only charged when someone clicks on your ad. While there is no guarantee they will be a qualified lead, at least you know they saw and interacted with your ad, so you are only paying for prospects that visit your Web site (this is why great landing pages are so important). As a result, these campaigns are easy to measure.</p>
<p>PPL (Pay Per Lead)</p>	<p>A Pay Per Lead ad model means you only pay when you get leads. Services like www.Capterra.com offer this type of model. While these programs are the easiest to measure, it is important to find out how the program defines a lead.</p>

As the above chart shows, not all online ads are equal. In 2007, search ads (pay-per-click) accounted for over 40% of online advertising revenue. Be very careful about allocating too much money to other forms of online advertising (e.g., banners, e-mail sponsorships, etc.). For example, Google's search ads deliver click-through rates of just over 5% according to Nielsen Online compared to .2% for banner and classified ads. And remember to make sure you have a great landing page (discussed in the direct e-mail marketing section above) to maximize your conversation rates.

Tip: To determine the amount of money you should pay for someone to click through to your Web site, do the following to calculate the value of a paid Web visitor:

1. Determine the average price point of your product.
 2. Determine the percentage of this price that you are willing to spend to find a customer (not including sales commission).
 3. Calculate the percentage of your leads that convert to sales.
 4. Estimate the percentage of Web visitors from paid campaigns who will convert to leads. Remember, the range is typically between 5% and 25%, but for HR suppliers that have a very narrow target audience this percentage is likely to be closer to 5% or lower.
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5. Multiply these four numbers together and you will arrive at the top limit of how much you should spend per click.

Source: Adapted from information Capterra (www.capterra.com) has provided.

Webinars, Blogs and Podcasting

When it comes to webinars, podcasts and blogs, HR buyers are catching on. If you are not blogging, podcasting or doing webinars, consider doing so – especially webinars. These are yet further opportunities to take your message direct to your buyer, bypassing the traditional media. They can also be used to further leverage your content. For example, if you produce a white paper and announce its availability via direct e-mail marketing and a few search-optimized press releases, you can then promote the white paper download via your blog and provide a summary via a podcast – which by the way can be incorporated into your search-optimized release. Finally, you can deliver a webinar to discuss the white paper and then publish the webinar archive on your Web site (more content!). Each of these plays a critical role in lead generation and SEO.

Other Social Media & Social Networking

This emerging category is impacting all aspects of business communications. Examples include LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace. You may wonder about the right use of social media tools and

technologies to support your strategic objectives. No simple prescription exists. Social media provides all business communicators (PR, Sales, Marketing, Recruiting, Internal, HR) additional channels to engage and converse with their target audiences. The best advice we can offer, based our own experience, is to listen first and only then work to add value to the conversation. Social media is not another pipe to ram the corporate message through. It's bi-directional, so expect a reaction if what you

contribute is not welcome or violates the culture of the community or network that you joined.

With that mindset, the upside surely outweighs the downside risk. Corporate risk managers are slowly accepting this after much prodding from communications and marketing departments. Jump in, be smart, add value, and be a part of the conversation happening online.

Putting it All Together: Sample Six Month Marketing and PR Plan

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
"Search-Optimized" Press Releases Web Site Integration (Lead Capture Forms)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Media Relations	●	●	●	●	●	●
"Traditional" Press Releases and Pitches	●	●	●	●	●	●
Editorial Calendar Monitoring	●	●	●	●	●	●
Query Service Monitoring (ProfNet, HRSourceNet)	●	●	●	●	●	●
Analyst Briefings	●					●
Byline Articles (Identify/Apply/Place)			●			●
Speaking Opportunities (Identify/Apply)	●				●	
Award Competitions (Identify/Apply)		●		●		
Direct E-mail Marketing (distribute to at least 5,000 targeted prospects per campaign)	●			●		
Direct Print Marketing					●	
White Paper (or other "content offer")		●				●
Webinar		●				●
Podcast		●				●
Blogging (at least one to two posts per week)	●	●	●	●	●	●
E-newsletter (minimum quarterly)	●			●		
Pay-Per-Click Advertising	●	●	●	●	●	●
Exhibiting (at least two events per year)						●

Further Reading (and Viewing)

<http://hrmarketer.blogspot.com> – this is our company's blog where we discuss a lot of this stuff each week.

http://www.hrmarketer.com/home/whitepaper_main2.htm – a ton of great (and free) white papers on marketing to HR decision makers.

<http://www.xtremerecruiting.tv/mark-willaman-president-founder-hrmarketercom> – in this video interview I discuss the role of social networking and social media in the human resource marketplace; something every HR supplier should be adapting to.

About Fisher Vista, LLC

Fisher Vista, LLC is a marketing services firm focusing on the human resource and senior care marketplaces. Our products and services combine innovative Web-based technologies with traditional marketing and PR. Since 2000, we've helped hundreds of suppliers in the HR and senior care marketplace improve their marketing and PR and generate more publicity, Web site traffic, sales leads.

Fisher Vista, LLC Products and Services

HRmarketer.com

If you sell to human resource professionals, you will benefit from a membership to HRmarketer.com, the no. 1 Internet marketing and media visibility service in the human resources industry. Over five hundred human resource suppliers have used HRmarketer.com to generate publicity, website traffic, sales leads and improved search engine rankings.



www.HRmarketer.com – For companies selling to the human resource department of an organization.

HRmarketer Services Group

Many organizations do not have the internal resources available to fully leverage the power of their HRmarketer.com membership. For these companies, our Services Group offers a full range of marketing and public relations services, as well as Web 2.0 digital media services.



SeniorCareMarketer.com

The senior care industry is booming- and it's just getting started. From home care services and medical products to housing options like assisted living, the demand for products and services relating to the care of older Americans is growing exponentially.

SeniorCareMarketer.com will help you get a jump in this competitive market by helping you generate publicity, website traffic and sales leads.



www.SeniorCareMarketer.com – For companies selling products and services relating to the aging of America.

SeniorCareMarketer Services Group

Many organizations do not have the internal resources available to fully leverage the power of their SeniorCareMarketer.com membership. For these companies, our Services Group offers a full range of marketing and public relations services, as well as Web 2.0 digital media services.



ShirleyBOARD.com

The ShirleyBoard is an online community for people caring for aging loved ones, helping caregivers centrally store important information, keep a log of daily activities, and network with other caregivers. The ShirleyBOARD can be licensed or private labeled by organizations who want to imbed this service within their website. Please contact us for more information.



www.ShirleyBOARD.com – An online community for people caring for aging loved ones.