Thought Leadership 2.0 Getting Started

Filigree Consulting

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Getting Started

- Define the initial campaign to share knowledge. Select a set of customers or segments and a thought leadership topic related to a customer problem. Define a flow of information for the initial campaign. Adapt in later cycles.
- Develop, package and deliver knowledge to create exceptional customer value.
    - Develop knowledge assets from your current intellectual property
    - Create interactive and rich media deliverables that help customers internalize knowledge.
    - Deliver via sales and campaigns that drive business results
- Manage the initiative. Measure results; modify and enhance the initiative.

Define Your Initial Campaign

The initial campaign is defined, including goals, objectives, target customers, strategy and tactics. Areas in your current strategy processes that may need enhancement include:

Selecting Target Customers

Customer based targeting is generally accomplished using a two dimensional **portfolio analysis** and team synthesis. This approach involves defining the opportunity and ability of your company to take advantage of that opportunity and contrasting those metrics on two axes for several candidates. A lot like market attractiveness and organizational strength for traditional segmentation portfolio work.

One of the key elements in building a portfolio analysis is determining the lower level data elements that will make up the two portfolio metrics. For example the organizational strength variable will likely be constructed by some weighted evaluation of elements such as fit of solutions to customer's problems, current customer satisfaction and/or loyalty metrics, etc.

To support Thought Leadership 2.0 (TL2), we need to make sure that **relationship metrics** are part of the build up to the portfolio variables. Include elements such as the status of key relationships, business process integration, satisfaction, loyalty, etc.

In addition we should make sure that data elements address current competencies in intellectual property development (as they relate to specific customers, perhaps as a subset of solution fit), and routes to market and communications approaches that satisfy specific customers (channels, sales team, permission marketing, brand, etc.).

Selecting the Leading Thought Topic

It’s really about finding a space in the customer’s mental value chain. Pick a great problem to address. The most important criterion for picking a topic for developing leading thought is that it should address a **real and significant customer problem**.

The topic should be important to all of the targeted individuals. You should expect to be able to command top of mind resonance.

The topic should address a **problem that has multiple levels**. You should be able to message the topic across levels of management and staff. Ideally, the solution should represent a significant journey or a business transformation for your customers.

The fact that you plan on addressing the problem should **make sense to customers**. The topic should align with your customer’s perceptions of you. It should a natural extension of the current dialogue - with some stretch.

In order for your organization to take advantage of the enhanced relationships the topic should have a **strong linkage to your solutions**.

You should be able to measure the business results.

The topic should **make sense to your field, executives and other stakeholders**. You will likely have a competency or the topic may not even surface as an alternative. Hopefully you already have a competitive advantage.

Develop, Package and Deliver

Once you have a target topic and initial project defined a fair amount of the initial roll out will use existing practices. There are three areas where you may need to augment your current capabilities prior to your initial TL2 campaign.

Knowledge Creation

Your initial campaign will likely be focused in an area where you **already have a competency** and have already made some level of your knowledge explicit. You have presentations, tools, field tools, white papers, knowledge bases, product and service documentation etc.

Most of the current thought leadership practices we are aware of started with extracting, refining and enhancing knowledge the company already had. Some augmentation via research was typically applied to help codify, make the knowledge more current or more relevant, or simply to **add value and credibility to the knowledge**.

Knowledge-Based Relationship Marketing Process

Building on your permission marketing capability, TL2 marketing (or knowledge-based relationship marketing, as we call it) establishes **individualized two-way communications with customers, sharing knowledge that can fundamentally alter the customer's business success**. This means coupling your current approach to campaign design with considerably different content considerations. The focus is on knowledge sharing. Communications must be interactive, rich and experiential.

Knowledge- Based Relationship Management Process

Creating customer intimacy and trust, followed with the sharing of valuable knowledge forms a **virtuous cycle**

leading to deeper trust and higher value knowledge sharing.

The relationship building effort involves beginning with relationship planning, through trusted day-today interactions, and finally forming an effective knowledge sharing /trust cycle. Training and support for your relationship management personnel across all customer touch points should be focused on knowledge-based interactions.

Knowledge Sharing Tools

Tools that **engage customers in learning opportunities** either individually or in teams are knowledge sharing tools. Knowledge sharing tools help customers internalize information, thereby creating knowledge. Examples include justification tools, assessments, configurators, problem solving algorithms, automated data analysis/display, etc.

Manage

Managing the initiative consists of using your current campaign and brand management techniques for measurement, presentation and management. Some **new metrics regarding relationships** you are targeting are necessary.

Modify and enhance the initiative, across the entire process. Revisit the topic and target selection process. Review knowledge creation capabilities. Review deployment and implement any process creation or optimization necessary to support the initiative.

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