

iLeadFarmers Case Studies

Software Product - Buzz Marketing & Branding



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SECTION 1 – BUSINESS CASE

An India based entrepreneur company developed its own product in the e-Learning domain. The product required to be launched and branded in the educational sector in USA.

The challenge was that the product idea or the technology concept was unique and the target audience required to be educated about the technology.

The requirement was to create a need for this product in the target audience.

Educating the masses and the marketing and branding effort was required to be done at the same time to aggressively penetrate the market before competition arrives.

The company did not have a team of professionals to take on this project which was another challenge i.e to set up a team for Marketing & Branding and Sales with a quick turnaround time.

SECTION 2 – THE CHALLENGE: THINKING OUT OF THE BOX

2.1 IDENTIFYING THE TARGET AUDIENCE

The product idea or the technology concept was new and nobody knew of it let alone used it in the past. It was important to identify the right target audience and create a need amongst them for the product.

The vertical that was decided was the Education sector in USA with focus on Universities but the exact target audience was not known.

| Building Marketing Intelligence | |
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| Target audience | <p>In order to find the right target audience for the product extensive Internet Research was required to be done to find out how the Universities in USA operate in relevance to software development & technology.</p> <p>The websites of Universities were the only means of research that would give insights into the departments & hierarchies within these Universities.</p> |

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| <p>Creating the Databases</p> | <p>Databases were to be built ASAP with the names and contact details of the target audience (email, phone number, title, profile info, department etc...).</p> <p>The Database is a key element in the buzz marketing strategy and requires high quality to generate substantial results.</p> <p>The Database requires to be maintained and updated with people moves, promotions and new appointments.</p> |
| <p>Market Intelligence</p> | <p>The following was the requirement to be a part of the Market Intelligence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competitor companies - Competitor products - Possible partners - Industry trends such as – budgets, funding, purchasing process, vacation period in a particular University - Events & Conferences - Forums & Discussion boards - Organizations & Communities in e-Learning domain |

2.2 BUZZ MARKETING STRATEGY - IDENTIFYING THE MOST DIRECT & FASTEST MEANS

It was crucial to identify a strategy that would be the fastest means of reaching out to the target audience in a short interval of time.

As the product was a novice idea it would be easy to establish a brand and catch the attention of the target audience with the new concept.

But, the need of the hour was to capture the market and establish a brand before competition arrives.

2.3 POWER OF WRITING - *CONVINCING VALUE PROPOSITION*

The product being a novice idea the requirement was to write strong an educative content (emails, brochures, website, webinar, product manual, and marketing material).

Not many people know, but the quality of marketing material is number one priority in brand building. The first & everlasting impression comes from the material that your audience receives and reads.

The key is to be innovative, direct, use simple & friendly language but the message should be strong and should stand out clearly.

The target audience here was diversified with varied sentiments. For this product the set of audience was Head of Departments (key decision makers), Programmers/Techies (end users) and Professors/intellectuals (end users). The value proposition for each would be different.

2.4 BRANDING STRATEGY - *WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE KNOWN AS?*

The requirement was to project the product as a novice idea- one of its kind.

The product should be known for its support and should project the image of the company as most innovative.

The strategy was to hammer the target audience continuously with news on the product so that it stays in their mind as the first and one of its kinds.

The logo, branding statement, colors - required to be published and publicized everywhere & frequently in the target market to remain in the eye of the target audience.

2.5 CREATING A TEAM

The biggest challenge was to create a team of people who could execute this project. The right combination of skills and talent was required in order to ensure the rapid implementation of the strategies chalked out.

SECTION 3 – THE SOLUTION: AGGRESSIVE APPROACH

3.1 IDENTIFYING THE TARGET AUDIENCE

| Building Marketing Intelligence | |
|--|---|
| Target audience | <p>Internet Research was done to find out the system in Universities in USA. The websites of Universities were carefully analyzed to figure out the departments and hierarchies.</p> <p>The departments were identified that would have the target audience.</p> <p>After much research and analysis it was found that the Universities in USA have a Technology/Instructional technology/ e-Learning department. The conclusion was reached to zero down on these departments in the Universities.</p> <p>Head of the departments (decision makers), Programmers (end users) and Professors (end users) were identified as the target audience where a need for the product could be created.</p> <p><i>The strategy was to simultaneously hit out at the identified target audience mentioned above with custom value propositions to create a buzz from all sides.</i></p> |
| Creating the Databases | <p>The task of creating databases was taken up aggressively. The Database would consist of Names and contact details of the target audience (email, phone number, title, profile info, department etc...).</p> <p><i>The Database is a key element in the buzz marketing strategy and requires high quality to generate substantial results.</i></p> |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Market Intelligence | The following tools were implemented to gather Marketing Intelligence - Google alerts, RSS feeds, e-Learning news sites, e-Learning newsletters, organic searches on identified keywords such as e-Learning, Instructional Technology, Competitor names etc.. |
|----------------------------|---|

3.2 THE TEAM – *THE RIGHT COMBINATION*

The team was set up with the professionals having expertise in domains that could combine to give successful results.

The team of 3 musketeers constituted –

Aramis: one market researcher + Porthos: marketing professional + Athos: marketing & branding & corporate strategy expert (the manager).

3.3 BUZZ MARKETING THROUGH EMAILS – *THE FAST & THE FURIOUS*

The strategy for buzz marketing concentrated its effort on email campaigns.

The team did not implement email blast instead the focus was on writing customized value proposition for the target audience which was:

Head of the Department/ Directors: The value proposition here was to make the decision maker see the advantage in terms of cost & time saving which would benefit the department and consequently the University. The email required to be short and precise clearly stating the benefits in the first few lines itself.

Programmers/Instructional technologist: It was important to convey to them that the product is not their replacement but actually a tool to improve the quality of their work and make it easy and less tedious. This target audience would be using the product the most and even recommending its implementation to the decision makers. The value proposition for them focused on technical advantages and the effort & time the product would save for them.

Professors: This was the hardest of the lot. The value proposition here needed to stress on the benefits the product would have on their means of teaching and their students. The message to this target audience was written such that it carries interesting content even poetic.

3.4 WEBINARS – *WE HAVE AN IDENTITY*

We had live webinars to demonstrate the product.

Besides the product information we publicized the webinars everywhere. The product piggy backed on the webinar publicity.

It is not possible to just send out information continuously about the product. Webinar was a good alternative means of creating a buzz for the product.

The live webinars which were interactive were extremely exciting and portrayed the product features, logo, colors, branding statement effectively to create a long lasting effect in the minds of the target audience. The quality & impressive content of the webinars reflected the product brand.

3.5 EVENTS & CONFERENCES – *MAKING THE MOST OUT OF IT*

The team kept track of all important events and conferences taking place in the e-Learning industry.

A lot of preparation was put into the event & conference that was to be attended. It was the responsibility of the team to drive audience to the event & conference and publicize the product at the same.

3.6 ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT – *BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIP*

The most important strategy for brand building was the account management and post product sales support.

The team insured that the client was happy with the product after the delivery and that everything was working well. If the client faced a problem the Marketing & sales team would do the initial communication and help the client to solve the problem.

The account management strategy was to create confidence in the target audience and ensure quick turnaround time in resolving problems.

This strategy contributed immensely towards building the brand for the product.

SECTION 4 – RESULTS & MAPPING

- The product today is a well known brand in the e-Learning domain.
- The team of 3 musketeers generated record sales for the product that made up to the 1/4th of the revenue of the company.
- The buzz marketing campaigns generated record hits on the website highest amounting to 300 in just 5 days.

- The webinars were a huge success and as the popularity grew had an audience of atleast 5 persons per webinar which were conducted twice a week.
- The product improved from the feedbacks generated through account management.
- The branding & buzz marketing effort took 6 months of rigorous hard work that resulted in continuous sale throughout the year. As the sale continued to happen automatically, this reduced the pressure on the Marketing & Sales team and allowed them to move to new target domains and geographies.

SECTION 5 – TOOLS USED

Google Analytics to map the hits of the website to the email campaigns.

ACT, CRM to maintain the target audience information.

SECTION 6 – CONTACT INFORMATION

We are located at Pune, INDIA

Please visit our website www.ileadfarmers.com to know more about us

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