

THE 4-PHASE SALES FUNNEL YOU NEED TO Leverage Your Business

BY ROBERT W. BLY

Marketing funnels are the various paths potential customers travel on to reach their destination: buying from you. Each potential customer enters the funnel from a different point of product awareness and then continues along the path, intersecting with other paths of potential customers.

Along the way through the funnel, you need to engage these potential customers and drive them to the next step so they move down into the neck of the funnel toward conversion. Some will get to the goal sooner than others. But continuing to engage customers in some way is essential to keeping them on the path through the funnel—no matter how slow the journey.

A classic funnel is the **AIDA model: Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action**. Let's take a closer look at each and dive into what they mean for you.



ATTENTION

Your funnel must start with awareness. You need to get the prospect's attention, let them know you exist, and show them a product they might like. A few ways to garner attention after setting up your website or blog are Google AdWords, search engine optimization, and social media advertising. Once potential customers click on any of your call-to-action (CTA) buttons or links, then the process of gaining and retaining their attention begins.

INTEREST

Once you have aware potential customers, use every piece of your platform to give them more information and prove your product's value. Show the benefits of your product in a free white paper, demonstrate product features or applications in a video, tell a customer success story in a blog post, or share exciting news about product improvements with your email subscribers. Any of these could lead your potential customers to click on a CTA to find out more or even buy from you.

DESIRE

Interested leads who see how your product will help them may want to try it out for themselves, learn even more about it, or compare the pricing and features to similar products in the marketplace. Research your competitors and offer something unique to your prospects that competitors don't have. Continue to engage with these leads to keep them focused and excited about your product so they take the final step. You could even host a webinar to let viewers see your product in action.

ACTION

Create an offer that they simply cannot refuse so you earn their business. For instance, you can create a sense of urgency in your email offers by giving a short time span to buy or by telling customers there are only a few books or software packages left. You can also add perks like a 60-day money-back guarantee, an appointment with your interested customer for a product demo, if applicable, or a free phone consultation. ■

Written to help marketers—from the Fortune 1000 to small business owners and solopreneurs—turn their websites from cost centers into profit centers, Robert W. Bly teaches you the proven models and processes for generating a steady stream of traffic, conversions, leads, opt-ins, and sales in *The Digital Marketing Handbook*.

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