

Create Killer B2B Product Marketing Campaigns in 5 Steps





Introduction

An effective B2B product marketing campaign drives sales.

It's as simple as that.

But creating a campaign that delivers its intended goals isn't easy—especially on an efficient, consistent basis. Yet if you're a B2B marketing leader, consistency and efficiency are primary objectives for your product marketing campaigns. They need to run on a tight timeline, the same way most business operates.

Many B2B brands, however, have difficulty producing campaigns efficiently or effectively because B2B product marketers face myriad challenges. From poorly calibrated brand guidelines to product messaging too-heavily influenced by technical language, there are multiple issues to address before you can conquer the competition.

How do you overcome internal challenges to deliver outstanding product campaigns that win customers and boost your brand?

Look outside the organization for clarity. Large corporations have complicated marketing systems with layers of decision-making and numerous competing priorities. For marketing executives frequently pulled in multiple directions managing multiple products, it's easy to get caught up in internal battles and lose sight of the greater perspective.

That's exactly where an outside agency can be most helpful, providing objectivity and restoring focus to a stumbling campaign. An honest view by a trusted advisor might also reveal the need for a more comprehensive approach to your campaign strategy.

As one such trusted advisor, we've helped many complex B2B brands zero in on a clearer product marketing strategy. Along the way, we've discovered that successful B2B product marketing campaigns almost always follow the same five steps:

Discover, Distill, Define, Deliver, Delight.

In this eBook, we explore these steps in greater detail to help you refine your overall approach to product marketing strategy.

“...it's easy to get **caught up** in internal battles and **lose sight** of the greater perspective.”



Step 1: Discover

Too many B2B marketing campaigns begin and end with product features. Features are a vital piece of an effective marketing message, to be sure, but they should never be relied upon to introduce your product — because features close the deal. An effective campaign requires the right introductory message—and it must resonate with your product’s end user by addressing the problem (theirs) the product (yours) is solving. Leading with features doesn’t do that.

What message does resonate? You’re not going to know until you understand the product from every stakeholder’s point of view. As you might suspect, crafting a perfect message from multiple angles requires a considerable amount of research. At Marjoram, we build messaging campaigns by working to uncover (and understand) the perspective of everyone involved with the product lifecycle. But first, we define what campaign success looks like.

Start With the End in Mind

Before you embark on a journey, it helps to know where you’re going. That’s why it’s important to understand your campaign goals from the start. You must know what success will look like, and how you will measure it.



Goals are unique for each marketing campaign. For your product, success could be simply hitting a specific launch date (it happens more often than you think!), or it might be raising awareness within an entirely new-to-you demographic. Whatever the campaign goals are, first we help you define them clearly.

Talk to Everyone

Once you know your destination, organize your efforts to get there. Do that by seeking input from every group the product touches—from engineers to your sales teams to the end users.

The goal of these in-depth conversations is to develop as complete an understanding as possible of how the product impacts each group, what they believe is special about it, and what problems the product solves for them. And because surface-level questions will get you surface-level answers, asking the right questions of each group is imperative to understanding their perspective.

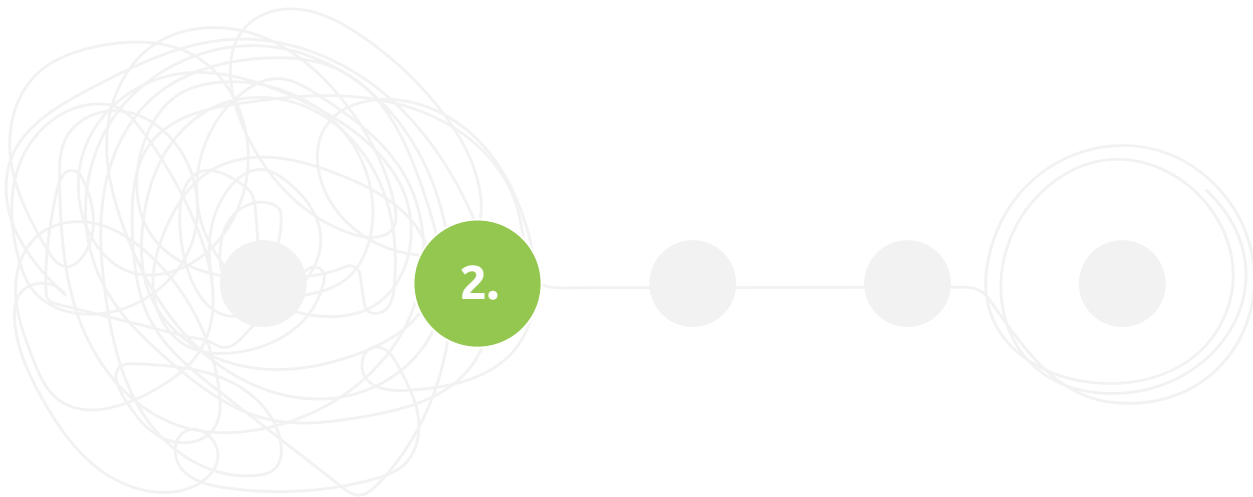
Scout the Competition

Having gained an understanding of internal audiences and potential customers, now turn your attention to your competitors. Your peers are a valuable source of information. Once you know what they're doing, you can determine how to do it better—or uniquely, because thoroughly understanding your competition and their products will allow you to differentiate your messaging.

Orient Conversations Around Benefits

As we noted earlier, features are frequently the (wrong) focus of B2B product marketing. In marketing complex products, we often assume that our more technically inclined audiences want hard data on features to help them make a purchase decision.

And they do. But they're still human, and humans respond best to stories — especially tales about solving a problem they're experiencing. B2B customers are no different than their B2C counterparts. (See: Humans.) Solving a pain point for your customer will elicit the same satisfied reaction from a technical buyer of technical products as it does from an online shopper.



Step 2: Distill

The quantity and quality of information that emerges from the Discover phase can be amazing. Distilling that mined information into actionable insights becomes the core theme of—and an overarching narrative for—your campaign. To do this, you need a way to analyze what you’ve learned and map it to the various audiences.

Audience Mapping

As we know, B2B products can (and do) have many audiences, and keeping track of all those perspectives can be cumbersome. An audience map matches each segment to their identified pain points, creating a framework that allows you to view their unmet needs holistically—which is especially useful for spotting patterns and relationships that might not have been obvious before.

Identify Competitive Advantages

You’ve analyzed your audience. Now it’s time to look at your competitors. Evaluating the competitive landscape helps you see what your peers do well and where your product can own a tailored message. This is critical in enabling you to differentiate your product from your competition.

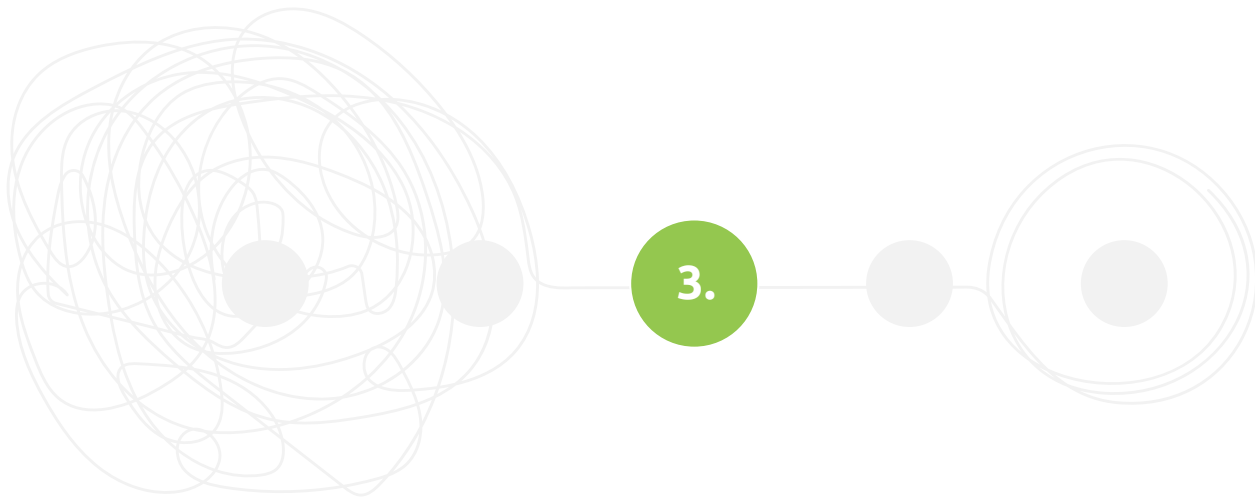


Examine the Buyer Journey

Your existing customers are another rich source of messaging insights. Knowing all that goes into a buyer's decision-making process can be incredibly advantageous. These direct conversations with your customers are valuable, but don't forget to ask your sales team how they understand the buyer journey, too. Sales reps have tried-and-true insights and often know their customers' needs better than the customers themselves.

Develop the Campaign Messaging

It's time to build the narrative for your product marketing campaign. All the insights you've gleaned and distilled from your discovery efforts become pieces of a puzzle that is now yours to assemble. The outcome of this step is a general positioning theme for your marketing campaign—a compelling product story that can be told in numerous ways.



Step 3: Define

An effective product marketing campaign tells the story of the product through the lens of the prospect's pain point. In Step 2, we created a general script for your product story. In Step 3, we'll get specific and define exactly how the story will be told. This means digging into audience-specific messaging and the details of campaign execution.

The outcome of this step should be a written plan that any team — internal or external — can pick up and run with. This stage of the process is also a great opportunity to get feedback and buy-in from critical stakeholders. As such, it doesn't hurt to create campaign examples to help your stakeholders visualize the new messaging.

Build a Messaging Framework

A messaging framework serves as a guide for your product marketing campaign. It's an extension of the audience map, picking up where the map leaves off by adding messaging priorities for each segment. The messaging framework becomes a single document to help with ideation, creation, and refinement.



Determine Content Needs for Execution

Messaging parameters defined, it's time to establish the logistical and technical aspects of your campaign by deciding how to best put your product messaging to work. Your campaign will utilize different channels (events, social, email, search, etc.), so be ready for the creative and development work ahead by outlining all the assets you'll need.

Create Messaging Prototypes

The messaging framework identifies messaging priorities, but when you're trying to secure buy-in from your stakeholders, a general idea may not always be enough. We always suggest developing a couple of sample messaging approaches (tailored for specific audiences) to help stakeholders visualize how the campaign will look.



Step 4: Deliver

You've wowed the stakeholders and secured approval for your campaign idea, but work isn't done. It's time to execute and deliver by using the insights you learned and the plan you developed to build a toolkit supporting the product marketing campaign.

This toolkit should include all the assets you'll use in the campaign, such as:

- Emails
- Digital ads
- Website landing pages
- Contact forms
- Animated shorts
- Trade show collateral

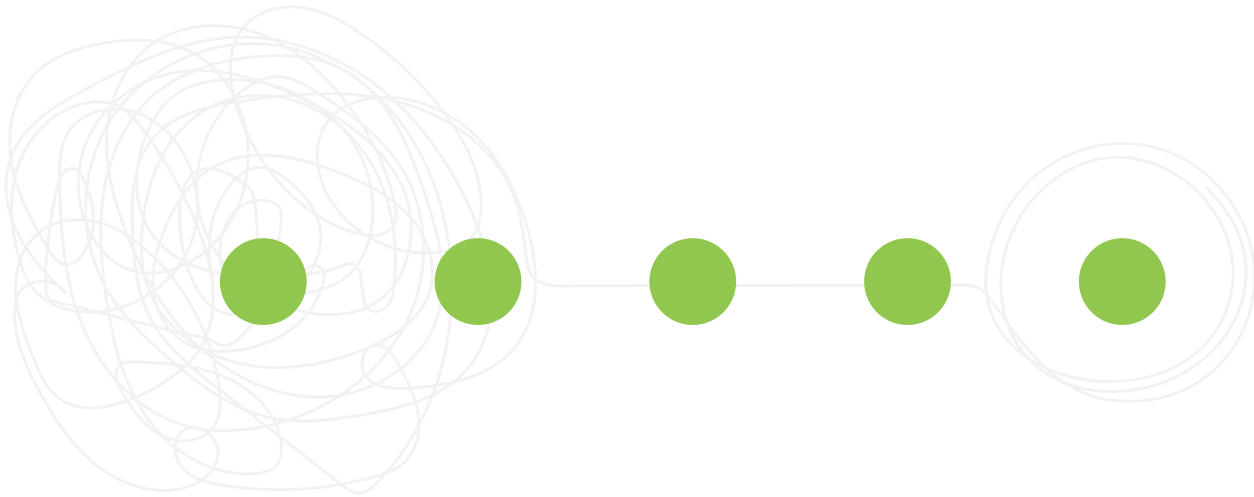
First, take stock of existing assets to determine what content gaps might exist. Any new assets you create should, of course, be constructed around the product, brand, and messaging needs you established in the Discover, Distill and Define stages.



Step 5: Delight

The right message should not only differentiate your product, but also delight your audience. You want your product campaign to build trust with your potential customers by demonstrating value. That's why the last step of your campaign strategy is providing ongoing support for the duration of campaign activities.

In the first four steps, you developed a flexible, adaptable product narrative and the assets you need to reach potential customers. In the last step you continue amplifying that messaging in every aspect of the product campaign as needs evolve. Not every asset will be needed at kickoff, so as you're creating new tactics throughout the campaign, remember that the product message is not about what you make—it's about what you make possible.



An Expert Approach to Product Marketing Campaigns

Large B2B brands struggle with product messaging. With so many products and brands, it's tough to identify obstacles while maintaining objectivity. If your product marketing campaigns are missing the mark, an outside perspective can help you reset your sights and optimize your message.

At Marjoram, we understand that effective product messaging focuses on problems over solutions, benefits over features, and putting the right star in the center of the story. (Hint: It's not you.)



info@marjoramcreative.com
tel. (404) 843-1990

marjoramcreative.com