Questions to Ask When Building Go-to-Market Plans

Marketing Strategy
- What is your brand promise to the market place?
- Do you have a unique and compelling message that is consistent across all actions, behaviors and communications?
- What are the key messages and who communicates them?
- What markets do you compete in?
- What is the market opportunity for your offering?
- What is your beach-head strategy?
- How do your function’s goals support the company’s objectives?
- Why are you building product x?
- What is the business objective for development effort y?
- What is the new product development process?
- How do you build a product roadmap?
- What is the distribution strategy?
- Is there a compelling value proposition in the coverage model for all channels?
- What is the cost of sale by channel?
- How can you decrease the cost of sale by channel?

Is Value Being Delivered
- Are products/solutions reaching their anticipated revenue targets?
- Are Marketing programs engineered to deliver revenue or leads?
- Is the sales organization spending enough time in front of prospects and customers?
- Is the cost of sale at or below industry standards?
- Have the economics of acquiring and retaining customers been maximized?
- Are markets large enough to support growth objectives?
- Are competitors growing faster?
- Are win rates high enough?
- Does product strategy include an appropriate balance of cash cows and rising stars?

Product Marketing
- Do customers and prospects know if you are a technology leader or industry follower?
- Do you have a product roadmap that shows improvements in TQC, value, organization impact and/or penetration into new markets?
- Do you know how your offering stacks up against your competition?
- Do you know when and why you win and lose in competitive selling situations?
- Do you experience high conversion rates in the lower half of your sales funnel?
- Do you have a process to manage the development of new products?
Are there multiple checkpoints in the new product development process to kill, modify or fast track the effort?
Is the entire organization prepared to be successful when a new product/service/solution is released?

**Is There a Process to**
- Efficiently and effectively move a marketing qualified lead through the sales pipeline?
- Nurture leads that do not meet sales qualification criteria?
- Develop and execute a lead generation and management plan that will meet or exceed revenue objectives?
- Measure conversion rates and recommend appropriate courses of action?
- Create relevant sales tools and deliverables to support each step in the sales process?
- Develop a new product?
- Evaluate new market opportunities
- Build an integrated plan?
- Retain, up-sell and cross-sell to plan?
- Follow for sales to exhaust opportunities and produce the desired results?
- Produce clear metrics, KPIs, scorecards and dashboards to manage the business at executive and individual contributor levels?

**Demand Creation**
- Is there a clear understanding of who is targeted?
- Is there a mutually agreed upon Target Account Profile between Sales & Marketing?
- Have you established personas for each of your targets?
- Has a behavioral model been constructed for each of your targets?
- Does your messaging and offer resonate with your target audience?
- Is there a mutually agreed upon Qualification Matrix between Sales & Marketing?
- Is there a clean hand-off of “leads” to sales?
- Is there a buyer behavior model?
- Are there metrics that help optimize strategy and execution?
- Is the top of the funnel strong enough to drive quota?
- Are the conversion rates within the funnel strong?
- Do conversion rates increase as you move down the funnel?
- Is there effective reporting that allows Sales & Marketing to manage their functions properly?

**Maximizing Investment**
- Does the market opportunity support your growth objectives?
- Have you obtained your market share goals?
- Are you penetrating the verticals at the rate you have planned?
- Is there a 3X pipeline?
- Is the ROI on lead generation programs at least 10X?
- Is the marketing investment too high or too low?
- Is the marketing mix right?
- Are you meeting new customer acquisition targets?
- Are you retaining, up-selling and cross-selling to plan?
Is the staff/budget mix appropriate for corporate, product and field marketing?
Is conversion in the funnel tight?
Is the number of days to close a deal increasing or decreasing?
Is the win rate above or below expectations?
Are the right projects being funded in development?
Is the organization ready when a product is launched?
Are new products achieving their revenue projections?

**Go-to-Market**

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**Is the Field Enabled?**

- What resources are available by sales stage for the Field?
- What is the utilization of the sales tools that have been provided?
- What resources do the most successful Field people use?
- Is there an overall plan of how to approach a prospect and move them to close?
- Have the roles for all supporting functions to the sales process been identified?
- Has the Sales Representatives time been optimized to spend the majority of their time in front of prospects and/or customers?
- Is there an automated, self-service infrastructure to supply what the Field needs, when they need it and in the format that they require?
- Is there a feedback mechanism to evaluate, update and create new resources for use in the sale cycle?
- Are there metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of resources?

**Social Media**

- Why do you want to establish a social media effort?
- What are my social media objectives (these should align with company and marketing objectives)?
- Is there an executive champion?
- What is the message you want to convey?
- Who is my target audience?
- Are there subject-matter experts internally?
- Who will execute my social media strategy?
- Are there metrics to evaluate the efficiency of resources?
- Which platforms are best for my business?
- How do I know if my efforts are working?
- What social media channels will you use to execute your strategy?
- How do you develop a listening strategy?
- What is the workflow management strategy to handle responses and engagement?
- Do team members have a social media skill set or will efforts be outsourced?
- How much time and resources are available?
- What process will be used to build relationships with influencers?
- How will you coordinate social media with other communication functions?
- What are your metrics for success?

Value Proposition

- What pain does your product/service address?
- What is the profile of your ideal target customer (company)?
- What is your technology?
- What is the application of this technology?
- What are some compelling use cases?
- What is your differentiated, must-have message to this customer?
- How does the customer currently solve the problem in question?
- Who is the buyer? Approver? Recommender? Influencer?
- How strong is the pain?
- How do you prove your value?
- How long does it take to prove value?
- What is a typical compelling event to make a purchase decision?
- Who is the competition, and how do you differentiate from them?
- What are the various classes of products that you compete with in immediate and related categories?
- What value does the customer see?
- What is the ROI for the customer? How long will it take to realize the ROI?

Marketing templates for demand creation, demand management, social media, messaging and positioning, website, go-to-market strategy and investor presentations can be found at vpmarketingondemand.com.