



# **ADVANCED** **LEAD NURTURING 1** **FOR RETAIL + TRAVEL**

how to create a premium incoming lead processing campaign

# IN THE BEGINNING



Congratulations on your commitment to tailored Lead Nurturing! Companies who embrace Lead Nurturing concepts enjoy far higher conversion rates and repeat business from their customers.

Patience, adaptivity and measurement are the 3 key ingredients needed to tailor a process that is as good to you as it is to your potential customers. This guide will walk you through the initial stages, decisions and concepts needed in order to start enjoying higher conversion and retention rates from incoming leads through strategic nurturing.

We hope you enjoy this guide as much as we've enjoyed making it.

Good luck and welcome to the future of marketing!

*Lifestyle Media Group*

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# WHY LEAD NURTURING?

## | THINGS HAVE CHANGED

How we shop has changed forever. The ready availability of price comparison sites, free content and interactive media makes consumer purchasing journeys increasingly elaborate and far less predictable than what they once were.

Most consumers are no longer convinced by traditional advertising or cold selling and impulse purchases are a dangerous commodity to rely on. The majority of businesses know this. But, surprisingly, only a small percentage have responded with an evolved marketing strategy to address tougher consumer behaviours.

Potential customers now spend far more time independently researching their purchases than they did 5-10 years ago. And this research is conducted outside of the businesses they are considering purchasing from. This raises 3 important factors:

- 1 | Your marketing content is competing against third party reviews, social media word of mouth AND rival products. All of which you have little to no control over
- 2 | Every incoming lead or prospect you attract is an invaluable marketing opportunity
- 3 | Both your marketing and sales departments must synchronise their actions with each other as well as with your consumer purchasing funnel to effectively respond to varying consumer needs

Premium Lead Nurturing is the future of marketing - the natural evolution of advertising to meet rapidly evolving consumer trends.

PPC campaigns and drip marketing strategies have their places, but consumers are increasingly demanding genuine value in the content you make available as well as rewarding brand interactions that help them in their purchasing decisions.



# STRATEGY BASICS



## INTRO TO ILP CAMPAIGNS

Our guides try to avoid over-indulging in confusing campaign acronyms and unnecessary terminology. Which is why we apologise for the following paragraph.

An Incoming Lead Processing (ILP) campaign is an unattractive way of describing one of two main Lead Nurturing approaches. Its ultimate goal is to effectively capitalise on every enquiry, sign-up or show of interest you receive from potential customers - maximising your conversion and retention rates through responsive, branded, valuable and ongoing engagement.

Although conversion strategies are nothing new, Premium Lead Nurturing is unique in its approach. An ILP campaign may sound self-explanatory, but it is important to recognise the intricacies which set it aside from its less successful counterparts. This guide will help you avoid falling into the linear 'drip marketing' nurturing mistake.

Drip Marketing is one example of a linear ILP strategy where lead interaction is pre-defined through a formulaic, non-responsive process. This brand of 'lead nurturing' is not what you want to create. Below is the process you do want to create.

### THE 5-STEP PROCESS OF AN IPL LEAD NURTURING STRATEGY



INITIAL ENQUIRY



LEAD IDENTIFICATION



STRATEGY DESIGNATION

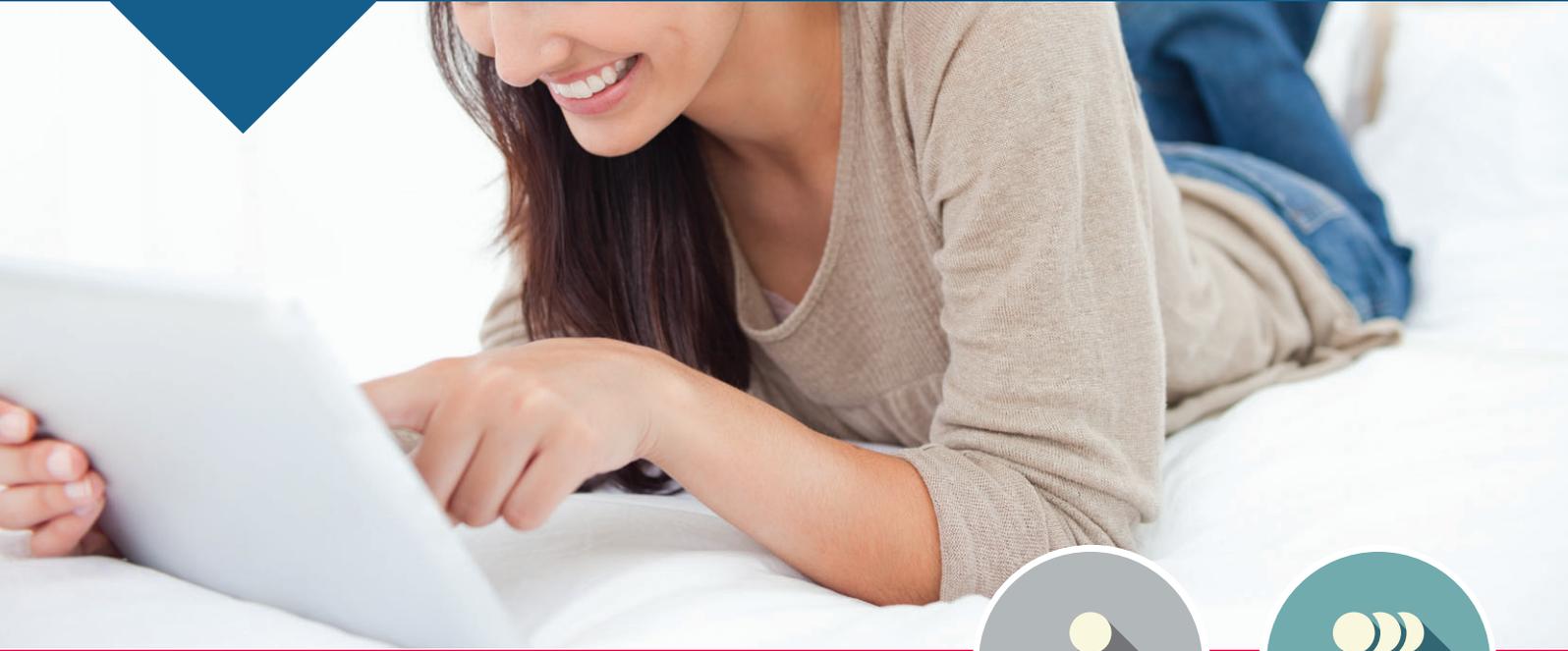


RESPONSIVE INTERACTION



CONVERSION + LOYALTY

# INITIAL ENQUIRY + IDENTIFICATION



Incoming Lead Processing strategies are the most common and useful Lead Nurturing campaigns there are. They are no different from building a long-term relationship on the back of a good first impression - they require a strong foundation, patience and respect, mutual trust, value and excitement. Maintain all of these, keep things interesting and the end result is always a good one.

## WHERE TO START UNDERSTANDING YOUR LEADS

You cannot sell to a prospect without first understanding who they are. Prospect profiling and lead segmentation is key to any successful Lead Nurturing strategy.

Leads are human beings. And different human beings have different needs. Take the time to create a system to analyse and segment incoming prospects by relevant criteria. Popular categories include:

- 1 | Lead source / Channel - such as email sign up, contact enquiry, social media, catalogue request
- 2 | Demographics, lifestage, aspiration etc - all of which you can determine through form capture, postcode profiling etc
- 3 | Behavioural response - how much have they already interacted with you or bought from you?
- 4 | Buying stage - have they already visited your 'high-value' pages such as checkout, pricing or contact pages?



# STRATEGY SEGMENTATION

Once you have devised a method of categorising your incoming leads by at the least their source/channel, you can begin to assign them to relevant engagement strategies or Nurturing Journeys.

As mentioned before, you cannot apply a single, linear, all-encompassing contact process for every lead you attract - that's drip marketing. Instead, you must create a Lead Nurturing journey that is bespoke to each of your lead types, providing engagement and content that is genuinely valuable to their needs and relevant to why they first interacted with you.



## DEVELOPING NURTURING JOURNEYS BY LEAD TYPE



### LET YOUR LEADS DEFINE THE CONVERSATION

Most of your incoming prospects will not be ready to engage with sales content. Your individual Nurturing Journeys must cater to this by firstly aiming to **gain trust, provide value and establish continued interest**. Let your leads choose where the conversation takes place and use this as a starting point for their journey.

For example if the 3 channels through which you acquire incoming leads are **1. Social Media 2. Catalogue requests 3. Download Forms** you must ensure that your 3 Nurturing Journeys reflect the engagement and media preferences inherent to these channels. Social media contact usually represents casual interest and a preference for reciprocal/public interaction whereas a print literature request shows strong potential purchasing intent and a taste for uninterrupted browsing. These factors influence the content/method of your next contact.

# SAYING HELLO + THE INITIAL STEPS



## FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

Once you've profiled your leads by relevant categories and processed them into appropriate Nurturing Journeys, you must now officially welcome them into your nurturing program. Essential components to your first contact are listed to the right and include establishing clear permission for further nurturing. You may have more unsubscribes than if you made the process difficult to find, but the most effective ILP campaigns are based on trust. Leads that actively choose to subscribe to your Nurturing Journey will be far more valuable to you than passive counterparts.

- **A BIG THANK YOU**
- **A FRIENDLY TONE**
- **NO SALES PITCH**
- **LINKS TO MORE INFO**
- **FREE CONTENT/GUIDES**
- **CLEAR UNSUBSCRIBE**
- **CONTACT CALENDAR**

## THE DOUBLE OPT-IN APPROACH

The 'Double Opt-in Approach' is ideal, filtering out casual leads from those who genuinely want to hear from you. The process is to send an email to an already registered/welcomed lead asking for explicit permission to send additional promotional material. Not only does this demonstrate concern for privacy but is also useful for brand reinforcement and removing 'cold' leads.

- **ESTABLISHES EXPLICIT PERMISSION**
- **DEMONSTRATES PRIVACY CONCERN**
- **INCREASES RELEVANCY OF CONTENT**
- **IMPROVES DELIVERABILITY RATES**
- **BENEFITS SEND REPUTATION SCORES**
- **ESTABLISHES TRUST + RESPECT**

## DETERMINING LEAD PREFERENCES

Adapting your process to reflect varying lead preferences or interactions is one of **THE MOST IMPORTANT** aspects to any ILP Lead Nurturing strategy. As consumers are increasingly receptive to customising the form, frequency and format your contact with them takes, you can now tailor highly targeted nurturing strategies that cater to specific consumer needs.

- **CONTENT TYPE**
- **SUBJECT TYPE**
- **EMAIL/MAIL/SMS etc**
- **AREAS OF INTEREST**
- **CONTACT FREQUENCY**

There are a number of ways that you can allow leads to specify their contact preferences. The most popular methods include online accounts with a contact preference section, feedback landing pages linked from emails or simply tracking web behaviour such as downloads or page visits.

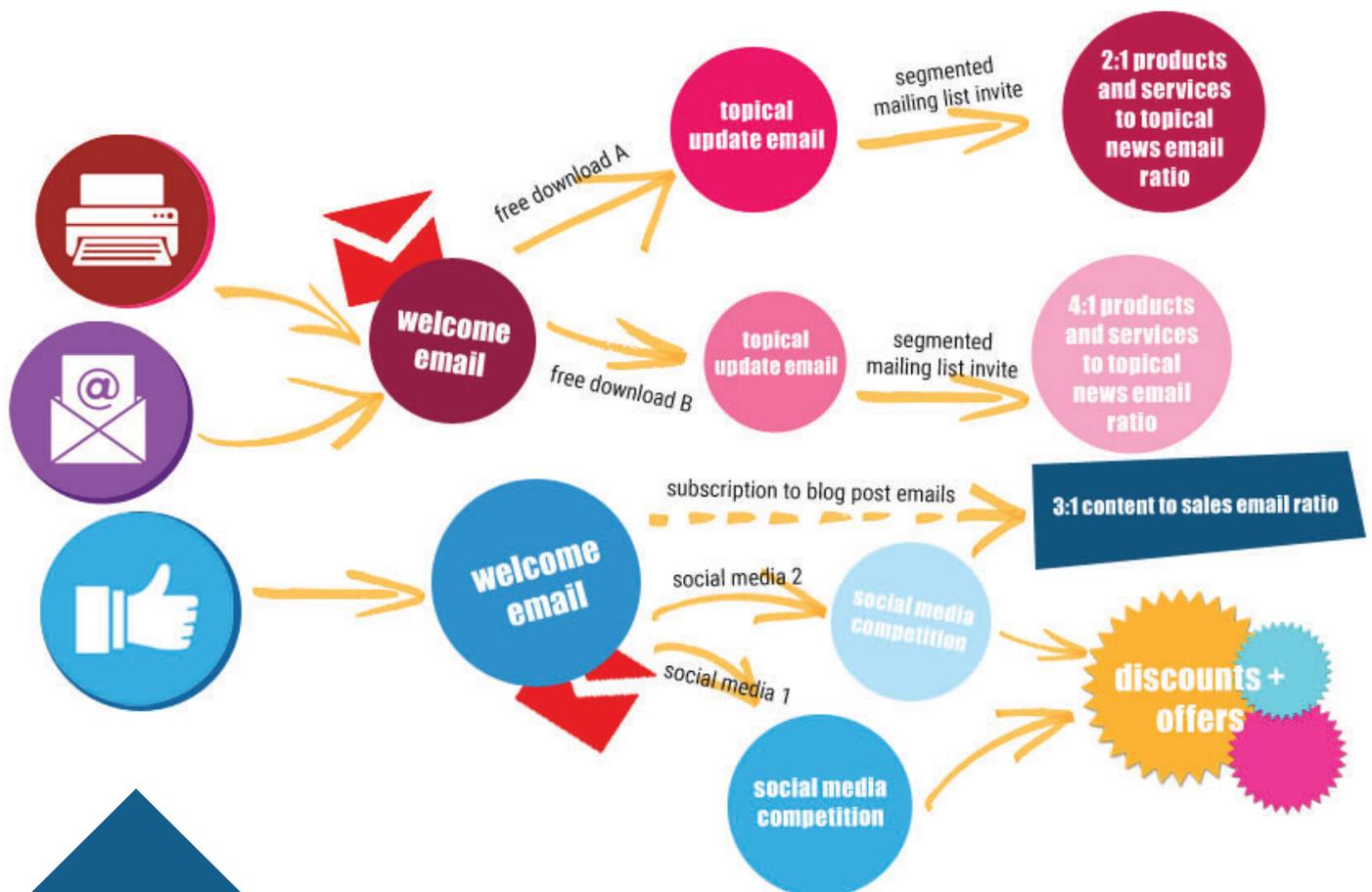
# RESPONSIVE STRATEGIES

Just in case you missed it the first few times, responsive journeys that reflect individual consumer desires and preferences are key to successful Lead Nurturing.

Core to developing your overall ILP Lead Nurturing strategy is the need to continually segment contact by lead engagement and interaction. For example, if a lead subscribes to your blog, ensure that all follow-up contact is content-rich and regular, offering additional online platforms through which to access/download further information. If this lead then proceeds to download a particular guide/FAQ sheet/catalogue etc, ensure that your follow-up interaction is of a similar theme. The more Nurturing Journeys you prepare and evolve, the more relevant your content and the more persuasive your overall strategy will be in securing conversions and loyalty.

## MAPPING YOUR LEAD JOURNEYS

The below infographic shows a simple example of how you can map the main stages of your Nuturing Journey paths to cater to various channels and decisions taken by your prospects. This should remain flexible so that you can tweak content where needed and adapt paths in line with emerging trends from potential customers.



# A NEVER-ENDING STORY



## CONVERSION, LOYALTY + DEVELOPMENT

Lead Nurturing never ends. Which is why we call it a strategy rather than a campaign. As such, conversion can occur at any stage in your process as your Nurturing Journey should consist of a relevant combination of pitches, product offers, relevant news, competitions and free content throughout.

Picture your Lead Nurturing / ILP strategy as a never-ending story. One which has no definite end but rather a clear, valuable and rewarding path that consumers genuinely enjoy being a part of. In that way, every interaction point you share with your leads will be mutually rewarding, saving you time and making you money. It's that simple.

### WHAT IF I GET TOO FEW LEADS TO NURTURE?

No database is either too big or too small to implement a rewarding Lead Nurturing Strategy. But a bigger database is always better than a smaller one, particularly if the database consists of leads who are opted-in and actively expecting to hear from you.

Discover how we can grow your database with our Premium Lead Generation model and start a genuine conversation with your leads through our integrated Lead Nurturing tools. To start enjoying higher conversion and retention rates visit [www.lifestylemediagroup.co.uk](http://www.lifestylemediagroup.co.uk) for our expert, affordable solutions or give us a call on **01223 495 599** to have a chat.

Thank you for reading and good luck!

