



MARKETING ESSENTIALS

In business, nothing is more important than a comprehensive marketing strategy to inform, win, and influence customers. Determining how your company is going to succeed varies based on industry, business size, and your internal resources and budget. If you're not a marketing expert, it may seem overwhelming—that's where we step in.

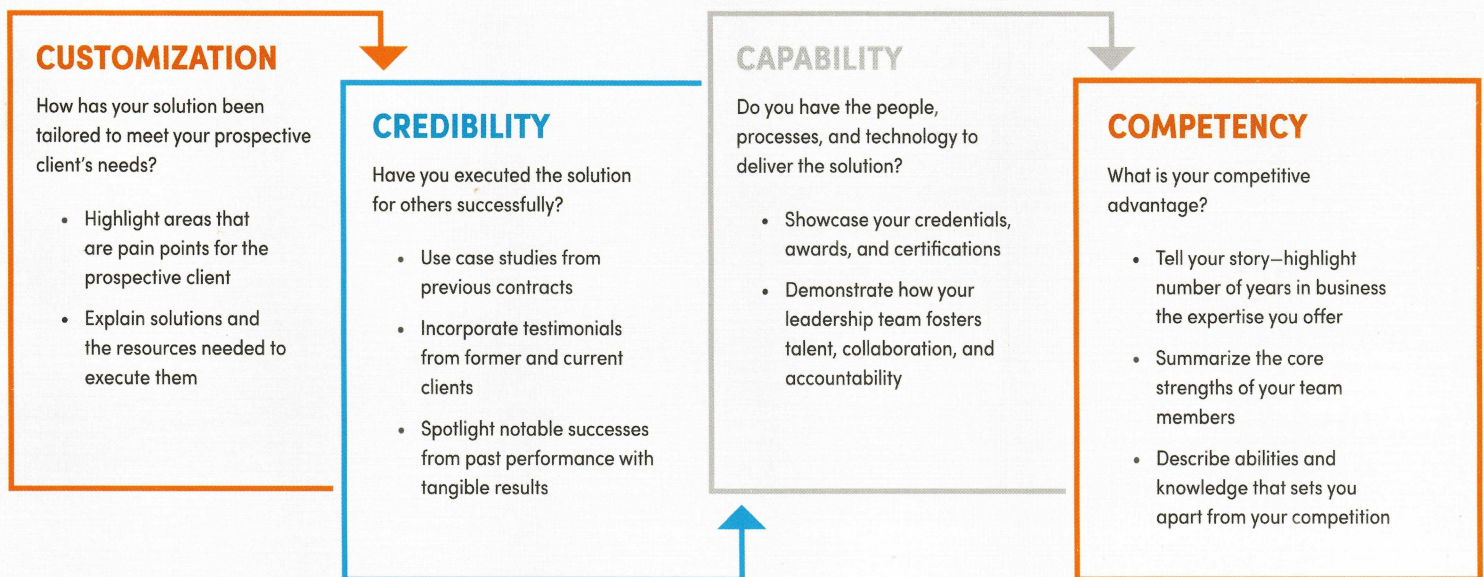
MBDA is dedicating March to sharing marketing insights every business enterprise needs to thrive, starting with three core strategies and tactics critical to winning, sustaining, and growing your business: a **comprehensive capabilities statement**, a **value-focused marketing sales cycle**, and an **engaging online advertising strategy**.

Corporate Capabilities Presentation

A **corporate capability presentation** isn't a collection of business services. It's a business case used to pitch, educate, and secure new business. Capabilities presentations should:

- Have dynamic branding and engaging design elements
- Demonstrate a thorough understanding of your prospective client's mission and goals
- Provide a solution to a problem and measurable results
- Outline your process, detailing your approach and methodology
- Include a call to action to prompt the next step in your sales cycle

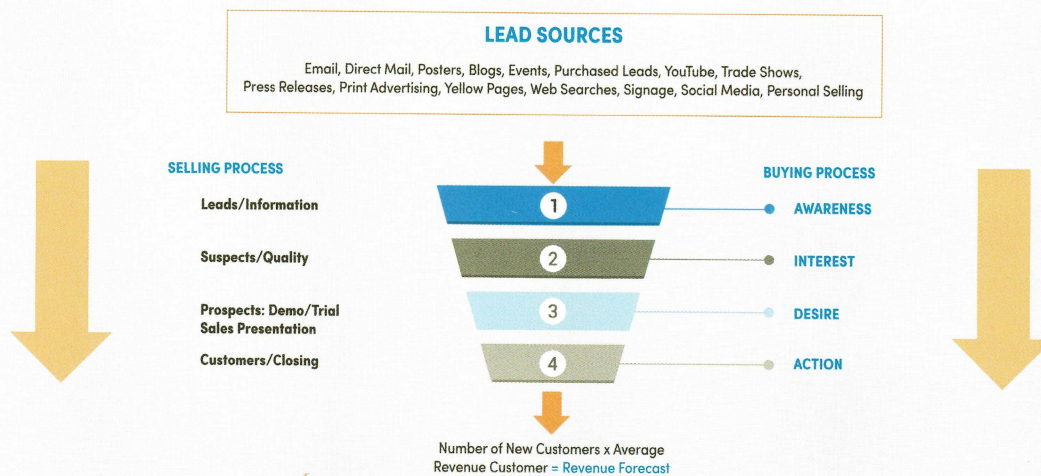
Effective capabilities presentations focus on the 4 C's clients consider when selecting a firm or making a purchase: customization, credibility, capacity, and competency.



Every business website needs to feature one capabilities presentation, but an in-person pitch presentations should be customized and include 8-10 slides. Design pieces should also be incorporated to create visual interaction.

Marketing Sales Cycle

Activities, proposal bids, and meetings, and the time it takes to develop relationships and close deals all impact your operating budget. Your actual cost is every expense associated with the lead generation, selling, and buying process—not just labor and material costs of marketing collateral. Capturing return on investment (ROI) and return on engagement (ROE) and calculating the resources utilized for executing marketing initiatives may seem complex, but creating a **marketing sales cycle** is easier than you think.

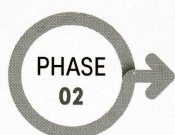


Start by identifying your target audience. Understanding their behaviors will help you establish effective ways of connecting and communicating with them—conferences, networking events, online advertising, and email marketing. These are your sales leads. Next, develop an engagement plan for each target audience using a five-phase sales cycle:



FIRST IMPRESSION

Everyone sells, consciously or subconsciously. Be intentional about every interaction from the receptionist to upselling existing clients.



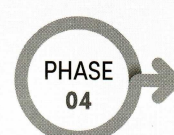
GET NOTICED

It's important to know your audience and value proposition. What do you offer that your competitor does not? The answer is critical to obtaining leads through email, blogging, company web pages, social media, conferences, referrals, print advertising, and supplier diversity conferences.



CATEGORIZE YOUR LEADS

A qualified lead is ready for an engagement meeting, presentation, or sales pitch. Set monthly goals for qualified leads, and create a plan to pitch and grow your business once the lead is generated. A tentative or on-hold lead is not ready for purchase but may be at another time. A closed lead will never be a customer.



TRACK AND MONITOR YOUR ENGAGEMENT

Consider purchasing a customer relationship management (CRM) tool to streamline execution, tracking and reporting. Software that manages customer data, customer interaction, business information, and sales automation is a hefty investment upfront but the immediate benefits and long-term value are priceless.



DETERMINE THE COST PER CUSTOMER

Are your efforts and use of resources—time, labor hours, energy, and money—worth the results? Develop a spreadsheet that outlines your monthly lead generation activities, how many qualified leads you secured, and deals you closed. Assess where you're spending the most money and the revenue it generated.

Online Advertising Strategy

Meet customers where they are....online. When developing an **online advertising strategy**, follow these simple steps.

Step #1: Create an audience profile

Analytics are key for understanding your target market to evaluate **demographics**, such as age, gender, income and education. Lifestyle information is equally as important. This includes psychographics (personality and emotionally based behavior), social factors (choice of hobbies and other non-work related interests), belief and value systems (awareness of religion, politics, and culture), and life stage (the experience of people at different ages and roles such as teenagers or empty-nesters).

Step #2: Develop goals and objectives

These terms are often used interchangeably but they are not the same. A goal is what you want to achieve. Objectives are the quantifiable actions you take to reach a goal. Objectives should be created using the SMART philosophy: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. The **SMART method** answers 5 critical questions to ensure your business is purposefully working toward success: What will be done? How will you know it meets expectations? Does the person have the experience, knowledge, ability, and resources to fulfill the expectation? What will be the impact? When will it be done?

Step #3: Decide what platforms you want to utilize

Research and choose online and social media advertising that complement your target market. When implementing a digital buy remember that no platform is the same. The effectiveness of **Google, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn**, and **Snapchat** varies based on your audience and objectives.

Step #4: Produce ad copy

Produce ad copy with images and graphics that will engage your target audience to perform a specific call to action. Make sure your messaging directly appeals to what users want to accomplish, and focus on the benefits you provide that solves their problem. Keep tabs on what your competition is doing. **SpyFu** is a great tool for discovering the most profitable keywords for the search engines and ads of your competitors.

Step #5: Track and monitor ad success

Choose the metrics that are relevant to your goal. **Google Analytics** is a one-stop shop for useful data including total number of visits to capture how well your campaign is driving traffic and the number of new and recurring visitors to reveal the effectiveness of your outreach efforts. High bounce rates and low conversions can mean bad design or poor offerings. The four main channels to track are direct (how many people visited your site directly), referrals (external links from other sites), organic (visitors who found you after performing a search), and social (visitors who found you through social media).

Visit us at www.mbda.gov/grow for expert tips, insights, and resources to grow your business.