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Marketing Together. Succeeding Together.

Tactical Marketing Guides

Cisco Partner Marketing has created a series of Tactical Marketing Guides to help partners understand how to execute on a variety of marketing tactics. Each Tactical Marketing Guide (TMG) takes you through an overview of the tactic, its primary and secondary objectives, best practice guidelines, steps to execute, where to find related marketing content, and a timeline to help you plan your execution.

Traditional Marketing Tactics	Digital Marketing Tactics	Live Marketing Tactics
▸ Mailer	▸ Search Engine Marketing	▸ Telephone Prospecting
▸ Print Ad	▸ Banner Ad Marketing	▸ Customer Walk-By
▸ Offers and Promotions	▸ Newsletters	▸ Seminar
▸ Public Relations	▸ Landing Page	▸ Trade Shows
▸ Radio Advertising	▸ Web Marketing	▸ Networking
	▸ Content Syndication and Watering Holes	
	▸ Social Media Networking	

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Overview: An email or direct mail campaign is a marketing tactic that uses a mail service to deliver a promotional printed or electronic piece to your target audience.

Objectives of Mailers

Primary: Generate demand for your products and solutions and stimulate your target to take action (call for an appointment, attend an event, visit your website, etc.).

Secondary: Create awareness of your brand and the range of products/solutions you have to offer.

TIP: Develop a campaign-specific landing page that recipients can go to directly for more information.

Sample Calls to Action: Book an appointment, schedule a demo or network assessment, or attend a seminar.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Create a coordinated plan, consisting of both electronic and printed mail, to ensure your target audience receives your message. The goal is for your target to see your message several times during your campaign.

· Include a clear, concise call to action, such as:

  – Learn more

  – Contact us today for more information

  – Set up an appointment today and receive a complimentary network security assessment

  – Register here <link> for our upcoming webinar

· Provide multiple ways for your target to get in contact with you: electronic (website or reply to email) and phone number.

· Offer an incentive to motivate your target to make an appointment or complete your call to action.

· Try splitting your contact list into two groups for an A/B test. Send unique mailers to each group and gauge whether one set of creative performs better than another. Use this data when planning future campaigns. Test often.

· Be sure to comply with the CAN-SPAM Act for email.

· Avoid words, phrases, and styles that can cause your email to be treated as spam. Spam filters look for things like exclamation points, all caps, and the words "free" and "act now" in the subject line.

· Drive contacts to a landing page that reinforces your campaign message, gathers metrics, and increases conversion ratios.

· Integrate email acquisition into your prospecting strategy so that you are collecting emails at networking events, while cold calling, at trade shows, on the web, and during in-bound calls.

· Follow up a mail campaign with outbound calling to increase the overall effectiveness of your program.

Options

Option 1:

Promotional Campaign: Use quarterly promotions to target prospects and stay connected to existing customers. Send out a promotional email once a month highlighting different promotions or presenting the same promotion in different ways.

Option 2:

Evolving Messaging Campaign: Send out a series of mailings in 2- to 3-week intervals, over a quarter, that builds to expand your prospect's understanding.

How to Execute

Preparation:

- Identify your contact list. Examples include: existing customers, your prospecting list, a purchased list, etc.
- Determine your contact strategy: electronic or printed mail, or a combination of both.
- Develop your call to action.
- Utilize co-branded Cisco marketing assets.
- Set up associated phone numbers, email addresses, and related campaign landing pages.

During Execution:

- Monitor traffic to the landing page and watch trends in call and email volume.
- Respond quickly to inquiries, and set up face-to-face visits, as appropriate.

After Execution:

- Follow through on appointments and deliver on committed promotional services/items.
- Review all contact metrics compared with the pre-campaign time period: landing page hits, calls, emails, appointments, closed business, and deal pipeline.

Marketing Asset Finder

Cisco has created both email and postcard templates for you to use and customize for various campaigns.

On Cisco Partner Marketing Central, you'll find an email campaign tool and direct mail services. The email campaign tool provides you with metrics and lead-tracking information.
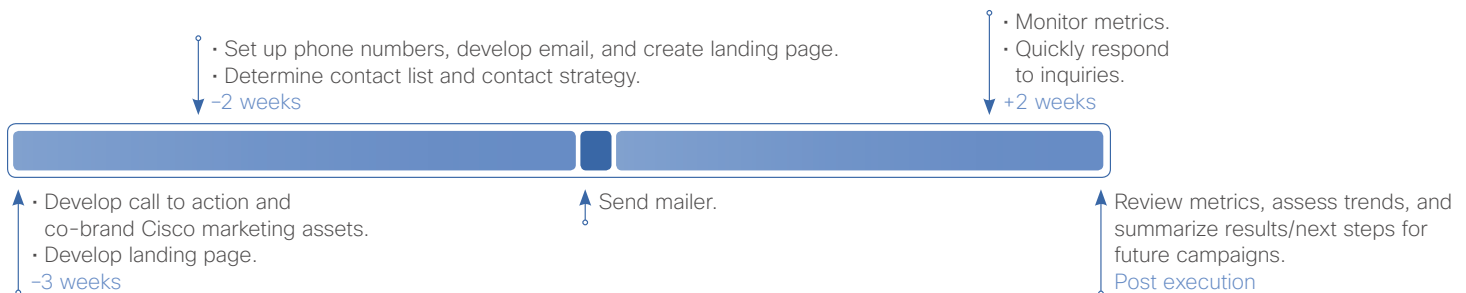
Complementary Tactical Marketing Guides: Landing Page and Newsletters.

Metrics Collection

Mail campaigns should be evaluated in the following way:

- Number of mailings (direct mail or email)
- Number of opened emails
- Open rate: opened emails/emails sent
- Clicks on call to action buttons
- Number of visits to the landing page

Planning Timeline

- Set up phone numbers, develop email, and create landing page.
- Determine contact list and contact strategy.
−2 weeks

- Monitor metrics.
- Quickly respond to inquiries.
+2 weeks

- Develop call to action and co-brand Cisco marketing assets.
- Develop landing page.
−3 weeks

Send mailer.

Review metrics, assess trends, and summarize results/next steps for future campaigns.
Post execution

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Overview: Print ads are placed in a printed medium, such as a newspaper, magazine, or trade journal. Print media can reach a very broad readership base (such as a national newspaper or magazine), or a narrow target (such as local newspapers or trade journals).

Objective of Print Ads

Primary: Increase brand awareness, promote an offer, or drive traffic to your website.

Secondary: Drive consideration for your product or service among your target market by providing additional context or differentiating benefits

Sample Calls to Action: Visit a website, attend a seminar, or call for more information.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Assess the technology magazines and publications in your region and determine which ones are a good fit to advertise your product or service. Consider a targeted section of the magazine or publication.

· Consider offer-based print ads with a limited availability to generate immediate traffic and business.

· Your ad should have a single call to action.

· For a successful ad, keep it simple, eye-catching, and easy to read.

· Use a promotional code to help identify leads associated with the ad and assess your overall return on investment.

· Don't pull your ads just because you don't get immediate feedback. Remember, awareness builds over time.

· Start small; a monthly publication might allow your advertising dollars to go further.

· Advertising representatives often offer discounts for new advertisers or for ads that will run for a term.

· Advertising rates will vary depending on each medium's popularity. Publications with big circulations often charge more than smaller, niche publications. Generally, you can expect to pay between $6 and $10 (per thousand readers) for magazines and $8 to $24 (per thousand readers) for newspapers.

· To save money, ask for remnant space. Remnant space is usually available just before publication when a publisher cannot fill all the available space.

Options

	Option 1	$	Option 2	$	Option 3	$
Print ad	Full-page, full-color ad in symphony playbill	$ 2,000	Half-page, full-color ad in a local business magazine	$ 2,150 per issue	Local newspaper ad in the business section	$ 1500+ monthly

How to Execute

Preparation:

- Consider the product or service you are selling. Technology is a broad field, so identify customer segments that may have a greater appreciation for what you are selling, and target them.

- Look for local newspapers and magazines, and find niche publications to advertise to your target audience. You want your ads to find the people who are interested in your product or service.

- Determine how much money you have in your advertising budget for buying advertising space. This will help you decide which media fit your budget and whether you should focus locally or more broadly.

- Contact several media advertising departments for rates. Discuss placement, frequency, competitors' placement, and the size of your ad; file size and format; and artwork deadlines, as well as any other concerns you may have before you buy. Many publications require you to submit artwork up to two months in advance.

- Determine the size of the ad and the number of runs you can purchase with your advertising budget.

- Design your ad. Do it yourself or hire a graphic artist. Many publications have in-house graphic and layout designers that can help. Crowdsourcing design sites, such as www.crowdspring.com or www.99Designs.com can also help you get affordable, professional help.

- Place your ad. Be sure to request a "tear sheet." This means the publisher will mail you the page that your ad is published on as verification of publication and date of print.

- Carefully proofread your ad and ensure that you have the appropriate phone number or web address listed. Remember: You are responsible for any mistakes. Not the publication.

During Execution:

- Be prepared to accept calls and online inquiries, and have staff ready to follow up.

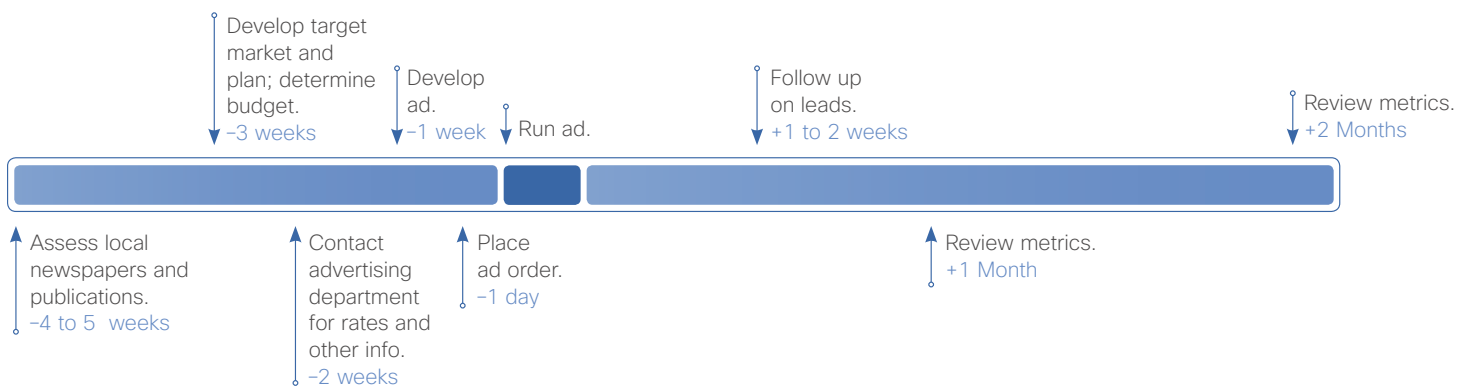- Keep it fresh. Refresh the ad at least every three months.

Post Execution:

- Determine your return on investment: divide the cost of the ad by the average purchase of each new or existing customer.

- Allocate budget for future advertising. Make adjustments to the ad or publication based on feedback and previous results.

Marketing Asset Finder

Cisco Partner Marketing Central (log-in required) provides you with the ability to create customizable marketing assets, including postcards, print ads, emails, and more.

Planning Timeline

Develop target market and plan; determine budget.
−3 weeks

Develop ad.
−1 week

Run ad.

Follow up on leads.
+1 to 2 weeks

Review metrics.
+2 Months

Assess local newspapers and publications.
−4 to 5 weeks

Contact advertising department for rates and other info.
−2 weeks

Place ad order.
−1 day

Review metrics.
+1 Month

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Overview: Offers and promotions are used to help incent potential customers to allow you to market to them, commit to a face-to-face meeting and/or drive them to an event or purchase.

Objective of Offers and Promotions

Primary: Introduce a new product to new/existing customers, respond to a competitor's promotion or announcement, increase seasonal sales, and make it easier for your sales staff to secure more orders.

Secondary: Acquire prospect contact information and permission to communicate with them ("opt-in") in the future.

Sample Calls to Action: Free network assessment, competitive trade-in, giveaway, or financing options.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Set clear goals. Are you looking to acquire more contacts, or increase product sales? Setting clear goals will help you to gauge your success.

· Educational materials, such as white papers and business tips, or low-cost items, such as USB drives, $5 gift cards, or a subscription to your company newsletter, can be effective ways to gather prospect information and obtain opt-in approval for future marketing endeavors.

· Customize an offer around your products or services, or co-brand a Cisco end-user offer (e.g., 0% financing).

· Get help with fulfillment: If you do not have resources, contact a marketing vendor to help you build your offer web presence, aggregate contact information, and mail out the offers.

· Track metrics. A good indicator of success is determining if there was an increase in product sales or in the number of contacts acquired during your offer period.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· Determine your target audience (business or technical) and choose a contact acquisition offer or purchase offer. To see which offers are available from Cisco visit:

  ▶ Cisco Partner Central

  ▶ Cisco Capital^{SM}

· Set goals (increase product sales or acquire a certain number of new marketing contacts).

· Determine the length of the offer. Be clear as to the terms and conditions and geographical availability.

· Build your offer web page and designate resources (employees, budget, etc.) to fulfill offers. If no resources are available, contact a fulfillment vendor for assistance.

· Launch offer with communications to prospects (e.g., newsletter, web banner, print ad, radio advertisement).
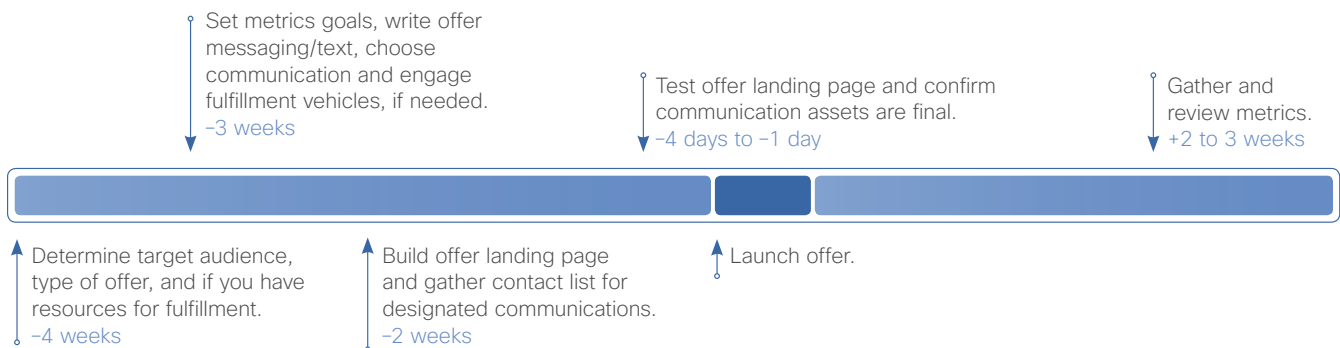
During Execution:

· Track web landing page or dedicated phone number/ email for activity. Modify messaging where necessary.

Post Execution:

· Analyze the metrics against the original objectives to determine success.

Planning Timeline

Set metrics goals, write offer messaging/text, choose communication and engage fulfillment vehicles, if needed.
−3 weeks

Test offer landing page and confirm communication assets are final.
−4 days to −1 day

Gather and review metrics.
+2 to 3 weeks

Determine target audience, type of offer, and if you have resources for fulfillment.
−4 weeks

Build offer landing page and gather contact list for designated communications.
−2 weeks

Launch offer.

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Overview: PR (public relations) is the process of finding news in and around your business, packaging it so that it is of interest to the outside world, in particular, to specific journalists at specific media at specific times, in order to gain awareness, third-party validation, and positioning.

Objective of Using PR

Primary: To build your brand, create awareness, improve your positioning, promote your team as thought leaders in your industry, and add credibility through placements in the media.

Secondary: This process results in new incoming leads, shorter sales cycles, increased chances of winning deals, larger deal sizes through premium positioning, and new opportunities for partnerships and investment. If you are interviewed by a reporter for a story, hundreds of thousands of people can read about your company at no cost to you.

Best Practice Guidelines

· PR is not about putting press releases on wire services or on your website. It is not about blasting the same story to everyone. It is about sending specific "story ideas" to specific journalists in the hopes that they will write about you.

· **Remember:** PR is not advertising and you have no control over what stories get written or where they will appear; you can only cross your fingers and hope that you have given journalists an interesting idea that they will want to run with.

· PR is also not about touting news that is only interesting within your organization—you must ask yourself why anyone would want to read about it.

· The key to PR is in finding ways to couch your central message in a number of ways that will be interesting to the outside world. You do this by connecting your story to industry trends, news, statistics, and events that are more generally appealing.

· Customize your high-level story idea for the audiences of specific journalists at different publications. For example, you should send technology-focused stories to tech journalists and not to celebrity buzz columnists.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· Prepare a basic media kit for your company. This doesn't have to be anything fancy—just a simple document with the main facts, history, executive biographies, and contact details on a page or two. You will need this to send to interested media contacts as background.

· Build a media list. This is a list of all applicable writers, bloggers, producers, and other journalists that may be interested in covering a story about some aspect of your business or industry. PR firms have access to a large database of such contacts (through programs such as Cision or Vocus), but you can begin to make your own through scouring the media.

· Add a media center to your website where you can upload press releases, company news, and have a place for the media to download your logo and high-resolution photography that they can publish along with stories about you. This is also a great place to upload links or PDF's of past media placements.

· Create a PR plan for your business outlining the range of different story angles you wish to pitch to the media and when you would like to go out with each (and to which subsections of the media).

· Consider engaging a PR agency to help with execution if you think that you can afford it or if you don't have time to follow up with the media on your own.

During Execution:

- Develop story ideas that connect to outside trends. Write up short emails about them, as well as a basic press release to provide the **who, what, why,** and **where** background on the story or on the specific news about your organization.

- Send these emails to your media contacts. The tone is helpful, i.e., "I have a great story idea for you that I think is right in line with what your readers are looking for… let me know if you need any more information or if you would like to set up an interview," etc.

- Make sure to send a follow-up email one week later.

- You can also make calls to these media contacts and tell them your story directly. If you are talking about products or services that are hard to describe, you may also think about setting up events or luncheons to demonstrate your innovations and of course invite the media.

- Try different types of story angles over time to keep your story fresh and to create media interest in new ways.

- For business-to-business technology firms, try thought leadership approaches (i.e., promoting your team as experts to the media) so that journalists will contact you for commentary whenever they are writing a story about your area of expertise. This also includes presenting on panels, publishing interesting statistics on your industry, working with analysts, and perhaps even writing your own articles to submit to the media as contributed content.

Post Execution:

- Set up Google News Alerts on your company and product names so that you will see when the media do write about you (you may also wish to pay for a clipping service to do this, though it is often not necessary).
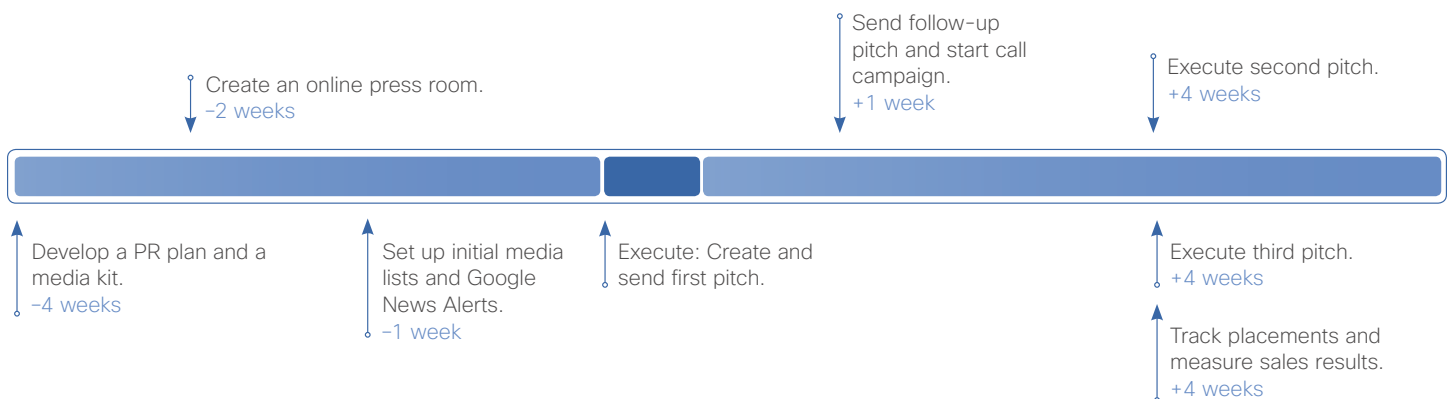
- Don't forget to feature any media placements on your website as well.

- Connect your PR efforts with your social media efforts, as well, for maximum impact (e.g., tweet about your story ideas and include links to media placements).
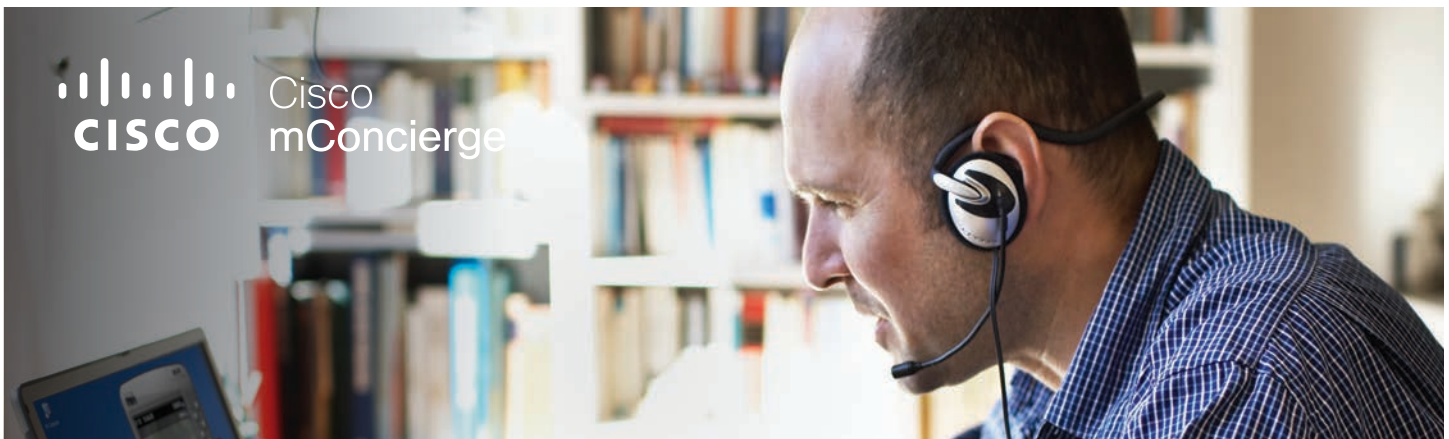
Marketing Asset Finder

- Cisco Partner Central provides templates for several basic press releases.

- You can also order pre-packaged PR services through the Cisco Partner Marketing Central Public Relations Service.

- The mConcierge program in Cisco Partner Marketing is now running a PR pilot to help teach our partners to do better PR on their own. Contact your Cisco representative to learn more.

Metrics Collection

- Track all of your media placements. One common measure of PR success is the total circulation of the media in which you appear (or viewership for TV or unique users for online publications).

- "Impressions" are also tracked; this measures how many people actually read or see a specific publication (usually the circulation is multiplied by a factor of 1-3 times).

- Track your incoming leads and sales close rates and deal sizes to see any noticeable lift when you are doing PR.

Planning Timeline

Create an online press room.
−2 weeks

Send follow-up pitch and start call campaign.
+1 week

Execute second pitch.
+4 weeks

Develop a PR plan and a media kit.
−4 weeks

Set up initial media lists and Google News Alerts.
−1 week

Execute: Create and send first pitch.

Execute third pitch.
+4 weeks

Track placements and measure sales results.
+4 weeks

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Overview: Radio advertising reaches a broad target audience through radio programs broadcast locally or nationally.

Objective of Radio Advertising

Primary: Expand market reach, make a lasting impression, and build your brand with your target audience.

Secondary: Communicate frequent messages about what your company has to offer in order to motivate a customer to contact you.

Sample Calls to Action: Visit a website, contact your company, or attend a seminar.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Know your customers and why they like to do business with you (your value proposition).

· Create a brief and concise ad that will compel your audience to take the next step.

· Don't buy advertising on your favorite station. Select the stations that reach your target customers. In your radio spot, be clear on your call to action. What do you want the listener to do? Call a phone number? Go to your website? For phone numbers, use a number that is easy to remember such as 888-BET-ONUS.

· Be willing to air your radio ads repeatedly, and be open to using different stations.

· Measure response throughout the campaign, and be willing to modify it during execution to improve results.

· Work with a media buying agency to plan a campaign that targets your customer base accurately and gets you the best rate.

· Consider adding television and/or print advertising to your campaign for better coverage.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· Determine the characteristics of your target audience and what is unique about your business or offer.

· Engage with a media buying company or local station representative to discuss a radio campaign.

  Some good questions include:

   – When are the best times to run ads?

   – Which stations?

   – How should I structure and write my ad?

   – Should my ad be 30 or 60 seconds?

· Depending on your call to action ("Call 1-800-XXXX" or "Visit our website at www.xxx.com"), make sure your destination location is easy to find and ready to provide a good customer experience.
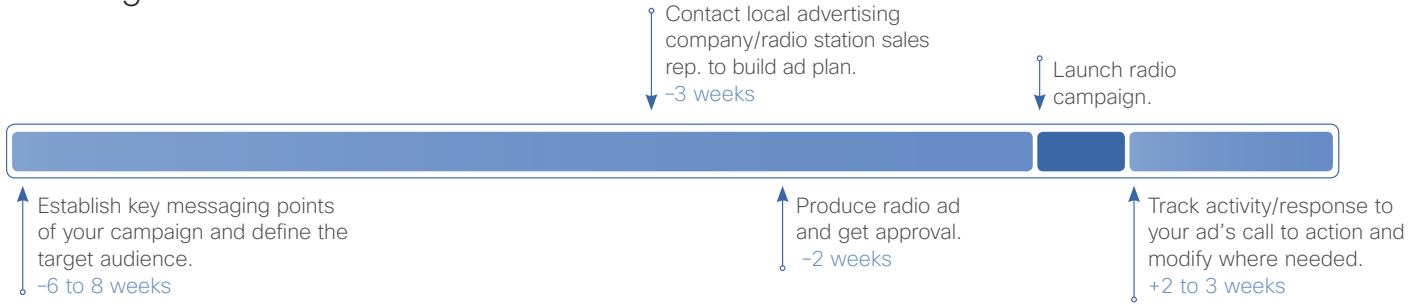
During Execution:

· Monitor the response to your radio advertisements (how many listeners responded to your call to action–tally the phone calls, web visits, and promo codes redeemed from the ad), and be ready to modify your campaign to increase effectiveness if needed.

Post Execution:

· Analyze metrics to determine the performance of the campaign.

· Keep detailed notes on what worked well and what didn't in preparation for a future radio ad campaign.

Planning Timeline

Contact local advertising
company/radio station sales
rep. to build ad plan.
−3 weeks

Launch radio
campaign.

Establish key messaging points
of your campaign and define the
target audience.
−6 to 8 weeks

Produce radio ad
and get approval.
−2 weeks

Track activity/response to
your ad's call to action and
modify where needed.
+2 to 3 weeks

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Overview: Search engine marketing involves paying a fee to have your website receive top placement on search engine pages, such as Google, Yahoo, Bing, and others, when users search using specific keywords.

Objectives of Search Engine Marketing

Primary: Build your brand and online presence.

Secondary: Acquire new customers by directing prospects to a landing page with a clear call to action.

Sample Calls to Action: Book an appointment, schedule a demo or network assessment, or attend a seminar.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Create one to three ad groups that will each focus on a key technology or solution.

· Each ad group should contain 15 to 30 keywords or terms. (It is better to have more ad groups than to have a broad group of terms in just one group.)

· A major factor in your price and position for a search term is your quality score, which is a measure of how relevant your keywords are to your landing page text and to a user's search query.

· Repeating your keywords on the landing page three to five times helps to ensure that you are providing what people are searching for. Include images that also highlight what people are looking for.

· Quality scores are built up over time, so be patient. Avoid stopping an ad group that has a good quality score.

· Google is a leader in the search industry; however, it takes only a few sales to pay for your search engine marketing (SEM) campaign, so you may ultimately pay less on Yahoo, Bing, and other search engines for the same number of prospects.

· Consider working with an agency that specializes in SEM.

· Avoid sending prospects to your main page. Research the terms customers search on by using the Google Keyword Tool.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· Open an account with Google AdWords or another provider of search engine advertising.

· Determine ad groups, keywords and terms for each group.

· Research search terms and words to make sure prospects are searching for them.

· Create a landing page for each ad group.

· Indicate the times and days of the week you want to display your ad.

· Set a geographic center point for your campaign and the radius of the area you want to cover around it.

· Decide on a daily and monthly budget.

· Place your bids.

During Execution:

· Monitor the click-through rate (CTR) and conversion rate for each keyword.

· Fine-tune the bid based on clicks. Pick the keywords with high CTR and high conversion rates.

· Adjust the landing page copy if conversion from clicks to leads is low. (This could start to affect your quality score.)

· Monitor your quality score and make adjustments to words in your ad groups and copy on your landing page.

After Execution:

· Ad groups with good quality scores should be continued. Those with poor ratings should be abandoned or adjusted.

Marketing Asset Finder

Search engine marketing keywords are included in various campaigns on Cisco Partner Marketing Central (log-in required).

Complementary Tactical Marketing Guides: Landing Page and Banner Advertising.

Metrics Collection

Evaluate search engine marketing in the following way:

· Number of impressions and clicks

· Click-through rate = impressions/clicks

· Conversion ratio of clicks to appointments set

· The number of visitors to your landing page who complete a call to action

· Cost per click = amount spent on ad group/clicks

Planning Timeline

· Research search terms and words to be sure prospects are searching for them.
· Create a landing page for each ad group.
−2 weeks

Paid search execution.

Monitor your quality score and make adjustments if needed.
+6 weeks

· Open an account with Google AdWords or other provider of search engine ads.
· Determine ad groups and keywords and terms for each group.
−3 weeks

· Decide geography, time of day, and days of the week you want to display your ad.
· Set a daily and monthly budget.
· Test landing page.
−1 week

· Monitor click-through rate and conversion rate.
· Fine-tune bid.
· Adjust landing page copy if conversion from clicks to calls to action is low.
+3 weeks

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Overview: Whether placed on high-traffic areas of your website, or on third-party sites, banners can help raise awareness of your business and drive customers and prospects to complete a specific call-to-action.

Objectives of Banner Ad Marketing

Primary: Raise awareness of your business, promotion, and/or offerings.

Secondary: Drive customers and prospects to complete a desired call-to-action, such as filling out a form, setting up an appointment, or registering for an event.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Keep your banner copy simple and short so that it's easy for readers to determine what you are selling or marketing.

· Use large fonts and aim for fewer than seven words per frame in order to grab attention quickly.

· Limit the banner ad file size to 50k so that it loads faster on third-party websites.

· Make sure the colors of your banner are in contrast with your placement location color palette. Your banner should stand out, not blend in.

· Link your banner to a focused landing page that correlates to your banner ad copy. Never send customers to your main URL.

· Display banner ads on sites that your target audience visits. Consider tier 2 news sites, regional/local business sites, and industry-relevant blogs.

· Many community news sites, forums, and blogs support banner advertising for as low as ten cents per click.

· Consider using a third-party, such as Reach Local, that can economically display your ads on tier 1 news sites while geo-targeting your city.

· Place a banner ad on your own site in high-traffic areas.

· Rolling banner ads at the top of your main page can help to funnel organic traffic to specials, promotions, and key services.

Options

Option 1: Place banner ads on your own site, as well as on local or regional third-party websites.

Option 2: Work with banner placement companies, such as Reach Local or Google AdWords, to place banners on national third-party websites targeting prospects in your area.

Option 3: Use banner placement companies to redisplay your banner ad to prospects who come to your landing page.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· Determine the goal of your banner ad campaign. Identify the primary technology, messaging, and the offer you want to showcase.

· Evaluate high-traffic areas of your own sites for possible placement, as well as potential placement on third-party websites. Ask third-party vendors for demographics, impressions (daily/monthly), and rate sheets. Also determine the potential placements of your ad and its rotation frequency.

· Create a budget and calculate the cost of displaying impressions of your ad.

· Select the third-party site where you plan to run your banner and ask for a style guide (it will detail their banner ad specifications)

· Download banner ad assets from Cisco® Partner Marketing Central and/or work with a design agency to create your own.

· Determine where your viewer will click to from your banner. Remember that it should be a focused landing page vs. a general page, such as your home page.

During Execution:

· Confirm that your banner ads are live and that the links are directing visitors to the appropriate pages.

· Bi-weekly or monthly, collect metrics from your own website and third-party sites, such as Google Analytics or Adobe Omniture.

· Collect the number of impressions and clicks from the site, and appointment requests or other calls to action from the landing page.

· Consider modifying your banner ad or landing page message, your calls to action, and other variables that could be negatively affecting your results.

· Coach your sales team on where leads are coming from so they can treat these sources as warm leads.
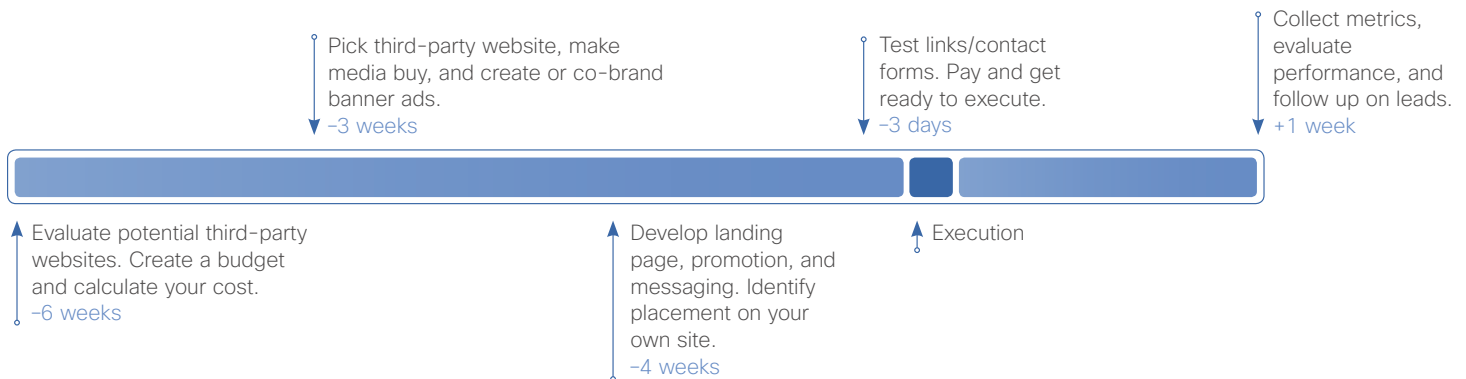
After Execution:

· Review your results and evaluate whether your campaign was cost-effective.

· Consider changing the banner graphics to catch the attention of repeat visitors to the site.

· Renew banner advertising.

Marketing Asset Finder

Cisco Partner Marketing Central (log-in required) provides you with the ability to create or download customizable marketing assets, including postcards, emails, and more.

Cisco has created banner ads and landing page content that can be downloaded for various campaigns.

Planning Timeline

Pick third-party website, make media buy, and create or co-brand banner ads.
−3 weeks

Test links/contact forms. Pay and get ready to execute.
−3 days

Collect metrics, evaluate performance, and follow up on leads.
+1 week

Evaluate potential third-party websites. Create a budget and calculate your cost.
−6 weeks

Develop landing page, promotion, and messaging. Identify placement on your own site.
−4 weeks

Execution

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Overview: An email newsletter serves to provide regular communication with your customers and prospects, as well as to educate them on relevant topics in your industry, and to provide solutions to their business challenges.

Objectives of Newsletters

Primary: Stay top-of-mind with customers and prospects, and increase ongoing brand awareness and preference for your business.

Secondary: Generate demand for your products and services by linking news articles to your solutions.

TIP: Make the content of your newsletter unique and meaningful. Ask someone, "Would you find this information helpful or useful?"

Best Practice Guidelines

Content:

· Define your "voice" and be clear on who you are writing for: e.g., technical professionals or business owners.

· Write in a conversational tone. Talk to your customers, not at them. Don't use big words when smaller ones will do.

· Focus on issues, or pain points, that you can help solve. Consider regional or timely topics that are top-of-mind. For example, in the winter talk about using remote access to avoid weather impacts, write about security after a new security vulnerability is revealed in the news, or discuss business productivity as a way to fight poor economic conditions.

· Incorporate existing content whenever possible, including videos, your company blog posts and case studies/ success stories. Ensure that you have a varied mix of content and content sources.

· Use colorful, engaging imagery to break up the text in your newsletter. If you include video, be sure to insert a screen shot or video still, including an arrow or "Watch Now" call to action. This will help prompt action.

· Use short, enticing subject lines to encourage prospects to open and read further: e.g., "Five Things You Need to Know About Securing Your Network."

· Include icons and/or links to your company's social media properties, such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, as well as to your company blog.

· Always include your company phone number and contact information to open up lines of communication.

· Include offers and promotions sparingly. A newsletter is not a sales tool, but it can't hurt to ensure your readers are aware of the ways in which they can benefit from purchasing your products and solutions. The sidebar is a good place for this type of content.

Formatting:

· Consider newsletter tools and programs, such as Constant Contact or Emma, that can both securely handle your contact list and provide valuable tracking information.

· Include a physical address in the footer of your email and a way for subscribers to opt out (mandatory under U.S. and Canada spam legislation).

· Test your newsletter format on different types of email platforms for potential formatting issues.

· Offer a way for subscribers to give you feedback (via an email alias).

· Integrate video to help break up content.

Operation:

· Include a way for customers and prospects to sign up for your newsletter from your home page. Use banner ads to promote opt-ins on secondary pages.

· When you follow up after an event, call prospecting, or a walk-by with an email, be sure to include a call to action to sign up for your newsletter. Be creative about opportunities to grow your subscriber-base.

· Be clear on the subscriber benefits of your newsletter.

· Encourage your employees to contribute articles based on their area of expertise. Vary your content sources.

· Your newsletter is a reflection of your company—its quality, service, and people. Have several people proofread your newsletter and related content, to avoid publishing false information or typos.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· Understand and define your target audience and their key business and/or technical interests.

· Determine the frequency of your newsletter (monthly or quarterly). Plan your editorial calendar three to six months in advance, even if you only have a rough content plan.

· Prepare your distribution list.

· Create and gather content for articles.

· Insert content into the newsletter template.

· Read, review, and edit articles.

During Execution:

· Send a test newsletter to several types of email accounts (such as Hotmail, Yahoo mail, Gmail, and Outlook).
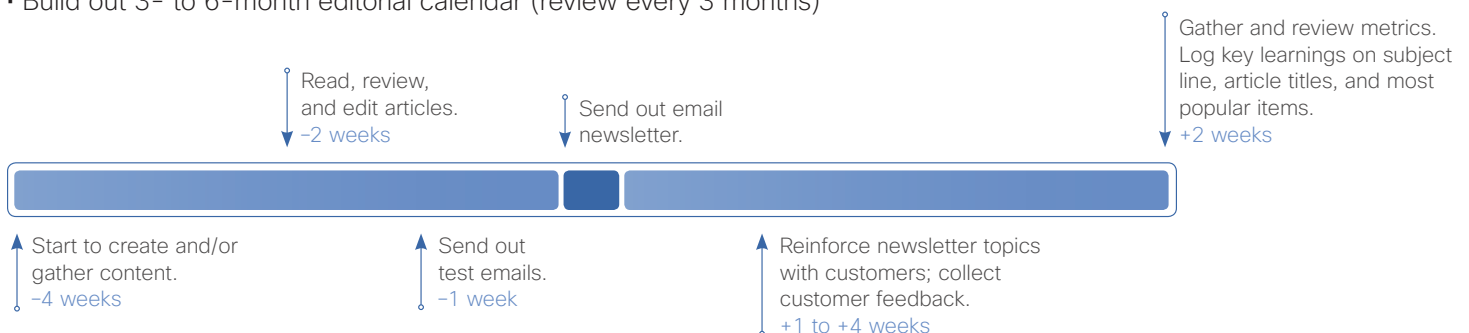
After Execution:

· Have technicians, sales reps, and other staff mention and reinforce newsletter topics with customers.

· Continually seek new ways to obtain new subscribers.

· Analyze metrics to determine newsletter performance.

· Take note of features that drew particular interest and continue to modify subject lines and content in future issues, for maximum impact.

· Collect feedback from customers on the relevance of your newsletter and steps for improvement.

Metrics Collection

Evaluate your newsletter in the following way:

· Size of subscriber list and the number successfully sent to.

· Open rate: number opened/number sent to.

· Total number of articles or links clicked.

· Click rate: number clicked/number of opens.

Planning Timeline

Startup:

· Engage email newsletter service

· Determine target audience and frequency (monthly/quarterly)

· Build contact list. Start with existing clients and then add more from various marketing activities

· Build out 3- to 6-month editorial calendar (review every 3 months)

Read, review, and edit articles.
−2 weeks

Send out email newsletter.

Gather and review metrics. Log key learnings on subject line, article titles, and most popular items.
+2 weeks

Start to create and/or gather content.
−4 weeks

Send out test emails.
−1 week

Reinforce newsletter topics with customers; collect customer feedback.
+1 to +4 weeks

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Overview: A landing page is a web page geared toward a particular topic, product, or conversion goal, to which prospects link to from various marketing tactics.

Objectives of a Landing Page

Primary: Encourage prospects who are seeking additional information to take action by scheduling an appointment, calling, emailing, or signing up for an event.

Secondary: Supply your prospect with further information to help move them forward in the sales process.

TIP: Avoid sending prospects to your home page, where they can get lost and/or lose interest.

Sample Calls to Action: Book an appointment, schedule a demo or a network assessment, or attend a seminar.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Create a "vanity link" (a short, easy-to-remember URL) that goes directly to the landing page.

· Reiterate or expand on the call to action from the referring asset.

· Place banner ads on your website to pull prospects to your landing page from other locations on your site, such as your home, product, and support pages.

· Highlight a promotion or offer that will help a prospect take action, such as a trade-in credit, competitive financing rates, or a free network assessment.

· Leverage landing pages for banners, print ads, newsletters, postcards, emails, search engine marketing, and more.

· Ensure that your landing page copy complements the messaging in your demand generation asset (e.g., if a banner ad focuses on network security, ensure that your landing page addresses network security).

· Include a bulleted list of the benefits of your solution or service.

· If you plan to utilize Search Engine Marketing (SEM) in your campaign, ensure that you incorporate your key words into the page text.

· Keep text and graphics simple.

· Make sure call to actions are clearly identified.

· Place contact forms on the right side of your landing page.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· Create a vanity link. (e.g., freenetworktest.com)

· Design your page with an appropriate mix of campaign details and graphics. Use resources from Cisco.com (Partner Marketing Central) for logos, images, and other assets.

· Implement and test the landing page.

During Execution:

· Track activity on the site and determine its source (other locations on your site, referring emails, banners, postcards, etc.).

· Continue to test your page.

After Execution:

· Review your landing page metrics, as part of your overall campaign, including the number of hits and the referring site.

· Either keep your page active or change your call to action. If you decide to take the page down, set a redirect to an appropriate place on your website so you don't lose any potential contacts.

Marketing Asset Finder

[Cisco Partner Marketing Central](#) (log-in required) provides you with the ability to create customizable marketing assets, including postcards, emails, and more.

Cisco® has created landing page text and examples for various campaigns that can be downloaded from [Partner Marketing Central](#).

Complementary Tactical Marketing Guides: [Search Engine Marketing](#), [Banner Ad Marketing](#), [Mailer](#), [Customer Walk-By](#), and [Telephone Prospecting](#).
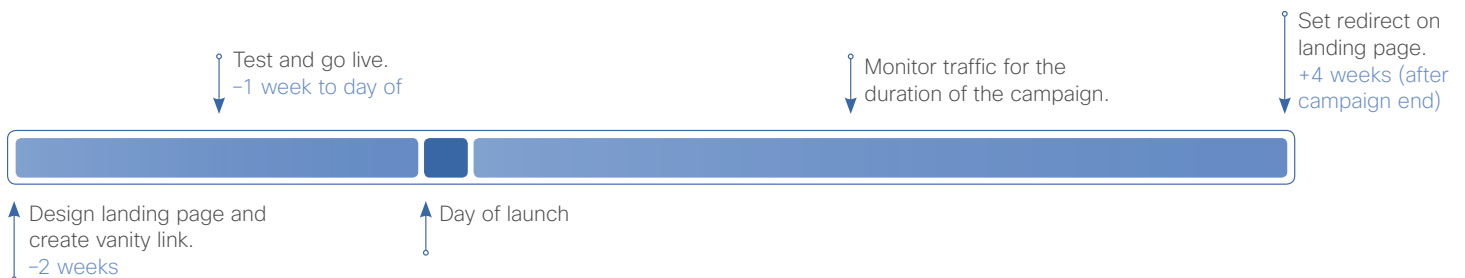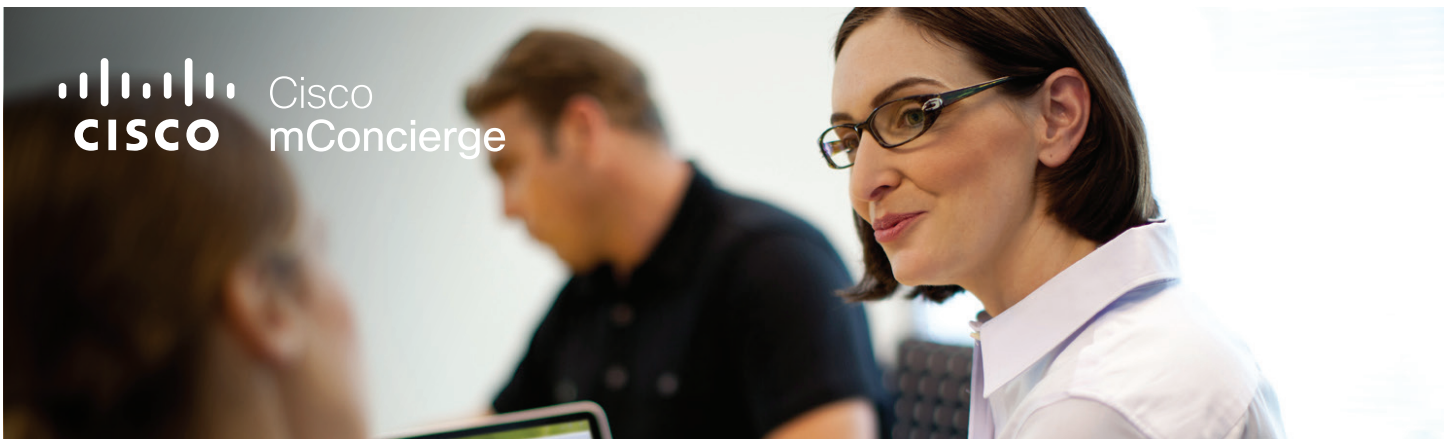
Metrics Collection

Landing pages should be evaluated in the following way:

. Number of page impressions

. Number of clicks on each call to action

Measure the conversion rate on your call to actions: Number clicked on CTA/Impressions. If below 3%, evaluate your landing page for ways to improve performance.

Planning Timeline

Test and go live.
−1 week to day of

Monitor traffic for the duration of the campaign.

Set redirect on landing page.
+4 weeks (after campaign end)

Design landing page and create vanity link.
−2 weeks

Day of launch

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Overview: Web marketing includes any action taken to market your web site or company online, including web site and search engine optimization.

Objectives of Web Marketing

Use web marketing to generate awareness and interest with new customers, as well as to expand upon opportunities with existing customers.

Sample Calls to Action: Book an appointment, see a demo, or attend a seminar.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Work with a web specialist to develop, and design your web site, as well as for search engine optimization.

· Keep content on your site accurate, relevant, succinct, and updated regularly, and always keep customer-experience top-of-mind.

· Use a site map that is a text-only link outline of your entire site, as well as secondary text navigation.

· Enhance your website by adding editorial content, as well as product and solution-oriented content, to give your audience a better understanding of your offer and brand promise.

· Your web marketing plan should include details on how to bring both new customers and existing customers to your site and ultimately to your "offer."

· Promote your website in newsletters, flyers, email, and all customer communications. Use a dedicated landing page for a more targeted experience. For new traffic, use search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine marketing.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· For initial web site development, set up a consultation with a web marketing company.

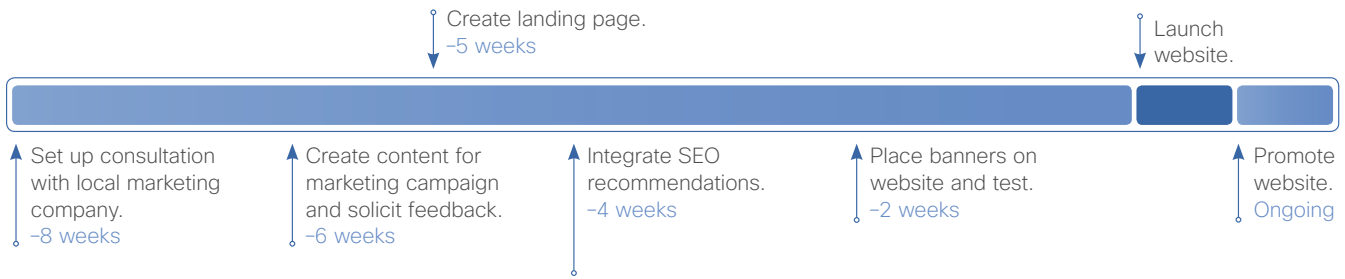· Create succinct and relevant content. Web copy should be short and easy to skim.

During Execution:

· Integrate web improvements and SEO recommendations from your web consultant.

· Launch your site and/or landing page content in conjunction with the launch of the other elements of your marketing plan.

Post Execution:

· Review website statistics and analytics. Make changes and improvements based on these results.

Planning Timeline

Create landing page.
–5 weeks

Launch website.

Set up consultation with local marketing company.
–8 weeks

Create content for marketing campaign and solicit feedback.
–6 weeks

Integrate SEO recommendations.
–4 weeks

Place banners on website and test.
–2 weeks

Promote website.
Ongoing

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Overview: Content syndication and watering holes are methods of hosting related content on third-party sites for people to use when gathering information on various topics and technologies.

Objective of Content Syndication and Watering Holes

Primary: Gain new contacts. Contacts must register to read specific content. You pay for that registration/contact.

Secondary: Build awareness for your business.

Sample Content: White papers, articles, videos, and banners.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Find out how many online partners your syndication vendor works with. The more they have, the more visibility you'll have for your content and business.

· Negotiate your cost per lead (CPL) with the vendor. Depending on your budget and how much the vendor has to filter (for example, U.S. vs. global or regional) to get your contacts, the CPL will be different. The more filtering, the more expensive the lead will be.

· Generally, you should be able to syndicate various types of content, such as videos, articles, and white papers, and post web banners. Of course, the more you post, the more it will cost you.

· There will be a set of registration questions that will be standard, with an option for a few additional customizable questions. You should consider producing a newsletter and asking registrants to opt in to receive it. This enables you to stay in touch with your contacts.

· The headlines that seem to attract the most readers include phrases, such as "Top 5," "Top 10," and "Five Ways to…."

These headlines engage users and encourage them to download and read your content. The content related to these headlines is typically shorter and more direct.

· Get reports from the vendor on the top downloads, information on the contacts that downloaded your content, and any other analysis that they can provide.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· There are many content syndication and watering hole vendors to choose from. Select one that will provide you with contacts in your area at a reasonable cost.

· Know which content you would like to syndicate. Use content that is direct and provides business advice or guidance for a user. For example, select an article that talks about why security is critical for a business or how a business can be more operationally efficient. These speak to readers about how they can improve their own business rather than simply promoting your business and why they should buy from you. At the end of the article, provide contact information. Make it subtle and not a hard sell.

· Work with the vendor to clearly outline your objectives and target audience.

· Make sure you get agreement on how frequently you will receive reports containing the contact data. Most vendors can be very flexible with respect to how often they send you the contact reports.

· Once you select a vendor, it typically doesn't take long for them to get your program up and running. You'll need to work with them to come up with a timeline.

- Some recommended vendors that you might consider are:
  - TechTarget
  - IT Business Edge
  - Sales Spider
  - Madison Logic
  - Focus

During the Execution:

- Post relevant content.
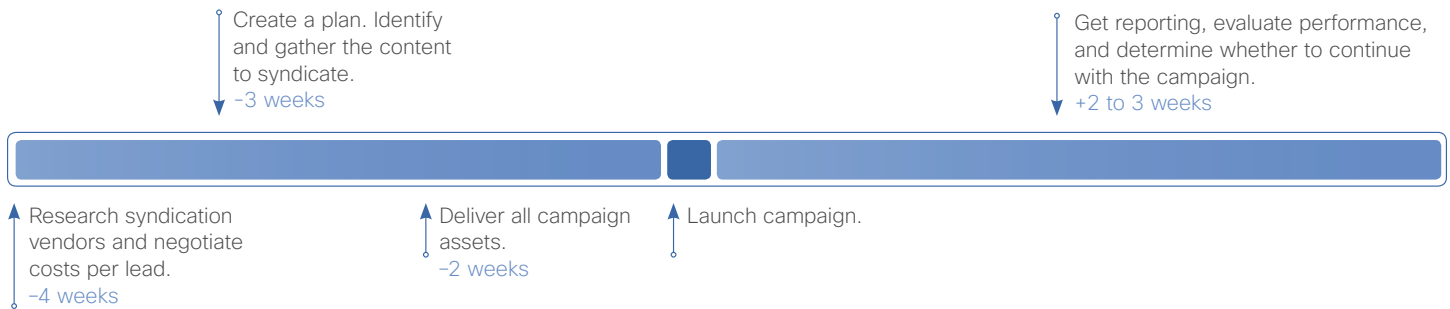- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign.

After the Execution:

- Work with your vendor to pull post-campaign reporting.
- Evaluate and determine whether your return on investment was substantial enough to continue the campaign efforts.

Marketing Asset Finder

Cisco Partner Marketing Central (log-in required) provides you with the ability to create customizable marketing assets, including postcards, emails and more.

Planning Timeline

Create a plan. Identify and gather the content to syndicate.
−3 weeks

Get reporting, evaluate performance, and determine whether to continue with the campaign.
+2 to 3 weeks

Research syndication vendors and negotiate costs per lead.
−4 weeks

Deliver all campaign assets.
−2 weeks

Launch campaign.

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Overview: Social media networking involves the expansion of one's business and/or social contacts through connections with individuals on interconnected online communities (such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube).

Objective of Social Media Networking

Primary: Increase awareness, drive traffic to your website, create buzz, promote discussion, acquire contacts, and generate leads.

Secondary: Stay in contact with existing customers and get feedback on products or services.

TIP: Make sure your content is exciting and interesting and not too sales-oriented.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Be truthful, professional, respectful, and relevant.

· Be aware that competition may be present.

· Be transparent. Tell your audience that you are an owner or employee of XYZ company. You will gain credibility as a result.

· You are representing your business to the world. Do so carefully and do not divulge anything confidential.

· Do not go straight to a sales pitch. Be genuinely helpful and build relationships.

· Do not speak on controversial, inappropriate, or personal matters.

· Be committed and consistent. Resource investment is critical to this marketing tactic.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· Find and monitor conversations and topics relevant to your business on various social media networks. Use these as an opportunity to engage new and existing customers and business partners.

· Create your own accounts on social media networking platforms (such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube).

· Plan subjects and topics as conversation starters to bring in followers. Develop an outline and prepare a one-paragraph description that can be used in marketing.

· Develop marketing assets and tools that you can promote: registration or landing pages, web pages, offers or promotions, blog posts, and videos (if applicable).

· Set metrics: number of new contacts, discussions, comments, tweets/re-tweets, leads, and followers.
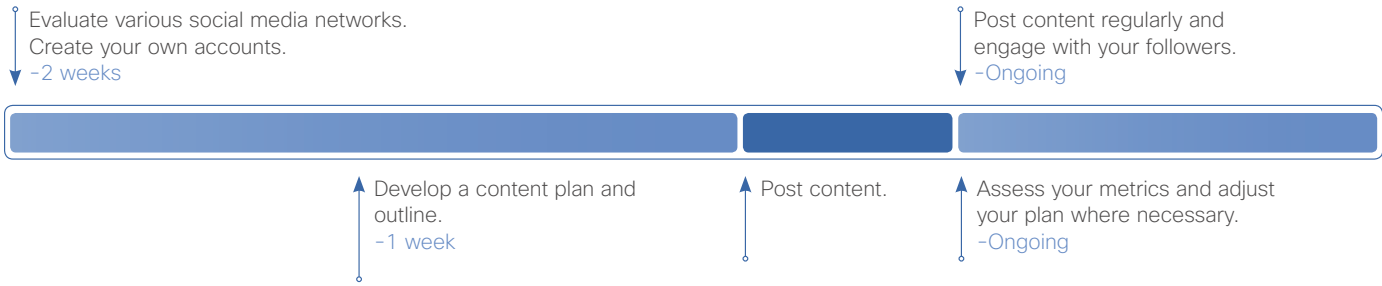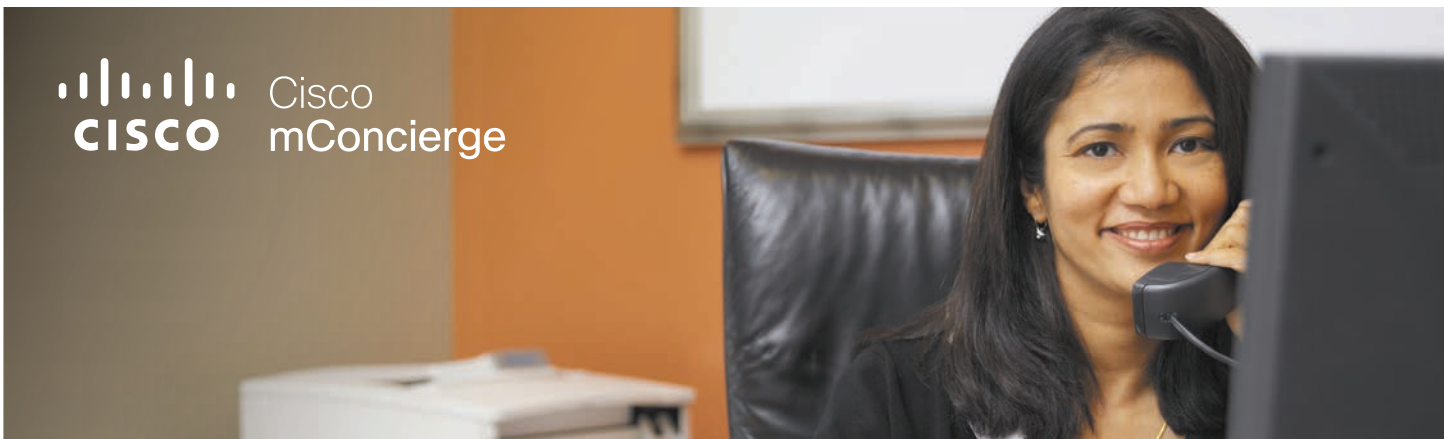
During Execution:

· Post content regularly (several times per week, if not daily).

· Engage with your audience. Respond promptly to comments made by followers/fans.

Post Execution:

· Follow up. Do what you promise.

· Keep it fresh. Refresh your objectives, plan, assets, and metrics at least every six months.

Planning Timeline

Evaluate various social media networks.
Create your own accounts.
–2 weeks

Post content regularly and
engage with your followers.
–Ongoing

Develop a content plan and
outline.
–1 week

Post content.

Assess your metrics and adjust
your plan where necessary.
–Ongoing

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Overview: Call prospecting involves making cold or warm calls to new or existing customers for the purpose of generating new sales opportunities.

Objectives of Telephone Prospecting

Primary: Engage with an existing or potential customer, qualify a new lead, inspire interest in your product or solution, and set up an appointment for further discussion.

Secondary: Encourage action and connection. Learn more about your target contact so that you can better plan your next step.

TIP: Those who are most effective at telephone prospecting integrate it into their daily or weekly routines. Making it a routine activity helps to relieve the fear and stress that such a tough job can create.

Sample Calls to Action: Set an appointment, schedule a demo or business assessment, or attend a seminar.

Best Practice Guidelines

· One of the keys to telephone prospecting success is to have a laser focus on one objective for each call—typically that is simply to set an appointment.

· A presentation to set an appointment should take only 30-45 seconds. This presentation must involve a "who" (who you are), a "what" (what you are offering), a "why" (why they should buy from you or accept a meeting), and the close (the moment of truth where you ask for the appointment).

· Develop a short sentence or two that describes the value of your solution and what makes you different so that you can quickly get to the point when on a call.

· Target the decision-maker. He or she is the one person who can say yes to what you are offering. Don't expect to both qualify a lead and make a sale on the same call. Consider making two separate calls.

· Try to determine the name of your contact before calling, rather than generically asking for the IT manager, for example.

· Speak like an executive; talk in statements, not questions, in a frank, direct manner. Talk slowly. This is the best way to get through any gate-keepers and to show that you are confident in what you are selling to the decision-maker.

· Expect that you will meet with some resistance at times, but don't get discouraged from making the next call. Don't give up after the first objection. A real objection must involve a solid reason.

· Be polite to everyone, but don't be timid. It is Important to show your confidence and strength—this might be the only indicator that a decision-maker uses to determine whether you mean business and can be trusted.

· Take notes and collect supporting information.

· Pay careful attention to the names of decision makers. If the gatekeeper does not let you through, call back in a week and ask directly for that person.

· A closing statement (where you ask for the sale or for the meeting) must be specific. Pick a specific date and time for a meeting—don't be wish-washy, and don't give a range. Remember: you can always re-set an appointment once it has been made.

· Set appointments no more than 3 days out. Longer than this and they are much less likely to occur.

· For those who are resistant to a face-to-face meeting, invite him or her to an upcoming seminar or event, or similar activity that enables you to stay connected with them.

Options

Option 1: Call Your Installed Base

Focus call efforts on your installed base as a way to re-connect with clients, enrich your customer database, and uncover opportunities. This is especially important when introducing a new product or service.

Option 2: Ask for Referrals

Ask existing clients for direct referrals to help you develop new customer opportunities. Most customers are willing to refer you to other businesses they know, but they won't do it unless you ask. Be specific as to the type of client you are looking for, and ask for an introduction.

Option 3: Make Cold Calls

Cold calling can be highly effective, but it needs to be done often in order to see results. If you have a sales team, a certain amount of cold calling should be integrated into daily or weekly to-do lists. Sources of lists can be purchased or acquired through your local library (for free), Dunn & Bradstreet, or Reference USA.

Consider organizing a separate telephone prospecting team (many outside sales people rarely perform this activity). This team needs to be trained, managed, and paid in a strategic way for maximum results. Tip: don't have anyone prospecting on a full-time basis. Less than 4 hours a day should be the maximum.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· Determine the primary technology you plan to prospect for and the goal of your call.

· Develop a value proposition statement or elevator pitch that is 15-45 seconds long.

· Co-brand a product overview sheet and save it as a PDF.

· Develop a follow-up package consisting of a pre-formatted follow-up email and an attached co-branded product overview sheet to send to interested prospects that are not yet ready to accept an appointment. Save this as an Outlook .oft file.

· Develop a high-level call script and practice your introduction, as well as your reply to common objections.

During the Call:

· Start with a simple introduction.

· Ask questions that support your value proposition.

· Take notes.

· Move toward your call to action.

After the Call:

· You may wish to confirm any set meetings. But be careful: many inexperienced salespeople will unintentionally un-set appointments when they call to confirm them. Confirm quick and get off the phone.

· Follow up with an email discussing appropriate next steps based on the call.

· Wrap up your notes and write a quick summary of the call.

Marketing Asset Finder

Cisco Partner Marketing Central (log-in required) provides you with the ability to create or download customizable marketing assets, including postcards, emails, and more.
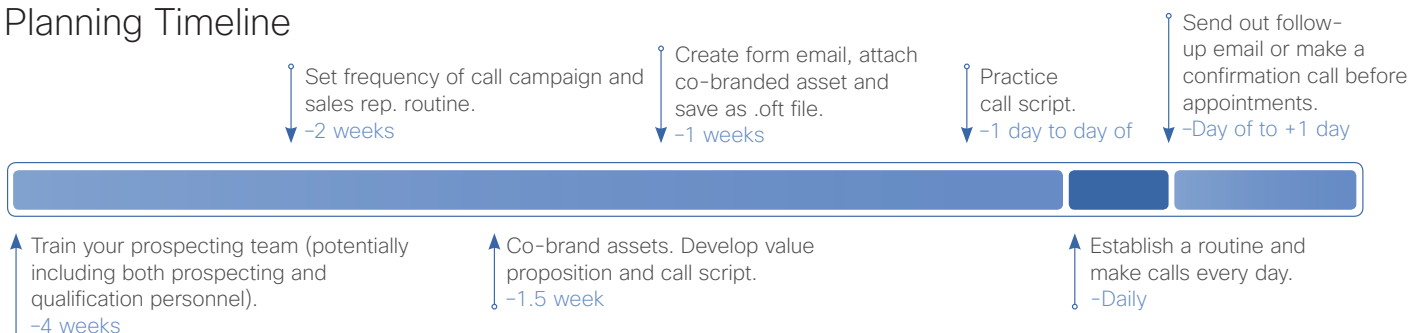
Cisco® has created call guides and email templates that can be downloaded or customized for various campaigns.

Metrics Collection

Telephone prospecting should be evaluated in the following way:

· Number of calls made

· Number of actual conversations with decision-makers. This is the single most important metric because it gauges your ability to get through to DM's through the telephone channel.

· Appointments set (or other completed calls to action)

· Appointments set that are held (shoot for 85%)

· Appointment to sales conversion ratio

Telephone prospecting can be seen as a numbers game (i.e., how many calls you make determines how many appointments you will set), but it is important to remember that it should be more of a quality game. This means that you should have done the appropriate marketing, list scrubbing, and qualification ahead of time to allow you to do telephone prospecting effectively. Ideally, they should all be warm leads.

Planning Timeline

Set frequency of call campaign and sales rep. routine.
−2 weeks

Create form email, attach co-branded asset and save as .oft file.
−1 weeks

Practice call script.
−1 day to day of

Send out follow-up email or make a confirmation call before appointments.
−Day of to +1 day

Train your prospecting team (potentially including both prospecting and qualification personnel).
−4 weeks

Co-brand assets. Develop value proposition and call script.
−1.5 week

Establish a routine and make calls every day.
−Daily

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Overview: A customer walk-by involves visiting a business for the purpose of raising awareness of your company and generating new sales opportunities.

Objectives of Customer Walk-By

Primary: Create awareness for your business, promotions, and/or offerings.

Secondary: Generate demand by setting up an appointment for further discussion or by scheduling a demo with your contact.

TIP: Never miss the opportunity to do business with companies that are within walking distance of your office and to stay in contact with your existing customers.

Sample Calls to Action: Book an appointment, schedule a demo or network assessment, or attend a seminar.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Don't forget your personal presentation. Hold yourself straight and smile.

· In most places, "No Solicitation" signs prohibit you from trying to sell something on the spot. However, leaving behind a flyer and asking to follow up at a later time is often okay. Understand local and national laws in your area.

· Develop a few sentences that describe your value proposition, to help you deliver a quick elevator pitch.

· Use handouts as talking points.

· Don't linger, be brief, and ask for an appointment and/or a good time to call back.

· If applicable, ask the receptionist for advice; doing so can provide you with valuable information in terms of locating the appropriate decision makers.

· Expect that you will meet with some resistance, but don't get discouraged. Perseverance is key.

· Take notes and collect supporting information.

· Pay careful attention to the names of decision makers. If the gatekeeper does not let you through, call back in a week and ask directly for those individuals.

· Questions show interest. If your contact asks about your business or offerings, that's your cue to follow up with an appointment.

Options

Option 1: Near Customer Sites

Focus walk-by efforts on businesses that are near your existing customers. When technical or sales teams go onsite with an existing customer, take 30 minutes to visit 10 businesses in the general area. Mention that you provide services to Xyz Co. next door.

Option 2: Near Your Business

Visit businesses near your office. People generally like to work with neighboring businesses. Make sure they know who you are and what you can do for them. Walk by once a quarter, making them aware of promotions, services, and seminars.

Option 3: In Business Parks

Business parks provide a high concentration of businesses in one area, making it easy to spend 30 minutes or an hour canvassing an area. If asked to leave a business park, be respectful and do so.

How to Execute

Preparation:

- Develop your value proposition, elevator pitch, and/or sales script. Practice it thoroughly before your walk-by.

- Rehearse responses to common objections.

- Develop a high-level flyer that covers what your business does, and what you can do for prospective customers.

During the Walk-By:

- Start with a simple introduction.

- Ask probing questions that support your value proposition.

- Take notes.

- Move toward your call to action (an appointment, a time to call back, or an event).

- Leave a flyer with more information, a URL for learning more, and contact details.

After the Walk-By:

- After your visit, take wrap-up notes and write a quick summary of your experience.

- Follow up at the end of day with an email and appropriate next steps based on the visit.

Marketing Asset Finder

Cisco Partner Marketing Central (log-in required) provides you with the ability to create or download customizable marketing assets, including postcards, emails, and more.

Cisco® has created postcards, email templates, banner ads, and landing page content that can be downloaded for various campaigns.

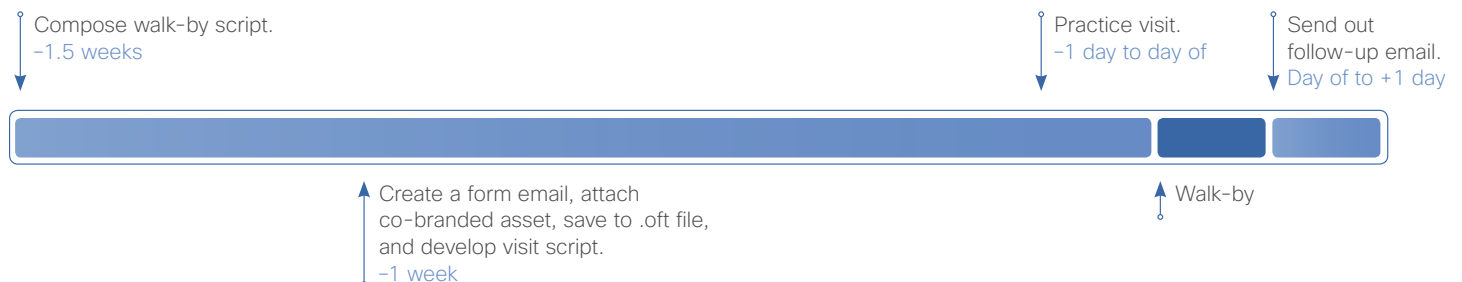Complementary Tactical Marketing Guides: Landing Page and Telephone Prospecting.

Metrics Collection

Evaluate your customer walk-bys in the following way:

- Number of visits

- Number of conversations

- Appointments set (or other calls to action)

- Calculate conversation to appointment ratio: appointments/conversations

Customer walk-bys are a numbers game, and after a while sales reps should know how many visits they need to make in order to talk to someone, and how many people they need to talk to before they get an appointment. Shoot for a 5% to 10% conversion ratio between those talked to and appointments set. Also keep in mind that this tactic helps raise awareness and bring traffic to your landing page.

Planning Timeline

Compose walk-by script.
−1.5 weeks

Practice visit.
−1 day to day of

Send out follow-up email.
Day of to +1 day

Create a form email, attach co-branded asset, save to .oft file, and develop visit script.
−1 week

Walk-by

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Overview: A seminar or webinar is an event at which a formal presentation by one or more experts is delivered to an audience of 10 or more attendees. The purpose of the event is to educate potential customers regarding a particular solution your company offers.

Objective of Holding a Seminar

Primary: Demonstrate the value in a solution and to motivate customers to meet with you one-on-one.

Secondary: Complement prospecting activities by offering potential customers a non-threatening venue for learning about your offerings.

TIP: Make sure the content of your seminar is educational and not sales-heavy.

Sample Calls to Action: Sign up for a free consultation, book an appointment, or attend an in-person demo.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Content should be educational. Attendees are coming to learn, not for a heavy sales pitch.

· Avoid responding to questions that relate to specific user scenarios, and instead use them as a way to suggest a one-on-one meeting.

· Expect that only half of those who say they will attend the seminar will actually show up.

· Call attendees a day in advance to cut down on no-shows.

· Food does not have to be fancy, but good food puts people in a good mood.

· Know the times of your metro rush hour and schedule accordingly, considering time and location.

· Practice the presentation.

· Everyone in your company should be playing a role, helping to prepare, present, greet, and/or publicize.

· Make sure everyone knows their role.

Options

Option 1: Webinar

Webinars are ideal if you are worried about attendance, cost, and time needed to coordinate a live event. However they are less personal, lack one-on-one conversations, and attendees are more likely to multi-task or skip the webinar. Your key presentation should be about 30 minutes, with time for questions post presentation. Follow up is critically important.

Option 2: Traditional Seminar

Traditional seminars are set in a large room with several rows of seats facing a presenter. The format consists of a 30-45 minute presentation or demo followed by questions. A meal or snack is typically provided, depending on time of day. Leverage your own conference room, or a Cisco office, to keep seminar costs down.

Option 3: Networking Seminar

Make your seminar a networking opportunity. Part of the draw will be the opportunity to socialize with businesses that face a common challenge. Start with an informal 10-15 minute introduction followed by 90 minutes of socializing. The venue should be lively, with appetizers and beverages provided. Demo stations should be set up around the room, giving attendees the opportunity to see, touch, and talk about your solutions. Follow ups are easier since you will likely have had a face-to-face conversation with attendees.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· Allow adequate time to prepare, plan, and publicize the seminar.

· Pick a subject, develop an outline, and prepare a one-paragraph description that can be used in the presentation.

· Develop marketing materials: registration page, web page, email invites, email reminders, and music on hold.

· Drive attendance by integrating promotion into regular prospecting activities, including newsletters, postcards to existing customers, and customer visits or service calls.

· Follow up with the attendee list: formal invitation (after contact), reminder email, and reminder call.

· Book a venue, confirm the speaker, and order food.

· Co-brand marketing collateral, as needed.

During the Event:

· Arrive early, set up, and be ready to greet people.

· Dedicate a good part of the day to the event.

· Drive toward your call to action.

After the Event:

· Follow up with those who did not attend (the day after) and those who did (two to three days after).

· Send a thank-you letter with a call to action.

Marketing Asset Finder

Visit Cisco Partner Marketing Central for a full set of assets to help you host and drive attendance to a seminar, including post cards and email templates, an event registration tool, and presentations.
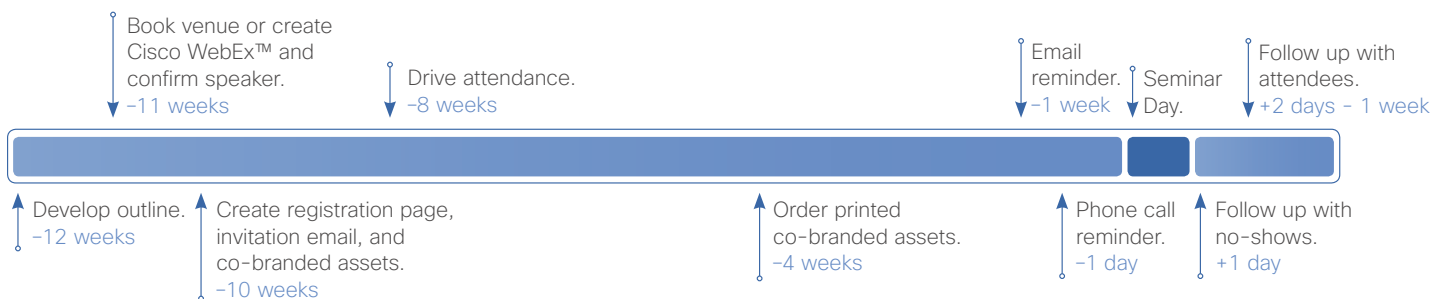
Complementary Tactical Marketing Guides: Mailer, Telephone Prospecting, Customer Walk-By, Networking, and Landing Page.

Metrics Collection

Seminars should be evaluated in the following way:

· Number of registered attendees

· Number of attendees

· Attendee ratio: attendees/registered (target 50%+)

· Number of appointments set

· Appointment ratio: appointments/attendees (target 20%+)

Planning Timeline

Book venue or create Cisco WebEx™ and confirm speaker.
−11 weeks

Drive attendance.
−8 weeks

Email reminder.
−1 week

Seminar Day.

Follow up with attendees.
+2 days - 1 week

Develop outline.
−12 weeks

Create registration page, invitation email, and co-branded assets.
−10 weeks

Order printed co-branded assets.
−4 weeks

Phone call reminder.
−1 day

Follow up with no-shows.
+1 day

Cisco
mConcierge

Overview: Trade shows enable you to personally showcase and demonstrate your products and services to prospects, as well as existing customers.

Objectives of Trade Shows

Primary: Demonstrate value in your company's offerings and encourage further action, (e.g., set an appointment).

Secondary: Complement prospecting activities by offering potential customers a non-threatening venue to learn about your products and solutions.

Sample Calls to Action: Attend a demonstration, or book an appointment

Best Practice Guidelines

· Select trade shows in regions where you have an abundance of customers and prospects.

· Determine how to participate in the show you've identified. Exhibitors typically reserve space for a booth, which requires a lower level of investment and time commitment. Sponsors usually occupy a booth and employ other promotional tactics, with a higher level of investment and more visibility throughout the event.

· Choose a booth that is in a high-traffic area (near a bar, restroom, exit, or lounge area).

· Order services and ship all materials early. Most shows offer early bird discounts on rentals and services, but penalize for last minute shipments.

· Set up the booth so that it comfortably allows foot traffic in and out of your exhibit.

· Everyone in your company should help to prepare, present, greet, and/or promote attendance to your event.

· Use a reminder phone call or email in advance of the event to increase attendance.

· Arrive one day early to allow proper set up time.

· If your demonstration requires an Internet connection, order it in advance. Do not depend on free Wi-Fi, or you may be competing with many others for the connection.

· Practice your demonstration. Make sure all employees know their roles.

· Do not overstaff your booth. You need room to talk to your customers.

· Ensure that your demonstration content is relevant to the audience. Do not be overly technical or use a hard-sell approach with your audience.

· Avoid bringing up competitors, as potential customers may not consider them until mentioned.

· Use giveaways to obtain a prospect's contact information, generate leads, and drive booth traffic; a glass fishbowl to collect business cards is a simple way to collect contact information.

How to Execute

Preparation:

· Allow adequate time for event research, preparation and promotion.

· Determine how to become an exhibitor at your desired event and make contact.

· Sign necessary paperwork, pay for the event, and make sure you are insured (most insurance companies will add insurance for the event at no cost if you have an existing policy).

· Order electricity and Internet service for your booth.

· Choose the appropriate products for your audience, and develop event messaging.

· Create marketing materials: web page content, email invites, email reminders, event signage, and booth displays.

· Co-brand marketing collateral and print handouts.

· Drive attendance to your event by integrating promotion into your regular prospecting activities: newsletters,

postcards to existing customers, and on customer visits or service calls.

· Follow up with the attendee list: send a formal invitation (after contact) and a reminder email, or make a call.

During execution:

· Arrive early, set up, and be ready to greet people.

· Dedicate the entire day to the event.

· Drive toward your call to action.

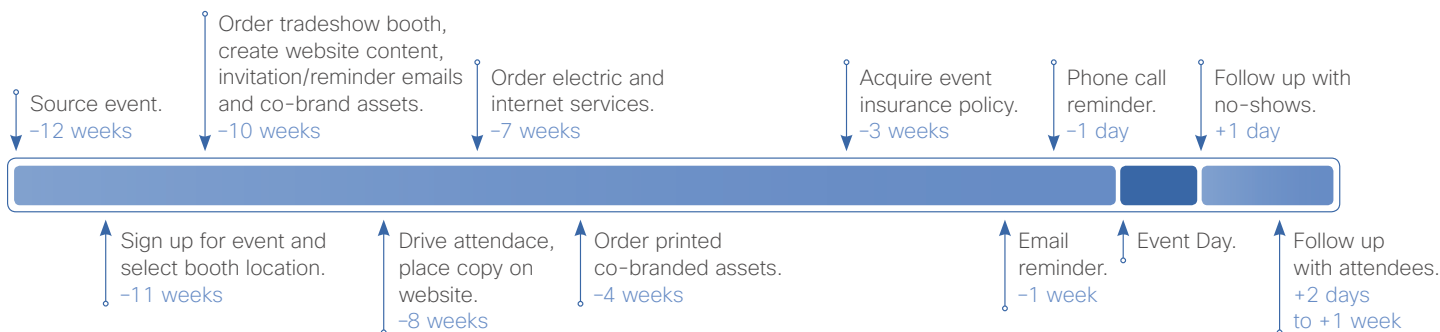· Raffle a promotional item at the end of the day.

After the event:

· Follow up with those who did not attend (the day after) and those who did (two days to a week after).

· Send a thank-you letter or email with a call to action.

Options

	Option 1	$	Option 2	$	Option 3	$
Venue	Chamber of commerce	0 – 200	Local tradeshows	200 – 500	National tradeshows	500 – 2000
Promotion	Free consultation	0	Giveaway raffle for attendees	150 – 300	Giveaway raffle for attendees	240 – 1000
Event materials	Rent booth	600	Rent booth	1-2000	Rent booth	4000
Additional costs	Electricity/Wi-Fi	0 – 50	Electricity/Wi-Fi	50 – 1500	Electricity/Wi-Fi	50 – 1500

Planning Timeline

Source event.
−12 weeks

Order tradeshow booth, create website content, invitation/reminder emails and co-brand assets.
−10 weeks

Order electric and internet services.
−7 weeks

Acquire event insurance policy.
−3 weeks

Phone call reminder.
−1 day

Follow up with no-shows.
+1 day

Sign up for event and select booth location.
−11 weeks

Drive attendace, place copy on website.
−8 weeks

Order printed co-branded assets.
−4 weeks

Email reminder.
−1 week

Event Day.

Follow up with attendees.
+2 days to +1 week

Cisco mConcierge

Overview: Networking involves the use of trade and social associations to gain contacts, referrals, and opportunities.

Objectives of Networking

Primary: Expand your contact base and brand by becoming a trusted advisor for technology solutions.

Secondary: Uncover new opportunities.

TIP: Don't expect to instantly identify an opportunity. As with any community, it takes time to build trust, but when you do the reward can be considerable.

Best Practice Guidelines

· Before going to a networking event, practice a 30-second elevator pitch describing who you are and the solutions your business provides. Make it simple.

· Keep business cards within reach.

· Print out a stack of postcard-sized flyers that include a landing page URL, contact information, and key value propositions for handing out to prospects.

· Make sure you fully understand what others do, so you can determine how to help them grow their business.

· Find networking groups that are relevant to your business, such as the local chamber of commerce, and trade associations.

· Frequency of attendance is key to building trust, becoming established in the community, and understanding group dynamics.

· Focus on making between two and five new contacts at each networking meeting. To build trust, focus on the quality of the connection.

· Always ask a contact's name and probe into what they do. Most people like to talk about themselves.

· Develop a great handshake, approach people with a natural, genuine smile, and make good eye contact.

· When breaking into a conversation, look for a group with an odd number. Target the person who is the least engaged in the conversation and introduce yourself.

· Don't be discouraged if you're nervous when networking. Others will be too. Going to an event with a friend or colleague can help.

· Follow up with your new contacts the next day, and let them know how much you appreciated meeting them.

· Always make time to network. It's important to the long-term success of your business.

How to Execute

Before the Event:

· Pick an organization that you would like to be part of.

· Place the next six networking events on your calendar.

· Ensure that you have business cards.

· Co-brand a postcard as a flyer to hand out.

· Practice your 30-second elevator pitch.

During the Event:

· Target three to five new contacts.

After the event:

· Follow up each meeting with a personal email.

Planning Timeline

Print business cards and flyers.
−2 weeks

Attend event.

Pick an organization and
place events on calendar.
−4 weeks

Practice elevator pitch.
−1 week

Follow up with an email
to new contacts.
+1 day