Digital Marketing Plan

AMERICA'S SBDC
VIRGINIA
LYNCHBURG REGION

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary

This document provides information on the mission of SBDC - Lynchburg Region, and the appropriate ad networks to successfully market their services. Each platform is described with the benefits it has and the purpose it will serve for SBDC - Lynchburg Region. The Lynchburg Region includes Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford & Campbell Counties, and the City of Lynchburg. It will conclude with a marketing strategy that follows one year, including a breakdown of the budget and expected analytical results.
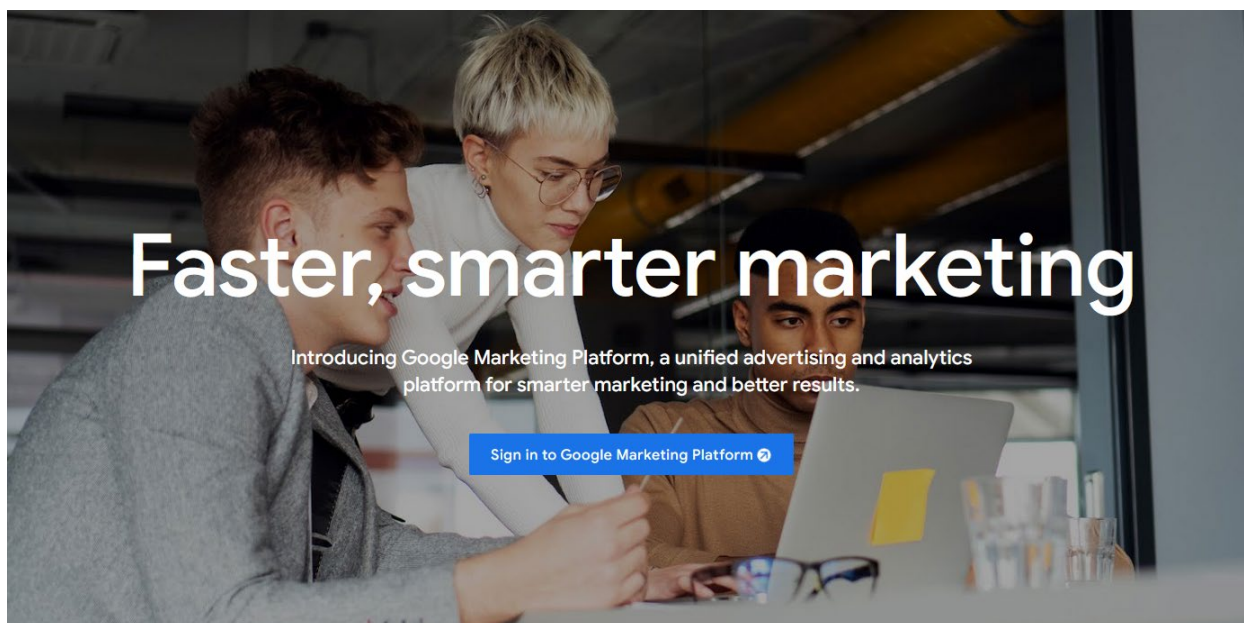
Introduction

Company History, Purpose, Mission, and Vision

The Small Business Development Center – Lynchburg Region's mission is to promote small business growth, entrepreneurship, and the strengthening economy by providing advising and training to our region's small businesses (America's SBDC Virginia Lynchburg Region, n.d.).

The SBDC - Lynchburg Region is a free, confidential advising and training service. It is open to any small business in the region – no membership is required. All programs of the Virginia SBDC are open to the public on a non-discriminatory basis (America's SBDC Virginia Lynchburg Region, n.d.).
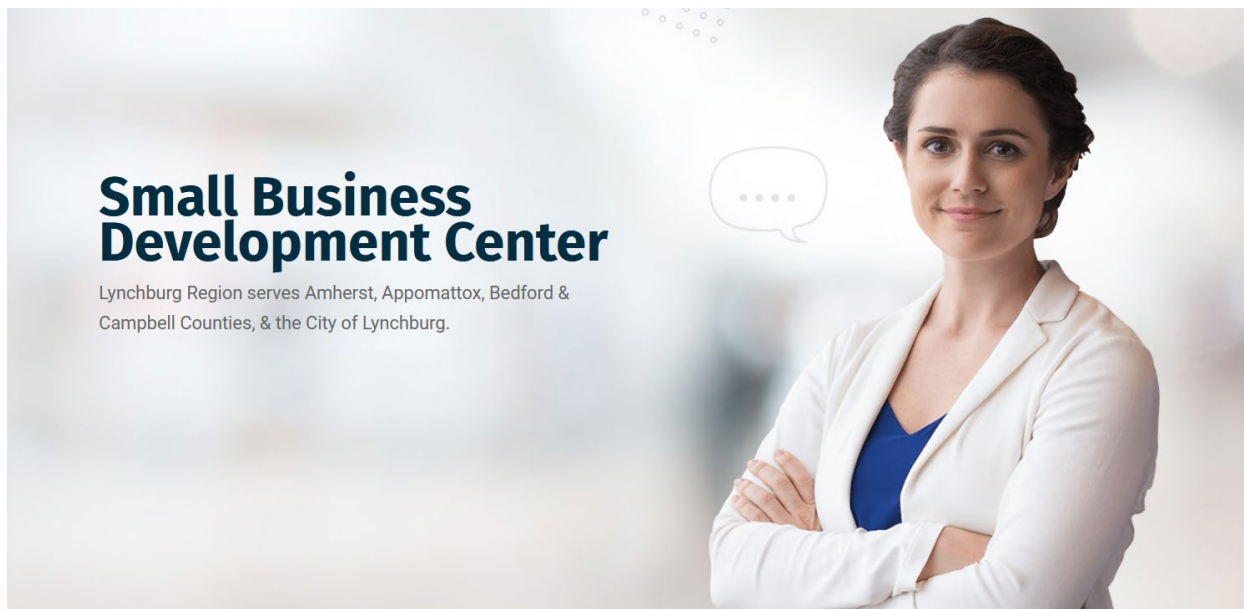
Brief Description of Company's Products/Services

The SBDC - Lynchburg Region Program is designed to deliver up-to-date advising, training, and technical assistance in all aspects of small business management (America's SBDC Virginia Lynchburg Region, n.d.). Topics or Products/Services include:

- Financial Review
- Marketing
- Organizational Management
- Startup Assistance
- Customer Development
- Government Contracting
- Access to Capital and Investment

Training ranges from Start Smart programs which answer the most basic questions for those new to the business to specialized training in industries like healthcare and early childhood education.

Marketing Goals/Objectives

By having SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) goals, SBDC - Lynchburg Region will be able to build a successful digital marketing strategy. The marketing goals/objectives are:

- Improve lead quality
- Increase website traffic
- Gain more followers on social media
- Increase engagement on social media
- Improve awareness and demand for new services
- Increase positive reviews of services
- Establish business as an authority with increased brand awareness

Sales/Revenue Targets

To measure the success of the marketing goals, sales/revenue targets are set. The "sales" are counted as registrations and attendees for the programs. The targets will be the number of expected registrations for the events. By following the buyers' journey and nurturing leads through the processes, increase in attendees is expected.

Expected ROI on Marketing Spend

For email marketing in the consultation industry the average open rate is 19.54% and CTR is 2.26% (Brenner, 2020).

Email Type	Open Rate	CTR Click-through-rate	Conversion Rate
Newsletter	23.4%	17.8%	1%
Member Follow-Up	39.2%	22.4%	2.7%
Registration Follow-Up	46.1%	16.7%	5%

(Brenner, 2020)

The expected ROI on the marketing spent for social media is calculated by the previous "Ticket Sales" ad that was created with Meta Business Suite. Results are shown to the right.

Performance

Link Clicks — 5 | Reach — 797

Cost per Link click — $2.00

Activity on Facebook   Activity on your website

Post engagement — 12
Link clicks — 5
Post reactions — 4
Post shares — 3

Ad Type	Cost	Reach	Link Clicks	Registration (customer)	Cost-per-click	Cost-per-customer
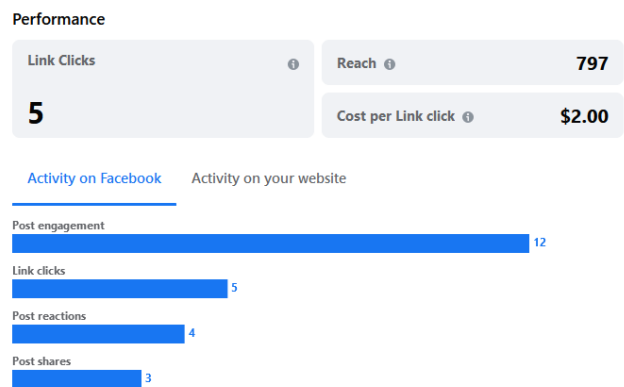
					ck	
Social Media AD	$100	8000	50	8	$2	$12.5

Target Audience

Demographics

SBDC - Lynchburg Region aims to reach people who are looking to expand their knowledge in the business world. Within those aspects, the target age ranges from 25 to 65+ with a minimum high school 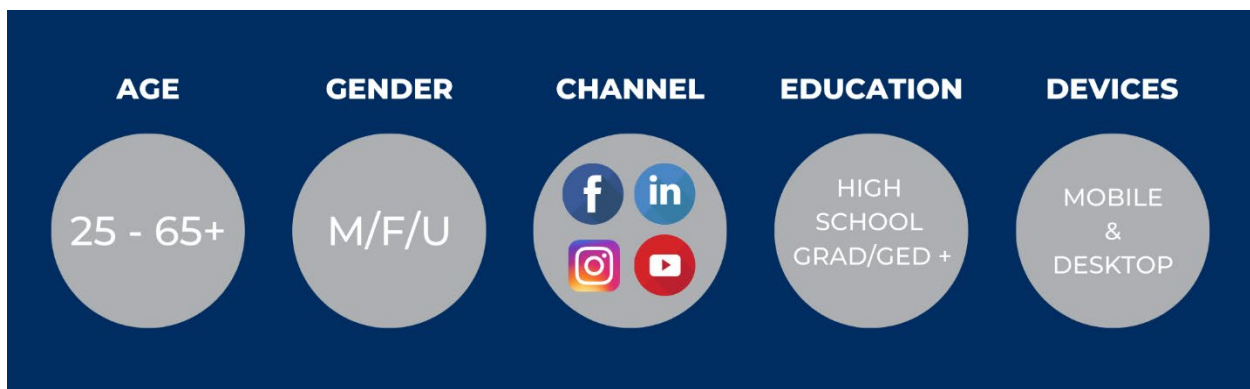education. Leads that fall within the range of these demographics will also display an interest in business development.

AGE	GENDER	CHANNEL	EDUCATION	DEVICES
25 - 65+	M/F/U	f in / YouTube	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD/GED +	MOBILE & DESKTOP

Location

The location of the target audience covers:

- Amherst County
- Appomattox County
- Bedford County
- Campbell County
- The City of Lynchburg
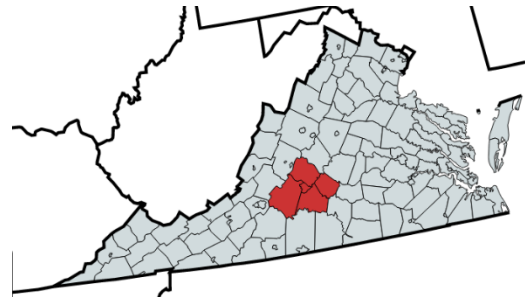
Digital Behaviors

How leads interact with brands online via social media, website visits, shopping, browsing, and ad engagement is digital behavior (Goodman, 2022). This behavior can be tracked through cookies and other analytics reports. Some digital behaviors that the target audience will use include searching some of these keywords or words similar.

- Business
- Business Development
- Marketing
- Government Contracting

- Small Business
- Business Consultation
- Starting a Business
- Entrepreneurship
- Business Education

- Financial Review
- Capital and Investments
- Start-up Business
- Organizational Management
- Customer Development

Aside from search terms, the behavior that is tracked on the SBDC - Lynchburg Region's website can help indicate what people are interested in.

Ad Network Overview

Search Networks

Google Ads –

Google Ads is a search network that helps a company be seen where its customers are searching across Google Search, YouTube, and the web (Google, n.d.). It is an online advertising solution for businesses to promote their products and service (Google, n.d.). The user-friendly search network makes creating ads in 5 easy steps.

1. Set Goal – Achieve results by
   - Getting more calls to your business
   - Increasing visits to your store
   - Driving people to your website
2. Message – Customize ad copy based on advertising goals and marketing objectives. Google Ads helps determine how to best craft your ad with a variety of ad formats.
3. Keywords – Select a few relevant keyword themes that can be updated over time. Your ad will show when someone searches phrases related to your business.
4. Location – Google Ads lets you choose where your ad will appear including a specific radius of your business to cover entire regions and countries. This will help find the right audience.
5. Budget – Google Ads recommends budgets based on similar businesses. Decide the budget and never pay over the monthly cap.

In addition to Google Ads, Google Analytics is free software that provides insight into the viewers visiting your website and their engagement (Brenner, 2021). This can be paired with another free tool called Google Search Console to identify problems on the website and optimize it for traffic (Brenner, 2021). With the size of the marketing department, concentrating on one search network is better than multiple currently.

Social Media Networks

LinkedIn

The total number of active users worldwide on LinkedIn is 774 million (Baker, 2020). The main audience consists of baby boomers, generation X, and millennials (Baker, 2020). This is an ideal network for SBDC because of the relationships with B2B, business development, and social selling (Baker, 2020). Because SBDC targets small businesses this is a great avenue to reach them, as well as entrepreneurs.

Facebook

As the largest social media platform with over 1.9 billion active users daily worldwide, Facebook has an even spread of generation x and millennial audiences (Baker, 2020). It also offers advanced advertising features through Meta Business Suite, including organic opportunities (Baker, 2020). The industry impact is B2C and is best for brand awareness and advertising (Baker, 2020). SBDC currently has an established presence on Facebook. This platform has the potential for the company to further its reach and increase brand awareness within the Lynchburg region.

Instagram

Like Facebook, SBDC currently has a presence on Instagram. Instagram has 1 billion active users monthly (Baker, 2020). The primary audience is millennials, and the industry impact is B2C (Baker, 2020). This platform is known for promoting brands through high-quality image and video advertising (Baker, 2020). Instagram can help raise the brand awareness of SBDC while connecting with individuals on a personal level.

Display Networks

Google Display Networks

To remain consistent with platforms, Google Display Network is the display network chosen for SBDC - Lynchburg Region. It also helps reach people as they browse websites, apps, and Google-owned properties like YouTube and Gmail (Google, n.d.). This network helps find the right audience with its strategic targeting options and shows your message to potential customers at the right time and place (Google, n.d.). The benefits of this network are:

- Reach people in multiple places
- Build campaigns around your goals
- Designed for ease of use
- Optimized targeting
- Smart bidding

Google Display Network finds new customers and engages with existing ones using the audience segment and drives more conversions using automated targeting. This is a great platform for SBDC to use.

Video Networks

YouTube

YouTube's platform is an ideal location to place educational videos and ads to promote business development and growth. Over 70% of viewers are made more aware of new brands (YouTube, n.d.). Viewers are 4x more likely to use YouTube compared to other platforms for information about the brand, product, or services (YouTube, n.d.). With these stats, this would be a great place to begin posting videos.

Audio Networks

Spotify

Spotify is a digital music, video, and podcast service that gives access to millions of content from creators all over the world (Spotify, n.d.). This network is available on phones, tablets, computers, speakers, TVs, and cars (Spotify, n.d.). Podcasts are a way to deliver audible information and tips for businesses to grow and develop. Keeping fresh updates allows retention of the audience and keeps the brand relevant.

Content Marketing Networks

Mailchimp

Email marketing offers a higher ROI on average than any other marketing activity (Brenner, 2021). When customers subscribe to a mailing list it directly connects you to their inbox (Brenner, 2021). Mailchimp is a platforms that allows you to capture emails, manage lists, send out eblasts automatically or scheduled and, analyze engagement (Brenner, 2021). Since SBDC has a small team, Mailchimp is an ideal choice to start. Features that are included in Mailchimp –*Professional* are:

- **Email & automations -** Email templates, and tools for more sophisticated campaigns (Mailchimp, n.d.).
    - Customer Journey Builder
    - Multiple starting and branching points
    - Pre-built journeys
    - Custom-coded templates
- **Audience features** - More contacts, and more ways to personalize based on what you know about them (Mailchimp, n.d.).
    - Five Audiences
    - Behavioral targeting
    - Marketing CRM
    - Signup forms
    - Up to 100,000 contacts with $605/mo tier

- **Marketing platform –** Multi-channel tools to promote and grow your brand and find new leads, all from one place (Mailchimp, n.d.).
  - o Facebook and Instagram ads
  - o Retargeting ads
  - o Social posting and scheduling
  - o Websites and domains
  - o Landing pages
  - o Postcards
- **Smart tools -** Features to help you create better content and improve campaign performance (Mailchimp, n.d.).
  - o Creative Assistant
  - o Dynamic content
  - o Personalized product recommendations
  - o Send Time Optimization
  - o Customer lifetime value and purchase likelihood

This platform will help SBDC generate leads and increase the ROI for attendees of their training classes and other services. It will also help them to track conversion rates and learn more about the needs are of their customers.

Hootsuite

The next content marketing network that will be beneficial to SBDC is Hootsuite. This network provides a seamless and user-friendly service that centralizes management between multiple social media platforms (Brenner, 2021). Being able to schedule posts months in advance is a great time saver for adding on more social media platforms for SBDC to advertise on. Hootsuite provides data on campaigns to help calculate ROI as well as mentions of your brand (Brenner, 2021). Some other features of Hootsuite include (Hootsuite, n.d.):

- **Hootsuite (Hootsuite, n.d.)**
  - o Analytics & reports
  - o Export reports in PDF
  - o Access to free apps
  - o $500 ad spend for social boost
  - o In-dash live chat support
  - o 10 social media profiles
  - o 1 user
  - o Unlimited scheduling
  - o Bulk scheduling
  - o Social inbox
  - o Content calendar

Demand-Side Platform Overview

About Demand-Side Platform

With all the amazing programs that SBDC - Lynchburg Region has to offer, it can be time-consuming marketing these services through each platform individually. By using a demand-side platform (DSP) the digital ad experience will be more cost-effective and easier (Riserbato, 2022). A DSP "is an automated programmatic advertising platform where marketers can purchase and manage ad inventories from multiple ad sources" (Riserbato, 2022). This allows the marketing team to use one interface to manage all digital ads.

To increase lead conversions for SBDC - Lynchburg Region, the recommended DSP is Google Marketing Platform. This platform was chosen because Google's products have been designed together and there is already an established strategy within the Google Ads campaign. This will help the team when navigating the platform.

Benefits of the Demand-Side Platform

Google Marketing Platform offers several products and supporting functions to help manage and optimize digital media in one place.

Advertising Buy
The advertising side

- **Campaign Manager 360**: run ad campaigns and measure their performance
- **Display & Video 360**: manage display and video campaigns, bids, creatives, and audiences
- **Search Ads 360**: manage search campaigns across Google Ads, Bing, Yahoo, Baidu, and more

Analytics
The analytical side

- **Analytics 360**: understand how users engage with your business
- **Optimize 360**: run experiments and personalize content
- **Surveys 360**: pose questions to broad populations of online users
- **Tag Manager 360**: manage web and app tags from a single interface
- **Data Studio**: create data visualizations

Navigation
Tying all the products together

- **Marketing Platform Home**: the portal to your products and administration
- **Integration Center**: manage the data-sharing integrations between products
- **Administration**: manage individual products, the organizations for analytics products, along with users and permissions, and billing

(Google, n.d.)

With the supporting functions that Google Marketing Platform has to offer, SBDC - Lynchburg Region will be able to understand their customers, get smarter insights to improve ROI, connect the insights to results, and make the data understandable for the team (Google, n.d.). By in-housing the Google Marketing Platform, the company will be able to take control and ownership of the digital media activities, data ownership, and transparency (Fivestones, 2020).

The platform allows the company to control the granularity and frequency of reporting, making it easier to have better data-driven decisions (Fivestones, 2020). By having all the resources in one interface SBDC - Lynchburg Region will be able to plan, buy, measure, and optimize digital media and customer experience (Bender, 2018). This platform helps companies achieve a customer-first approach when it comes to marketing (Bender, 2018).
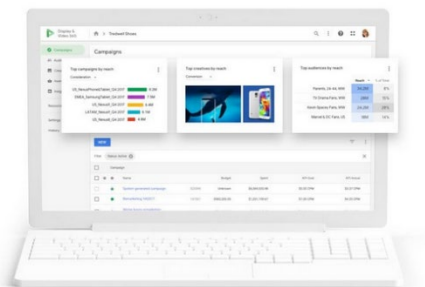
Competitive Advantages

By utilizing Google Marketing Platform SBDC - Lynchburg Region will be able to see a competitive

advantage by using analytical data to better understand their audience (Google, n.d.). Other advantages include:

- Expanded Access Through Real-Time Bidding
- An Efficient Use of Capital
- Sophisticated Targeting Methods
- Access to Many Useful Features
- Remarkable Stats

A number one advantage to using DSPs is that it allows for a more affordable streamlining of the digital ad experience (Pollack, n.d.). This expands the advertiser's reach across multiple ad publishers in a centralized location. In return, it makes keeping ad campaigns organized (Pollack, n.d.). SBDC - Lynchburg Region would therefore be able to reach more leads in the Lynchburg Region.

The platform will help to understand the customer interactions across the website and applications through the entire life cycle and uncover anticipated future customer actions (Google, n.d.). With the easy-to-use interface, analyzing the data will help create shareable reports that optimize marketing performances (Google, n.d.).

Lastly, the Google Marketing Platform can save the company time and money that can then be concentrated in other areas. Currently, SBDC -Lynchburg Region's marketing team must view the analytical reports in multiple locations and pull them together to analyze the reports. By utilizing the DSP, the company will be able to seamlessly bring together the reports of each campaign that is being run across multiple channels.

Data Management Platform Overview

DMPs, data management platforms, collect, organize, and activate first to third-party audience data from various on and offline sources (Oracle, n.d.). Cloudera is one of the most complete data management platforms that perform high-level of scalability, data integrity, performance, and quality (Haije, 2022). Some of the features included are alert management, monitoring and diagnostics, cluster management, client configuration management, and more (Haije, 2022). The Cloudera Data Platform, CDP, manages and secures data lifecycles across private and public clouds (Cloudera, n.d.). The CDP can:

- Control cloud costs with auto scale, suspend, and resume
- Optimize workloads based on analytics and machine learning
- View data lineage across any cloud and transient clusters
- Use a single pane of glass across hybrid and multi-clouds
- Scale to petabytes of data and thousands of diverse users (Cloudera, n.d.).

Other tools that CDP offers are the data hub, warehouse, engineering, and visualization (Cloudera, n.d.) Along with those data resources the platform has machine learning and an operational database (Cloudera, n.d.).

The pricing options for CDP allow the customer to use one or all the services and only pay for what is used (Cloudera, n.d.). Payments can be made monthly or with prepaid credits. Below are the breakdown of the annual subscription for Data Services and the hourly rate of the individual service if purchased separately.

CDP Private Cloud Pricing		Annual Subscription
Data Services Runs on embedded ECS or dedicated OpenShift and relies on Base for storage	Data Engineering Data Service	**$650/CCU** Cloudera Compute Unit (CCU) - 1 Core and 8 GB RAM
	Data Warehouse Data Service	
	Machine Learning Data Service	

Data Engineering Data Service	Data Warehouse Data Service	Machine Learning Data Service
Schedule, monitor, and debug data pipelines to streamline ETL processes quickly and securely.	Deploy data warehouses with secure, self-service access to enterprise data.	Provide collaborative ML workspaces with secure, self-service access to enterprise data.
$0.07/CCU Hourly rate	$0.07/CCU Hourly rate	$0.17/CCU Hourly rate

Digital Media Plan

Product

The SBDC - Lynchburg Region Program is designed to deliver up-to-date advising, training, and technical assistance in all aspects of small business management. Topics include:

- o Financial review
- o Marketing
- o Organizational management
- o Startup assistance
- o Customer development
- o Government contracting
- o Access to capital and investment

Training ranges from Start Smart program which answers the most basic questions for those new to business to specialized training in industries like healthcare and early childhood education.

Price

The SBDC -Lynchburg Region is a free, confidential advising and training service. It is open to any small business in Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford and Campbell Counties, and the City of Lynchburg – no membership is required. All programs of the Virginia SBDC are open to the public on a non-discriminatory basis**.**

Promotion

We promote our service in the following ways:
- **Organic Channels**, such as our website and blog
- **Paid Campaigns** on social media and search engines for targeted small business owners and entrepreneurs in Lynchburg, VA.
- **Print Advertising** with pamphlets, brochures, and flyers
- **Guest Speaking** at business events in partnership with Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance
- **Affiliate Marketing** with Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance promoting SBDC on their website

This strategy combines paid, personal, and organic opportunities to reach new customers and engage existing ones.

People

Process

The services are delivered to the customer through virtual and in-person training sessions. For some training, multiple classes are using this as an ongoing service. Other trainings are single sessions. To measure the success of the service we will conduct surveys and interviews of the customers including follow-ups to see how they enjoyed the service. We will also track customers to view the number of people returning to sessions and research how the knowledge obtained in the classes is utilized and contributing to business success.

Budget

The budget for the year will be $5,800 and estimated spending for the year is $5,642. With being a small organization, the main focuses will be video, social media, search, and display ad placements. The monthly budget spending covers those campaigns to start with and will be adjusted as the data is analyzed based on the audiences' response. Below is a chart representing the total budget and a breakdown of monthly spending for the ads.

	Estimated Price	
Marketing Programs		$1442
Mail Chimp	$204	
Hootsuite – Professional	$588	
CDP Data Services	$650	

Ad Spend Budget	$4200
TOTAL	**$5642**

Paid Media Monthly Budget Planning and Reporting

Business Goal	Increase lead conversion
Monthly Budget	$350.00
Total Spent	$325.00
Remaining Budget	$25.00

Type	Date(s)	Name of Platform, Site, or Publication	Description	Spend	Clicks/ Acquisitions	CPC/CPM/CPA
Video (Online)	January 1 - January 10	YouTube	Video Ad for Product	$70.00	10	$7.00
Social Media	January 4	Facebook	Event Promotion Ad	$40.00	20	$2.00
Social Media	January 4	LinkedIn	Event Promotion Ad	$30.00	15	$2.00
Social Media	January 4	Instagram	Event Promotion Ad	$35.00	10	$3.50
Social Media	January 4	Spotify	Brand Awareness	$10.00	2	$5.00
Search	January 12 - January 28	Google	Google Search Ads	$50.00	60	$0.83
Display	January 14 - January 30	Google	Display Network Ad	$90.00	70	$1.29

Type	Total Placements	Total Spend	Average Spend	Total Clicks/ Impressions	Average Clicks/ Impressions
Display	1	$90.00	$90.00	70	70
Search	1	$50.00	$50.00	60	60
Social Media	1	$40.00	$40.00	20	20
Video (Online)	1	$70.00	$70.00	10	10

Average Spend vs. Type

- Display
- Search
- Social Media
- Video (Online)
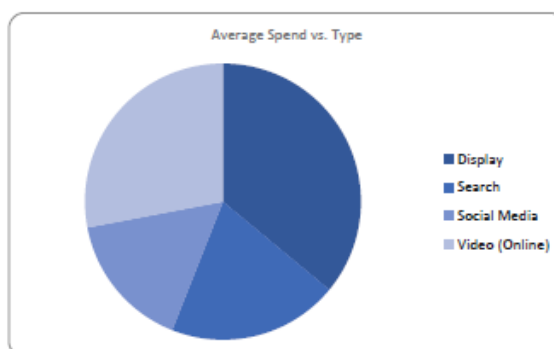
Lead Generation and Communication

What Constitutes a Lead

A lead is an individual who has shown interest in a company's product or service and has provided some basic information that suggests potential interest in buying (Enterprise, n.d.).

Anyone that provides information such as a name, phone number, or email is constituted as a lead for SBDC - Lynchburg Region. When someone shows interest in learning more about what SBDC - Lynchburg Region has to offer and provides a way to contact him or her, that person becomes a lead.

Contact Strategies

Leads can come from various locations:

- In-Person Meetings – having a face-to-face conversation can generate potential leads. These meetings often take place at various events and workshops, such as ones hosted by the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance.
- Content Marketing – social media is a two-way street that allows both the organization and potential leads to reach out to one another.
- Company Website – leads can be generated when filling out information on the company website, such as subscribing to the mailing list.

Once a lead has been established, it is important for the company to follow up and learn more about what they are looking for and how their needs can be met.

Conversion Rates

Based on previous data, the conversion rate through email marketing is between 1-5%, social media 0.1-3%, and in-person is 10-12%. The in-person metric is currently significantly higher because of face-to-face networking opportunities that help generate leads for customers.

Reporting/Measurement

Success metrics

The following equation is used to calculate the success rate of lead conversions to customers.

Conversion Rate = Total number of interactions / Total number of event attendees

For example, if there were 50 conversion out of 1,000 interaction, the rate would be 5% because 50 ÷ 1,000 = 5% (Google, n.d.). As the percentage increases that informs the company that they are on the right track.

Optimization Strategies

While an increase in the conversion rate shows that the marketing plan is working, a decrease means that there need to be adjustments in the plan. By doing A/B testing SBDC - Lynchburg Region can track what is working and what isn't. Some of these adjustments may include:

- Updating target audience
- Changing/redesigning graphics
- Refocusing ad spend
- Altering verbiage of ads

Running multiple tests when creating ads, can allow a company to understand what their audience responds to more and adjust their plan as needed.

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