

VetMedux

May Blog: Aligning Marketing Tactics with the Buyer's Journey

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Aligning Marketing Tactics with Each Stage of Your Buyer's Journey

How to Align Your Tactics with Each Stage of Your Buyer's Journey

Meet Them Where They Are Your Buyer's Journey

Meet Prospects Where They Are on Your Buyer's Journey

Gone are the days of shouting salesy messages at captive consumers. Today's consumer is in the driver's seat when it comes to the content they consume. That means B2B veterinary marketers must meet prospects where they are with the right content at the right time.

This fundamental shift has touched every stage of the buyer's journey. What once was dominated by pushy sales tactics now provides opportunities for meeting prospects with helpful, educational information. To understand your buyer's journey and where those opportunities lie will give you the wherewithal (even a leg up) to compete in the modern market.

So, let's look at the stages of the buyer's journey through a B2B veterinary marketing lens and see how you can create meaningful connections with prospects at each stage.

What is the buyer's journey?

Simply put, the buyer's journey is a prospect's path to purchase. Many buyers follow a similar roadmap as they become aware of and ultimately purchase your product. If you've never charted your buyer's journey, it's a worthwhile exercise that can answer important questions:

- How long do prospects spend in each phase?

- Which content is most effective at moving prospects down the path to purchase?
- Which marketing channels make sense at each stage of the **buyer's journey**?
- Does the journey differ based on buyer persona?

If you're mapping your **buyer's journey** for the first time, start by retracing the steps of recent buyers. This will reveal the content they interacted with and can reveal common steps that prospects take before buying.

Important Note on Your Buyer's Journey:

Often a buyer's journey begins ***before*** the prospect becomes a lead in your database.

They may stay "hidden" as they delve into zero-click and content from third party websites such as cliniciansbrief.com while doing product research.

Understanding the complete journey helps justify the marketing tactics you employ before lead conversion, which are often the first to get cut when teams are busy or budgets are tight.

There are three stages of the **buyer's journey**:

1. **Awareness:** This is when your prospect realizes they have a problem, or you help them realize they have a problem by figuratively "palpating" a pain point.
2. **Consideration:** Now that the prospect knows they have a pain point, they start searching for and evaluating solutions, including your direct and indirect competitors. For example, if they decide they need more robust pain management protocols, they may evaluate options spanning different competitive categories, such as pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, and devices.
3. **Decision:** The buyer chooses a solution. At this point, they are committed to the product that will solve their problem. They meet with sales representatives and ultimately make a purchase.

These buying stages often align with lead lifecycle stages. If you can align buyer stages to lifecycle stages, you can pair the right content strategy at each stage of the journey.

- Prospects in the awareness stage are often unknown website visitors, subscribers, or leads of unknown quality.
- A prospect actively considering a solution and engaging with your assets is often considered a marketing qualified lead (MQL). This lead is not ready for sales contact, but is engaged and actively seeking information.

- Sales qualified leads (SQLs) are in the decision-making stage of their journey and are actively engaged in a deal or seeking a sales demonstration.

The **buyer's journeys**, but make it veterinary medicine.

Veterinary professionals are busy and veterinary teams are tightly knit and often very collaborative, so your veterinary medicine buyer's journey should offer content that reflects our awareness of our audience.

Because they're busy, they'll prefer short, high-impact content to quickly gain an insightful pearl at the onset of their journey. Later, you'll see a hunger for educational longer format content, such as webinars and research-based education that gives them a deeper look into the topic.

Because they're close knit, decisions are commonly made by committees. Feedback is sought from veterinarians, technicians, practice managers, and even customer service representatives in some cases.

In addition, practice managers or practice-owning veterinarians commonly rely on support staff such as veterinary technicians to research solutions for the team, which makes [veterinary technicians a very influential group to keep on your radar](#).

With that being said, let's now dive deeper into the stages and discuss the tactics and strategies to connect with potential buyers.

Awareness

Your potential buyer is becoming aware that they have a pain point. The most important thing B2B **veterinary marketers** can do at this stage is to be helpful and informative. The potential buyer needs education and support.

Often you won't know that a potential buyer is in this stage—because they won't yet be in your database. During this crucial stage, they fly under your radar because they may not even know you exist.

Prospects in this stage are...

Noticing articles and content and keywords in trade publications that discuss their pain point.

Ways to capture their attention:

- Use [thought leadership articles](#) in **Clinician's Brief** that cover hot topics with high-impact language. [Partner with a key opinion leader \(KOL\) to boost the authority of your content](#).

- Deploy content in several formats to capture attention across multiple platforms. This could include infographics for email, tips in a carousel ad on Facebook and Instagram, and video clips for organic social media.
- A/B test headlines to optimize your language. Sometimes, a punchy headline makes all the difference.

Searching for information on Google and in trusted resources in the language that they understand to explain their pain point best.

Note that their keywords will likely change as they become more familiar with potential solutions to their problem. They may not know who has potential answers to their growing problem. They may be searching for solutions to their problem on trusted industry sites like cliniciansbrief.com to see if there is peer-reviewed content to support viable solutions.

Ways to capture their attention:

- Create strong content that has visibility on cliniciansbrief.com that comes up for both search engine queries and searches on cliniciansbrief.com
- Employ a strong SEO strategy to appear in their organic search results. Remember that Google increasingly values “zero-click-content,” meaning that the highest value content is displayed first, but appears as a direct answer to their question. Ultimately you want to show up in these spots, [even if you don't have the click-through metrics to show for it](#).
- Use a cost-per-click (CPC) strategy to capture the attention of those searching for keywords associated with your solution.
- Leverage YouTube. Consider the top two places we currently search for answers: Google and YouTube. Of the two, YouTube is regarded as the largest educator and makes a great channel for prospects at this stage of awareness.

Looking for high-level introductory educational resources to help them understand their problem and potential solutions.

Prospects are still learning about their pain point, so they're not ready for sales pitches; they are just sniffing around and want to practice the best medicine possible.

Ways to capture their attention:

- Offer introductory webinars or written content that addresses the problem and explores solutions.
- Give them high-level, keyword-rich (gated) blog posts. They provide readers with pearls of wisdom and help you convert visitors into prospects in your database.

- Communicate with prospects via media partners. Leverage a partner like [Clinician's Brief](#) to share your message across multiple channels with prospects in the awareness stage who are not yet in your database.
- Attract attention with quizzes or self-assessments that [create interest and convert leads](#).
- Pay to level up consumer awareness with [short-form videos](#) on paid social media channels.

Consideration

Once a buyer has defined their challenge and their end goal, and they're committed to addressing their problem, they move into the consideration stage. Here, they are actively evaluating solutions to their problem, including products in and out of your product category.

In veterinary medicine, this stage is often highly collaborative within the veterinary team. The decision maker will commonly invite the feedback and input of those who will be involved in using the product or service.

At this stage, [B2B veterinary marketers](#) continue to educate prospects, who are now looking for more specific information. Multiple product categories may have potential solutions to their problem and a content strategy that directs prospects to your product category as the optimal solution is the next step to securing a sales meeting.

Prospects in the consideration stage are...

Actively searching for a solution to their problem using descriptive keywords in search engines and trusted industry publications.

Ways to capture their attention:

- Set up a content strategy through a resource that they turn to for solutions to everyday problems such as [Clinician's Brief](#). This could include a CE webinar, a thought leadership article, a quiz, or a treatment algorithm.
- Leverage a strong SEO and CPC strategy based on common keyword searches. Ensure you've optimized your keyword strategy and ads for a more specific search. Prospects will have refined their keywords and phrases during the awareness stage.
- Create keyword-rich blog posts and provide prospects with deeper dive information.

- Use longer format videos that compare different solutions and drive prospects to your product category as the optimal solution.
- Use retargeting tactics to deliver ads across all platforms they use. Contact the **VetMedux** team to find out how to reach your audience across multiple **Clinician's Brief** platforms with these retargeting tactics.

Attending educational sessions to learn more about solutions.

More in-depth than a “top of the funnel, these sessions should be educational and designed to build a foundation of trust. These sessions could include reviews of research or case reviews that show how to achieve optimal outcomes and position your product as the optimal solution among direct and indirect competitors.

Ways to capture their attention:

- Sponsor educational events. Use partners like **Clinician's Brief** to drive attendance to your sessions and refine the talk track where needed.
- Provide virtual learning opportunities such as live and on-demand webinars. Partner with **Clinician's Brief** to [develop an ideal target audience and promote virtual events](#).

Collecting content to bring back to the team for evaluation.

Ways to capture their attention:

- Use video to explain how your product addresses both common and specific pain points and post on YouTube, social media, within your webinars, and on your website.
- Create gated tools such as e-books or buyer guides to help prospects compare available solutions and capture leads for follow up. Partnering with **Clinician's Brief** can help identify the most appropriate audience for this key tool.
- Share gated case studies that show why your solution is superior. Then [use remarketing tactics](#) to deploy an email nurture sequence to the leads you collect.
- Create an FAQ section on your website to answer common questions prospects have during the consideration stage.

Decision

Once a buyer has decided on a solution category, they choose who they will buy from. Depending on your product category, this could mean a meeting with a salesperson or an in-office product demonstration. They could also opt to simply sign up to purchase via a self-serve portal.

Sales meetings may be hosted virtually or in person and may include several teammates from a cross-functional team of stakeholders.

During this phase, the sales representative becomes the primary owner of the prospect and must have a firm grasp of the product value proposition and common objections. Prospects often care about things other than your product's features and benefits.

When mapping your **buyer's journey**, dig deep to get a foundational understanding of the customer's real pain points. Commonly, veterinary professionals care more about medical outcomes, customer service, and workflow over features and benefits.

Prospects in the decision stage are...

Asking for a sales meeting and are ready to talk in detail about the product.

Ways to capture their attention:

- Use self-serve booking links to reduce the back-and-forth friction of establishing a meeting time. Consider including an incentive for booking such as a limited-time discount, or special offer.
- Equip your sales team with a strong sales presentation that proactively addresses objections, highlights key differentiators, and addresses the value propositions your prospects care about most.
- Educate prospects on key product differentiators.
- Host lunch and learn session. This gets your salesperson into the clinic to provide an introduction to your product.
- Give your team the sales-enablement tools they need, such as printed sales collateral and thought-leadership articles published by a trusted source like **Clinician's Brief**, case studies, and testimonial videos.

Evaluating the product as a cross-functional team.

Ways to capture their attention:

- Use follow-up email sequences to keep prospects engaged after the sales meeting. Content like case studies and time-sensitive offers work well.
- Tap into the credibility of peer recommendations by activating a peer network where applicable to help influence prospects.
- Leverage training techniques that apply to each member of the team and how they work together.

Reach Prospects at Every Stage of the Buyer's Journey

[Contact VetMedux](#) to leverage our highly engaged audience of veterinary professionals to drive activity at each stage of your buyer's journey.