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RIW 39 Essay Submission

## Beginning My Marketing Journey

After attending RIW 39 and speaking with my peers, I feel confident saying that I am not the “typical” Rapid Implementation attendee. I am a 25-year-old marketing coordinator who got her start in the nonprofit world. Before accepting my offer from Dynamic Edge in March of 2020 (yes, the chaotic, pandemic-instigating month that will live in infamy), I didn’t know much about the wildly complex world of IT, not to mention the even more complex world of IT marketing. I still had a few arrows in my quiver; I was very familiar with social media, and through my experience both in marketing and customer service, I understood the importance of getting truly acquainted with my audience prior to any sort of outreach. Without any other preconceived notions regarding my new field, I was eager to jump into B2B IT marketing.

Robin Robins provided an easy avenue through which to do so. The Technology Marketing Toolkit dashboard and its vast library of resources were right at my fingertips. I quickly went through Robin’s Marketing Manager Training series while exploring the marketing content she had readily available. During my second month of employment, it became clear that attending a Rapid Implementation Workshop was my next logical step. While I had inherited a Producer’s Club membership and few campaigns (a monthly print newsletter, some email templates, fairly successful social media pages and a few Google Ads keywords), my superiors and I agreed that our marketing efforts had a lot of room to grow. I was excited to get started!

## Rapid Implementation

The workshop itself was fast-paced and jam-packed with information. I came away from RIW’s two-day marketing deep dive with a to-do list the length of my arm. Looking back, I think I was a little intimidated by the checklists and deadlines. This, however, did not put a damper on my determination. I scheduled meetings with my supervisors to talk over next steps. Though our “plan” was a little choppy, it was clear that we finally had a path forward. First, I would assess my current marketing calendar and adjust it as necessary. Next, I planned to systematically work my way through the RIW checklist, making sure to take advice from Mark and Rich along the way. Finally, it was time to begin thinking about implementing fresh new lead generation



campaigns to keep our sales pipeline full. While we still have a long way to go, we have made great progress in the past few months.

## Assessing (And Reworking) Our Current Campaigns

I came into Rapid with a simply-designed marketing calendar that included social media posts, weekly prospecting emails, monthly newsletters, client communications and one-off events. Even with the calendar, our marketing was somewhat inconsistent—a HUGE mistake according to Robin! Above all else, our marketing needed to follow a regular cadence. In most areas, I think we have succeeded in achieving this. (See below for more detail.)

Some other campaigns needed to be fine-tuned based on suggestions and content from Robin. Because of the incredible success stories from other MSPs who fully implemented Technology Marketing Toolkit's strategies, we decided to follow Robin's wording and methods as closely as possible. Though we are still working hard to implement more, we have made great changes to the following campaigns/resources:

### *Print and E-Newsletters*

When I was hired by Dynamic Edge, our print newsletter campaign was one of the strongest drip marketing campaigns we had. However, the person who ran this campaign had recently left the company, and implementation was lagging. We were also hesitant to send direct mail during the COVID-19 pandemic; my manager and I (incorrectly) assumed that none of our prospects and clients would visit their offices to pick up the mail and see our efforts.

Over the course of the past several months, we have re-started our print newsletter campaign (using resources from Robin, of course) and introduced an e-newsletter companion. We decided to send the physical copies to our farm list and unconverted leads. Our clients and other contacts now receive the email version. Clients, some of whom specifically requested an electronic version of the newsletter, are responding well to the switch; our open rates are close to 50% with a 9% click through rate. All materials are sent during the first week of each month.

### *Testimonials*

Rapid gave us exactly the push we needed to refresh the testimonial section on our current website. While we had strong testimonials prior to the workshop, many were from former clients, and most looked outdated. Robin's email templates worked perfectly; we were able to get eight strong testimonials from happy, grateful clients. Rich's testimonial reworking session helped me hone each client's message. While we plan to ask for more testimonials in the future, between this batch and those we had previously, we have plenty of great client feedback with which to populate our new website AND our Shock and Awe Box's testimonial booklet. (Read on for more information!)

### *Email Blog Posts*

Before Rapid, I was crafting my own email blasts. Though they were loosely based on Robin's content, they yielded mixed results; none of them had a call to action, so they rarely received clicks. Now, I send Robin's paired blog post and email templates on a weekly basis to our farm



list great effect. On average, our open rates hover around 28%, and our click-through rate has gotten as high as 11%! Though these numbers may not seem immense, they are greatly improved compared to the 20% open rate and 0% click-through rate we had previously. I am optimistic that this drip campaign is keeping us at the forefront of our prospective clients' minds. Once we successfully implement a proper follow-up process, there is no telling what this simple campaign can accomplish.

### *Quarterly Business Reviews*

Dynamic Edge puts a lot of emphasis on regular Strategic Business Reviews (or SBRs). Account managers communicate with their clients at least once a month and conduct SBRs on a quarterly, bi-annual or annual basis, depending on client MRR. However, scheduling these meetings is far from easy; from what I have learned, there is often a bit of a scheduling crunch between Q3 and Q4. So far, we have only “tested the waters” with regard to Robin’s QBR campaign. After using just ONE of her email templates to solicit appointments, we scheduled ten in one week! Given our recent MAP Infusionsoft purchase (more to come on that later), I think this campaign will only become more and more effective as we move to fully implement it.

### *Social Media*

Robin recommends posting on all social media channels at least three times a week—so I do! I try to vary the content during the week; Monday’s post is usually a relevant news article, Tuesday’s is a tech meme, Wednesday I promote the blog... you get the idea. We have seen significant growth on our LinkedIn page in particular since implementing this strategy. Our page views have gone from 250 per month to over 570, and we have now garnered over 1,000 followers. We plan to leverage this using InMail and other LinkedIn prospecting techniques, all, of course, from Robin. Page views and follows are great, but what matters most is what we will be able to do with them.

### *Referrals*

Referrals are so, so important to our business. Since Rapid, my team has redoubled its efforts to gain referrals on a regular basis. Our account managers now report a “Number of Referrals” metric in our weekly meetings. All of our invoices now contain a request for referrals at the bottom. I regularly remind our team of our staff referral bonus program via email and verbal announcements. As a result, one of the six clients we have added within the past few months came from a staff referral. Though there is always room for improvement, we have become more consistent and organized regarding referral requests.

### *Organizational Partnerships*

With encouragement from Robin’s team, we partnered with a local professional services organization to distribute a white paper containing information relevant to our target market—a market, by the way, that we defined based on Robin’s target market templates and resources. Through an opt-in form on the organization’s website, we gained over 60 qualified leads. I have entered them into our sales pipeline, and our current cold caller is following up with each one. We plan to replicate this process in the future now that we understand a) our market and b) the avenues through which to reach it.



## New Beginnings

Based on suggestions within the 12-Month Custom Marketing Plan and general advice from Team Robin, we have concrete plans in place to pursue a few new marketing avenues. We are excited about the growth these entail, particularly regarding lead generation. As you have no doubt noticed, most of our existing campaigns, while effective in eliciting responses, are drip or relationship-building, not lead-generating. I am eager to funnel new leads into our sales pipeline using these key strategies:

### *MAP Infusionsoft*

First and foremost, Dynamic Edge is now the proud owner of Robin's MAP Infusionsoft software! Gone are the days of cumbersome list segmentation and Excel spreadsheets teeming with disorganized call notes. Now, our sales process will exist entirely within Infusionsoft. We just finished up our last meeting with our Sherpa and are excited to implement the QBR, Sales Pipeline, Aspirin and Cybersecurity Tips campaigns. A lot of our marketing progress has stalled based on our Infusionsoft implementation schedule, but I am optimistic that all the kinks will be worked out by Q1 of next year. I am looking forward to our future direct mail campaigns in particular; aside from the newsletter, I have not communicated with prospects via direct mail yet. This constitutes a huge opportunity for lead generation and will help us hone our follow-up process.

### *Webinars*

To no one's surprise, the rise of COVID-19 has increased virtual learning. I could not think of a more perfect time to nail down our webinar process. Though we have not had the chance to host one yet, we have a session on the books for October. I am looking forward to implementing Robin's promotional content, as it seems to really get results. I plan to follow Mike Stodola's exact recommendations regarding marketing and follow-up.

### *Virtual Shock and Awe*

After our entire team was blown away by Robin's Virtual Shock and Awe Box template, we knew we had to implement it as soon as possible. We developed a plan to create two boxes: one for prospects containing Robin's recommended materials (an informational video, a testimonial booklet, a relevant white paper, Robin's MSP buying guide, etc.), and one for current clients containing interesting brochures and information on how to most efficiently enter a ticket. The purpose of the Shock and Awe box is therefore twofold: It serves to strengthen our reputation in the minds of our prospects, while encouraging greater relationship-building with our current clients. While these boxes are still in the works, everyone is anxious to get them in our contacts' virtual hands.

## More Opportunities

Even more opportunities are on Dynamic Edge's horizon. We have several promising projects that have just begun to manifest; it is my hope that we begin seeing their benefits in Q4 and into 2021. Though the scope of each effort is large, I am confident that the rewards will more than justify the amount of work we plan to pour into them.



## *Our Growing Sales Team*

We have just begun an overhaul of our sales team and lead nurturing process. Due to a recent role split, we now have a dedicated Business Development Manager who will focus solely on marketing and sales. (Previously, this position also included oversight of our account managers.) We have also hired a Business Developer who just began working out of our Nashville office. His core functions will be to set appointments, book assessments and close clients. Though we previously had one of our front desk staff conducting follow-up calls, we will now have someone trained specifically in sales making key personal connections with our prospects. We are also interviewing candidates to fill a similar position in our Ann Arbor office. Our hope is to grow our sales team even more throughout 2021, turning it into a well-oiled machine.

## *Website Overhaul*

Thanks to our immensely talented web designer, we now have a prototype of our new website! It has a fresh new design and more prominently features the target markets (and associated provided services) we identified during Rapid. We plan to work with an agency to make the content and branding more cohesive. We can then use the new site as a basis by which to flesh out our existing Dynamic Edge Style Guide, thus strengthening our brand look and voice. The site will also feature opt-in pages that work with Infusionsoft, plus content from Robin specifically aimed at attracting leads. My team is excited to see where this new website will take us.

## **Our Results**

Throughout the past twelve weeks, Dynamic Edge has grown as a company, both in terms of new clients and upsells to existing clients. We added \$16,590 in new MRR plus \$157,037 in billable projects. We also signed contracts with six new clients. Based on these sales—in addition to sales made prior to RIW—we are expecting to earn \$7.5 million in revenue during 2020.

More noteworthy results include the growth of our farm list and the return of quite a few unconverted leads. As of our last data import, we have nearly 250 warm leads ready to enter our sales pipeline campaign in Infusionsoft. With our new Business Developer in place, we are ready and able to conduct Robin's campaigns to the letter.

## **Final Notes**

Dynamic Edge is at a (positive!) turning point regarding our sales process, thanks in large part to the resources provided and lessons learned during Rapid 39. I am grateful to Robin and her team for providing me with such a warm, information-rich welcome to the world of B2B IT marketing. I think it is safe to say that Technology Marketing Toolkit has shaped me as a marketer. Without the Toolkit, many of these projects and campaigns simply would not exist.

I am extremely optimistic about the future of Dynamic Edge's sales and marketing. We have already received great results from the work we have put in so far, and there are still numerous projects mere steps away from completion. We have a long way to go, but I and my team are up to the task. And, of course, I am thrilled to have Robin's team by our side throughout our forthcoming journey. Thank you!

