

Tech Marketer's Guide

The ultimate guide to lead generation

Attracting, engaging, and educating buyers

FOUNDRY

an IDG, Inc. company

Understanding the nuances of the tech sector is crucial for developing effective lead generation strategies that resonate with potential customers.

Whether you are a startup looking to establish your presence or an established company seeking to expand your customer base, understanding your target customer—who they are and what they need to succeed—is fundamental to attracting and engaging leads that will fuel your business growth. But the work does not stop there. Once a buyer has been identified, how companies nurture and educate that prospect in their follow up is critical to converting them to customers.

This guide looks at ways to help marketers understand tech buyers and how to engage them with effective lead generation strategies, and how sales follow up impacts those efforts. By leveraging these insights, tech marketers can create a roadmap of who their buyers are, and how to use content to engage and educate them throughout the purchase process.

Know your customer

Within the technology sector, lead generation involves targeting professionals, decision-makers, and influencers who are actively seeking innovative solutions to their problems or seeking to stay ahead in the competitive tech market.

Step 1

Define your customer profile

Defining your ideal customer profile (ICP) may seem like a trivial first step, but details and research at this stage make a huge difference. Be sure to explore all of these characteristics:

- ☑ **Demographics:** age, gender, occupation, location
- ☑ **Firmographics:** company size, industry, revenue, organizational structure
- ☑ **Psychographics:** interests, values, lifestyle
- ☑ **Behavior:** purchase history, buying patterns, channels used
- ☑ **Goals and objectives:** desired outcome or results that the customer wants to achieve
- ☑ **Pain points:** problems, needs, or challenges that the customer is looking to address
- ☑ **Buying power:** the financial capacity and willingness to invest in a product or service

The challenge: A small percentage of companies are actively in market for your solution at any one time. Once a purchase decision is made and implemented, there is typically a high barrier to displace a competitive technology or solution. Because of this, aligning an intent data strategy will allow you to find and target those buyers who are in market when they are actively researching solutions.

91%

of tech marketers are using intent data to identify what content should be served within account-based marketing campaigns

Primary goals for intent data:

1. Align sales and marketing
2. Prioritize accounts for prospecting
3. Identify new accounts to target
4. Monitor potential customer churn
5. Tailor messaging based on intent topics

Source: [Foundry ABM & Intent Benchmarking Study, 2022](#)

By identifying the specific traits and characteristics of the ideal customer, marketers can focus on targeting their marketing campaigns more effectively, personalizing their messaging, improving customer segmentation, optimizing lead generation efforts, and enhancing customer satisfaction.

Within an ideal customer profile are buyer personas. This is when marketers gather the information they have about their customers and organize them into specific profiles so then each “buyer persona” has a dedicated and different marketing strategy. Again, it’s important to look at demographics, firmographics, buying habits, etc. to give these personas their own narrative and make them relatable. Once you have finalized your buyer personas, apply them to your marketing, sales, and customer service strategies. Tailor your messaging, content, and campaigns to resonate with each persona. Use the personas to guide product development, customer acquisition, and customer experience improvement efforts.

Apply intent data early

Once an ICP and persona strategy are in place, it’s essential for marketers to capture and analyze intent data to best identify prospects. Intent data is information that captures a person’s digital behavior and provides insight into their interests, needs, and purchase intention with the goal of

providing marketers and sales teams with a more complete understanding of a potential customer's behavior and preferences. This helps businesses to engage with their target audience effectively and increase their chances of converting leads into customers.

Tech buyers have access to unprecedented amounts of digital information. Buyers can answer product questions, get pricing, compare services, and more all without ever reaching out to a sales rep. Leveraging buyer intent data allows you to identify when companies or buying teams are interested enabling marketing or sales to add value to the conversation and influence their buying decision earlier.

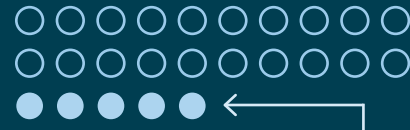
Target the whole buying committee, not just the IT decision-maker

Technology purchase decisions are not made in a vacuum—in fact there is a robust buying committee, with varying information needs—central to the process. The number of people involved in influencing major enterprise technology purchase decisions has grown over the past few years, perhaps because of the economic conditions, and is currently comprised of 25 people, with a fairly even split between IT (13) and line of business (LOB) roles (12).

Buying committees may be expanding in size but CIOs still call most of the shots. The top IT executive leads all stages of

25

people are involved
in influencing tech
purchases on average



5 more than in 2022

Source: Foundry Role and Influence of
the Technology Decision-Maker, 2023

the IT purchase process except for two: determining technical requirements and evaluating technology options. Even in areas they don't lead, CIOs are second to other players. One exception is determining technical requirements, where IT managers and staff take the reins. Despite their growing influence in purchasing decisions, line-of-business (LOB) managers and CEOs are involved mainly in determining the business need and approval stages, with a much-diminished role elsewhere in the process.

Millennials matter

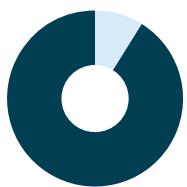
Foundry's research has found that millennials (those born between 1981-1996) are now aging into C-suite leadership positions. Given where they are in their career, these individuals are more likely to say the purchase process for technology products and services is becoming increasingly complex (71% vs. 61% for overall respondents and 57% for boomers).

Because of this, relevant and educational content is essential throughout all stages of the buying process. Millennials turn to technology content sites, webcasts/webinars, and technology vendors via their website, in-person, email, video conference, or phone. They also greatly rely on their peer networks and are more likely to attend virtual events this year (74%) and also in-person industry events (69%).

Educate your customers

Content plays a critical role in lead generation by attracting and engaging potential customers, building brand credibility, and ultimately converting them into leads. Technology marketers need to target all levels of the IT organization with messages tailored to the right buyer at each stage of the process. But the content must provide value.

Lead generation focuses on identifying and capturing potential customers (leads) who are showing interest in a product or service. Because the primary objective of lead generation is to gather contact information, typically through forms or landing pages, you must create valuable content that buyers are willing to register for. Surprisingly, tech decision-makers say it is challenging to find high-quality content. With less time than ever, buyers have



91%

of tech buyers say it's challenging to find high-quality content

Source: Foundry Customer Engagement Study, 2022

96% of tech buyers are interested in custom-tailored content based on:

- Industry
- Technology platform(s) already installed at their organization
- Company size

Source: Foundry Customer Engagement Study, 2022

shorter attention spans and less patience to deal with irrelevant or self-promotional messages. Vendors who demonstrate knowledge of the buyer's industry, region/culture, technology platforms and business needs will be significantly more likely to make a buyer's short list.

Content should be directly relevant to the audience that you are looking to target. A disconnect between the content and the audience will likely result in slow lead delivery. Content that will work includes independent, third-party content performs such as buyer's guides, analyst papers, and research. New topics, such as those that are currently trending, will naturally generate more interest, but need to be relevant to your solutions to make an impact.

Put your content in front of your buyer

Don't wait for them to "find it" on your website. Amplify the reach of your content

“To get the greatest return on your content creation, it’s key to follow a create and promote ratio and really think about how much time you spend creating content versus promoting it. For some marketers, it may skew 70/30 in favor of promotion.”

Brian Stoller, Chief Marketing Officer, Foundry

by sharing it across various channels, including advertising, content syndication, blogs, social media platforms, and email newsletters. Leverage multiple channels to share snippets of your content, engage with your audience, and drive traffic back to your website.

According to Content Marketing Institute’s Technology Content Marketing 2023 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends Report, technology marketers use a variety of platforms to distribute their content, including social media platforms, speaking/presenting at events, media/public relations, guest posts/

articles in third-party publications, and guest posts on podcasts, live video, etc. Additionally, 82% use one or more paid content distribution channels for content marketing such as social media advertising/promoted posts,

sponsorships, and native advertising/sponsored content.

Provide customized content

Tailor your content to different stages of the buyer’s journey and specific buyer personas. Develop targeted email campaigns that deliver relevant content based on user preferences, behavior, and demographics. Personalization can significantly increase engagement and conversion rates.

74% of tech marketers who rate their organization’s overall content marketing strategy as extremely or very successful, craft content based on specific stages of the buyer’s journey.

Source: [Content Marketing Institute’s 2023 Technology Content Marketing: Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends Report](#)

The key to successful content-based lead generation is to consistently provide value, demonstrate expertise, and understand your audience’s needs. By leveraging high-quality content across various channels, you can attract and nurture leads, build relationships, and drive conversions in the tech sector.

According to the Content Marketing Survey, creating content tailored to buying stage is the marketer’s biggest hurdle. To achieve



82% of technology marketers use one or more paid content distribution channels for content marketing

Source: [Content Marketing Institute’s 2023 Technology Content Marketing: Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends Report](#)

Create content for each stage of the funnel

- 1. Discover:** For the buyers who are in the exploratory phase, researching on a variety of sources to see what options are out there. Content may include blogs, videos, research.
- 2. Learn:** For the buyers ready to dive deeper into specific vendors, products and services. Content may include buyers guides, how-to blogs, newsletters.
- 3. Try:** For the buyers close to making a sales decision but wanting to best understand the product and implementation. Content may include case studies, product demos, and free trials.
- 4. Buy:** For the buyers who have the product or service in place and want to continue their education for optimization. Content may include competitive analysis, customer testimonials and spec sheets.

this at Foundry, we've adopted a "Discover-Learn-Try-Buy" framework for evaluating the content we create. By assigning various content categories to stages based on the role of the asset being created, we are decidedly better at addressing each stage of the journey. Of course you can create and adopt any framework that

works for your product set. The use of an agreed upon framework by every member of your marketing team, as a touchstone for content creation alleviates confusion and allows you to assign your paid media investments and audience orchestration rules with greater rigor.

What type of content works best?

The most effective asset to use will depend on interest area, decision role, and buying stage. In general, buyers in the early stage of research rely on case studies and analyst reports. As they move into the evaluation stage, product-specific information assumes a more prominent role. Foundry research reveals analyst research and independent product reviews are considered reliable content throughout the purchase process.

White papers

Should be educational and solution-driven—first outlining a problem and then propose a solution. White papers usually have a higher conversion rate than other content



74% of tech buyers are more likely to consider an IT vendor who educates them through each stage of the decision process.

Source: Foundry Customer Engagement Study, 2022

Top five information sources relied upon by tech buyers:

- Tech content sites
- White papers
- Webcasts/webinars
- Tech vendors (via phone, email, video conferencing)
- Tech vendors (via vendor website)

Top five content types relied upon by tech buyers:

- Product testing/reviews/opinions
- Product demo/product literature
- Technology news
- Vendor presentations
- Analyst research

Sources: [Foundry Role & Influence of the Technology Decision-Maker Study, 2023](#); [Foundry Customer Engagement Study, 2022](#)

types, and the leads generated are generally very reliable.

Ebooks

Can vary in length but must offer value. Offering a product as a solution to a problem is fine, but this shouldn't take up more than 5-10% of the ebook.

How-tos

Should provide tips and tutorials that address a problem.

Case studies

Should provide both knowledge and

actionable information—not just report the results. Case studies work best from established vendors with proven uptake in the market.

Infographics

Present a lot of information in a way that is interesting and easily digestible. They are generally best used on social media platforms rather than by email/telemarketing.

Webinars

Should ideally discuss research—providing insights backed by data. Those that provide an industry overview or are Q&A interviews are acceptable, but promotional videos where a spokesperson is 'selling' their company should be avoided.

Sales brochures

Material promoting a particular product and its capabilities should only be considered at the bottom of the funnel stage and generally belong on the vendor's website.

Content creation is not one and done—IT decision-makers have different preferences and depending on the stage of the purchase process, the job title and level of the individual, and the type of vendor (whether an emerging or established vendor) will determine which content is needed. For example, tech buyers seek case studies from emerging vendors while they need more detailed product information and trials from a well-established vendor.

Know your lead's action and when to follow up

- **3 days** is the average time it takes IT decision-makers to consume the content they download.
- **16 hours** is the average time in which IT decision-makers expect follow-up after filling out a form to learn more.

Source: [Foundry Customer Engagement Study, 2022](#)

have expressed some level of interest in a specific offering. It is a narrower approach that targets individuals or businesses who are likely to become customers in the near term. The focus is on capturing leads and passing them to the sales team for conversion.

As with all lead generation campaigns, how inside sales teams follow up and nurture leads will make a significant difference between converting the prospect to an opportunity or potentially losing them altogether.

You can have a well thought out sales nurture strategy, but it will not be effective if you do not have quality leads. Qualified leads are the lifeblood of any successful performance marketing strategy geared towards driving measurable revenue growth.

Nurture leads to customers

The main goal of lead generation is to generate a list of qualified prospects who

7 signs you should re-consider your lead generation vendor

If you're using third-party sources to generate leads through content syndication or other programs, there are a handful of red flags to be aware of:

- 1.** You provide your vendor with multiple content offers to generate leads against, but only receive activity against one or two.
- 2.** You receive the bulk of your leads in the final days of your program.
- 3.** 20% or more of your leads claim not to remember downloading or requesting your content
- 4.** You receive too many leads that are either already in your database or are existing customers.
- 5.** Your leads consistently have a bounce rate of 10% or higher.
- 6.** The first 100 leads are higher in quality than the other 900 combined.
- 7.** Your vendor's demand gen methodology leaves you with more questions than answers.

As marketing dollars become increasingly precious, marketers can't afford programs that don't deliver on the promise of real, qualified demand. If you're experiencing any of these red flags, it's time to start scrutinizing the vendors you're working with so that you can salvage your budget and generate high-quality leads from trusted vendors.

Customized approach

An MQL sits at the top of the buying funnel. It is a lead of more general interest that will require further education and follow-up to be converted into sales

opportunity. It is essential that both sales and marketing teams align on whether they require prospects who will need further time to nurture (MQLs), or prospects who have been pre-qualified as showing a business need, relevance and intent to purchase (SQLs).

Sales teams should be aware of the type of lead they are following up with to avoid any disconnect. The approach will be completely different for a prospect who has shown an interest in a client's asset or topic area, versus a prospect who has shown high intent to purchase.

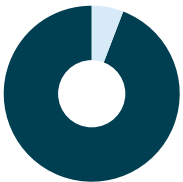
Nurture email tactics

Email marketing may seem trite. But deployed correctly as a nurture tactic, this low-cost touch point consistently generates more quality leads for tech marketers.

1. Provide valuable content with expert insights. Each email should be focused around one topic and include a call to action.
2. Put yourself in the recipient's place when creating an email. Keep the content of your email tied directly to the topic the lead initially converted on.
3. Work with your sales team to determine what qualifies as a "sales qualified lead" and craft your lead nurturing campaigns accordingly. Avoid the temptation to request a meeting from the outset.
4. Stay consistent to the company brand—the emails sent to the prospect should continue to represent all of those things about your business. The familiarity over time will build valuable trust and brand.
5. While the buyer's journey for every product and service can be quite different, research has suggested that on average, prospects receive ten marketing touches from when they become aware of your company until they convert into customers.
6. Add personalization to your outreach. IT decision-makers are much more likely to respond to vendor outreach when they were knowledgeable about the buyers' specific challenges and made them feel like they had one-to-one communication.

An MQL is a prospective customer. It is a business card prospect who meets your defined lead persona and target audience (i.e., job title, industry, company size). A prospect may have an interest in your content, but the reality is that they are not ready to make a purchase and will need to be nurtured down the sales funnel.

It is important that leads are nurtured in the right way. This process can be largely automated and allow sales teams to focus on customers further down the funnel who have demonstrated a level of ongoing engagement. This is achieved using lead nurture emails that are sent automatically to your prospects and customers on a programmed timing. Each respondent's actions and inactions are important in determining the next step in the nurture sequence.



94%

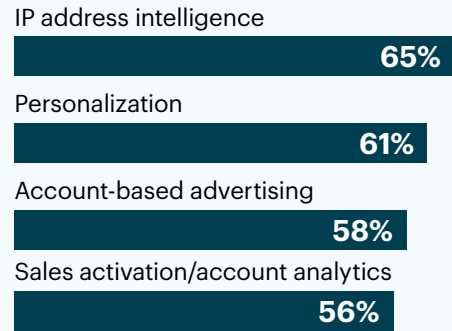
of organizations rate account-based marketing as extremely or very important to their marketing objectives

Source: [Foundry ABM & Intent Benchmarking Study, 2022](#)

Companies who have a clear strategy on how to best engage with and nurture MQLs will generate a higher return on appointments down the line. The main goal, after all, is to on board new customers.

Strong nurture strategies can also use account-based marketing tactics to engage target accounts. According to Foundry's research, 94%

Marketers are using a variety of ABM aspects



Source: [Foundry ABM & Intent Benchmarking Study, 2022](#)

of organizations rate ABM as extremely or very important to their marketing objectives and are using a variety of aspects, such as IP address intelligence (65%), personalization (61%), account-based advertising (58%), and sales activation/account analytics (56%).

Successfully generating tech buyer leads requires a strategic and comprehensive approach that aligns with the evolving needs of the tech industry. By understanding the tech buyer landscape, crafting compelling value propositions, creating engaging content, leveraging digital marketing channels, implementing lead capture and conversion strategies, and continuously measuring and optimizing efforts, businesses can create effective tech buyer lead generation and drive sustainable business success. ■

Case study

How Dynatrace scaled digitally and won 3,180% ROI in a pandemic year

At a glance

Company: Dynatrace

Year established: 2005
(public in 2019)

Marketing objectives:
Increase lead generation from niche audiences, adopt innovative approach to content syndication, fulfill ABM matching with a vendor that has quality first-party data, and generate MQLs through advanced digital platform

Results: 3,180% ROI

Overview

Dynatrace, a global leader in observability, AIOps, and software intelligence, became a public entity in 2019. After the transition, the company experienced rapid growth and began to scale digitally. When the world faced a global pandemic and unprecedented digital demands, Dynatrace needed a vendor with rich first-party data and an innovative approach to generating qualified, engaged leads.

In early 2020, Dynatrace began looking for a vendor that could reach their audience in new ways with relevant, targeted content. They wanted users to be able to self-educate and self-nurture, which required a platform that was engaging and user-centric.

This case study explores how Dynatrace leveraged Foundry's demand gen solution to reach those audiences and create unique content experiences at scale.



Program overview

Region: North America

**Total addressable
market:** 58K+ records

ABM accounts: 5K+

Parameters: SLED, Fed,
Azure, AWS users, IT
decision makers, and
IT executive titles

“What we loved about Foundry was their ability to curate content that guided our audience on a journey. It was a choose-your-own adventure way of engaging, which we had never seen before.”

Amy Horgan
Director of Digital
Capabilities, Dynatrace

Turning to Foundry

In June 2020, Dynatrace turned to Foundry and leveraged their content syndication platform to target niche audiences throughout North America.

While many traditional demand gen platforms do not capture engagement, Foundry's solution tracks every interaction and allows users to binge content at their own pace, driving high quality demand.

In less than 9 months, Dynatrace met internal growth demands and increased MQLs by 30%. With the help of Foundry, Dynatrace was able to attract new audiences while helping the businesses it serves stay afloat in a difficult season.



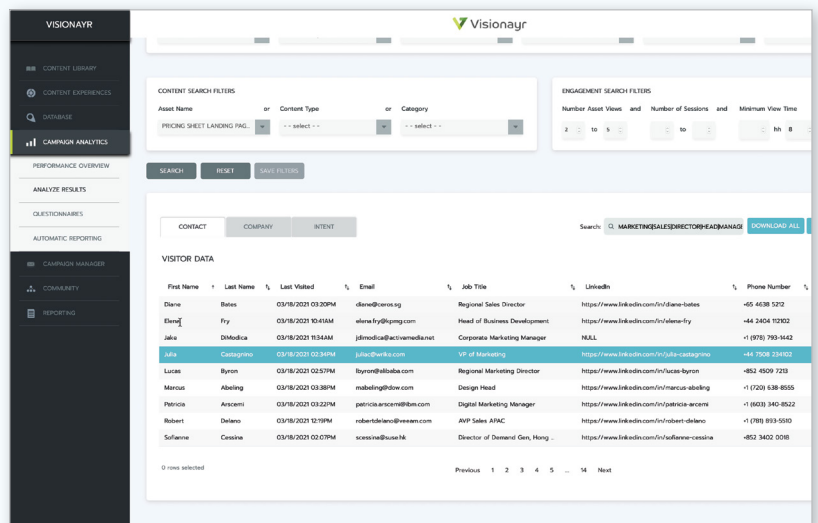
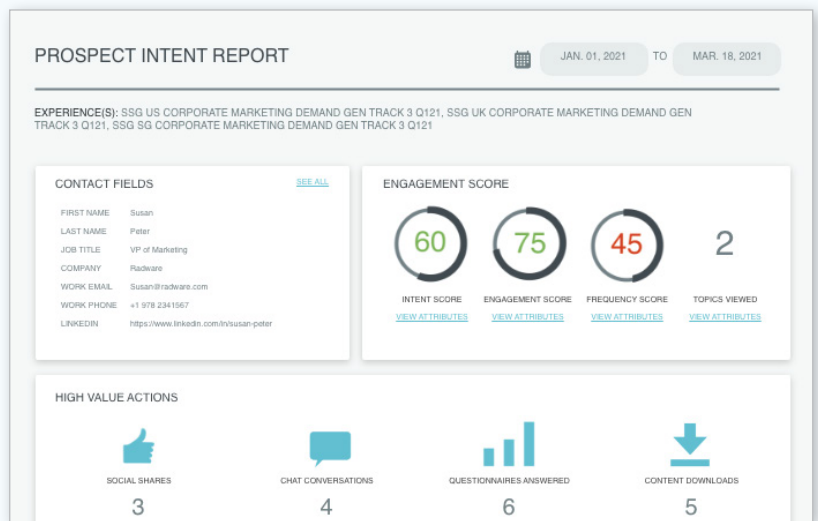
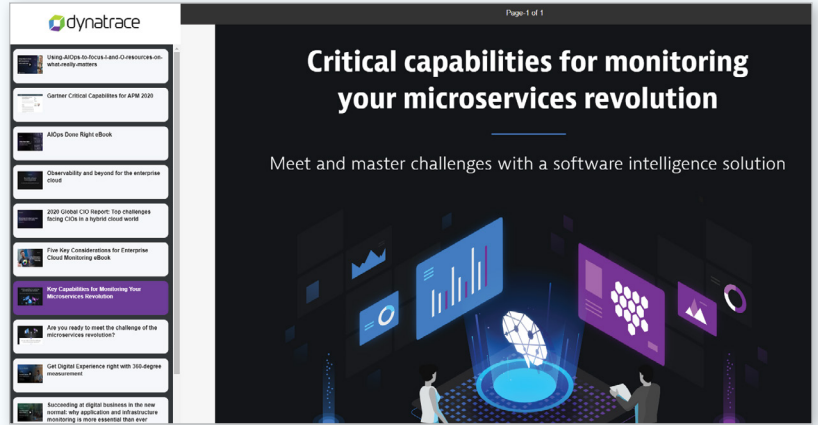
The solution

Dynatrace was tasked with a considerable marketing objective—to grow MQLs by 30%—pre-pandemic. So when the pandemic hit, they needed fresh ways to engage with their audience and reach those goals.

Foundry helped Dynatrace:

- Boost brand awareness by promoting content in a space without
- Drive high quality demand by allowing users to choose their own journey
- Build a picture of intent by capturing each engagement

Amy Horgan describes the solution as “a ‘Netflix-style’ demand gen program. The way that it’s organized and the way that we’re seeing engagement with the content is helping inform us about what our audience truly wants to hear and see.”



Execution

Foundry's demand gen solution operates atop a comprehensive first-party database of 160M+ B2B records. This enabled Foundry to match Dynatrace ABM parameters and reach target audiences efficiently.

- In six months, Dynatrace launched 14 unique demand gen experiences
- Six campaigns targeted government professionals across NORAM, including those with SLED and FED titles
- Seven campaigns targeted IT decision makers using specific cloud applications like Azure and AWS
- Post-campaign reports revealed how users interacted with Dynatrace content and the types of content they consumed

"The data and the feedback we've gotten is informative," said Horgan. "We take what we find out from these programs and apply it to other campaigns, whether email nurture or social engagement."

Results

"Working with Foundry helped us meet growth demands. We were asked to increase MQLs by 30% in a pandemic year, and we did it. I'm not sure we would have been able to do that without Foundry. It's rewarding because we've been able to help a lot of other businesses operate successfully during difficult times. Foundry helped facilitate our growth so that we could help others grow."

Amy Horgan, Director of Digital Capabilities, Dynatrace

1,608
net-new leads

85%
percent net-new

457
last-touch MQLs

3,180%
cumulative ROI

164%
MQLs ROI

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Our trusted brands inform our global data intelligence platform to identify and activate purchasing intent, powering our clients' success. Our marketing services create custom content with marketing impact across video, mobile, social and digital. We simplify complex campaigns that fulfill marketers' global ambitions seamlessly, with consistency that delivers quality results and wins awards. Additional information about Foundry is available at [FoundryCo.com](https://foundryco.com).