



Prospecting Playbook:

Get More Revenue from Your Existing
Client Relationships

Strategy / Planning / Execution
FANS-base Program



Prospecting Strategies

Capture More Revenue from Your FANS-base

To help you maximize your sales and marketing resources, this Playbook includes the following:

- A process outline that includes the steps to take to keep ongoing outreach and communication aimed at this valuable lead source.
- Best practices for engaging with former customers; specifically tips on maximizing the output and avoiding wasted effort.
- Metrics to forecast the amount of activity needed to achieve a desired goal.



► FANS-base Program

FANS is an ML acronym (Former Account, New Success) that we use to describe our efforts to bring in new business from existing relationships.



For most professional service firms, the largest potential revenue source is your existing customers, which includes former clients and relationships with individuals who have gone on to new companies that meet your ideal client profile.

These customers (past and current) already trust your brand and are familiar with your product offering. There are lots of available stats on how much cost is saved when selling to a previous customer vs. acquiring a net new customer, as well as the typical overall boost to the profit margin. [Harvard Business School](#) found that increasing customer retention and repetition rates by just 5% can increase profits anywhere from 25 to 95%.



Strategy / Planning

Using MarketLauncher's own prospecting efforts as an example, here is how our FANS strategy is designed to produce consistent results.

MarketLauncher FANS Metrics

- ML has a content strategy that keeps information going out on a monthly basis via personalized email, to a database of about 4,000 former client contacts and strategic partners/referrers.
- A portion of that database receives phone calls on a quarterly rotating cycle.
- This effort produces an average of \$1M in new business pipeline each quarter.
- Those pipeline opportunities close at an average rate of 40%.
- We built our plan based on a goal to close \$400K in new business from our FANS-base each quarter; \$1.6M each year.

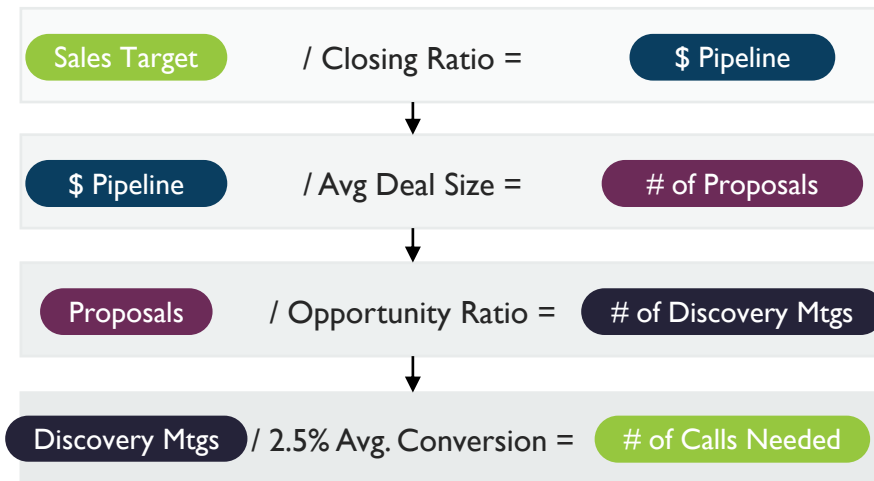


Reverse engineer the goal to establish how much activity is needed:

- To achieve our goal of \$400K in FANS-base new business, requires that we close approximately 8 deals per quarter (based on average project deal size).
- A closing ratio of 40% means our efforts must produce 20 proposals per quarter.
- 60-70% of meetings in the FANS-base typically convert to a proposal.
- This means we need 10 meetings a month (30 for the quarter) to ensure we capture 20 proposals and close 8 deals.
- We know that overall our FANS program averages a 4% conversion each month from contact to meeting; 2.5% conversion on activity.
- This equates to 400 calls to approximately 250 unique contacts needed each month to produce 10 meetings.



Once you apply your own metrics to the equations we've shared here, you can work out how much activity is needed month to month to establish your own predictable pipeline.



Apply Extra Effort as Needed

Because we are calling 250 unique contacts each month, we aren't hitting our total database in any given year.

This can cause portions of the database to fall dormant unintentionally.

Therefore, sometimes it pays to occasionally allocate additional resources to re-energize a portion of the database that has gone dormant.

We recently added a campaign for that purpose (321 calls to 220 dormant contacts) which resulted in an additional 8 meetings in 30 days.

This gave us a 30% boost in the pipeline that quarter.



Execution

You need a dedicated effort to fully maximize the potential of your FANS-base. Conventional wisdom would imply that FANS will reach out when they have a need. But that is only partially true. Here is how the ML FANS program evolved to a predictable model year over year.

- In 2016, MarketLauncher experienced a 20% spike in new business with over 30% of new customers coming from people we already knew. That included former client contacts who had moved to new companies and brought us along with them, current clients who shared their positive experiences with colleagues, and friends and followers who spread the word.

| | | | | |
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---|
| Year 1 | ▲ 20% growth in new biz | \$1.8M > \$2.2M | \$660K from FANS | ✓ |
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---|

- We realized early on that, while providing a great customer experience is essential, so is proactively nurturing and developing that FANS-base to get the most sales opportunities possible. The following year, we targeted campaigns directly to our FANS and saw new business spike again by another 10%.

| | | | | |
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---|
| Year 2 | ▲ 10% growth in new biz | \$2.2M > \$2.4M | \$720K from FANS | ✓ |
|--------|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---|

- In 2018, we assigned a dedicated business development manager to focus on proactive FANS outreach, including targeted content and personalized phone follow up. This time, our new business revenue jumped 34% with more than 50% coming from our FANS.

| | | | | |
|--------|-------------------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| Year 3 | ▲ 34% growth in new biz | \$2.4M > 3.2M | \$1.6M from FANS | ✓ |
|--------|-------------------------|---------------|------------------|---|

- By using HubSpot as our primary outreach platform, we were able to use the analytics tools to give us full visibility into lead pipeline and automated the process to give us more time for sales activity.
- Over the last three years, ML has seen the FANS-base continue to increase revenue, contributing to 80% growth in 2021.





Michelle Haarde
Vice President of Client Services

How do you go about winning back your former customers and creating FANS?

- Pro-actively implement communication strategies to re-engage former customers
- Develop a process for tracking the effort in your CRM
- Provide management visibility and sales accountability
- Inform strategic direction based on where you are seeing the best traction



Step 1: Define Your Market

The following elements can systematically work to help you get the most from your customers and followers of your brand:

- Start by defining your total addressable market of FANS.
- Determine how far back you want to evaluate your former customers (at ML, we initially looked back 10 years).
- Identify all the potential stakeholders for each of your clients and keep track of their activity on social media and keep them updated in your CRM.
- Take note when they are reacting to content, moving to a new company, getting a promotion, or experiencing a career-changing event. You would be surprised to learn how many of those relationships moved on to new companies.

Group your FANS into these 4 buckets:

- Former Clients
- Former Client at a New Company
- Former Prospects that were Closed / Lost
- Strategic Partners with Cross-over Customer-base



Step 2: Categorize Your FANS



The larger your TAM, the more categories you might need to assign in order to prioritize where you spend your time.

Establish categories to prioritize your outreach.

These are the categories we use at MarketLauncher:

- Former Clients
- Former Clients / New Company
- Prospect Closed / Lost – Reengage
- ABM Strategy: Additional business units and stakeholders in existing client companies
- On the Radar: Lower in priority, but don't lose sight
- Strategic Partner: Identify partners that are likely to have a customer base that crosses yours and there is mutual benefit to referring business
- One the Move: A client contact that has left and you want to make sure you identify where they land
- HOT TARGET: Something has triggered a need; working to schedule a meeting
- Clicks: Someone who has been reacting to content you are sending or visiting your web site
- Not a Fit – remove from the mix so there is no wasted time





Step 3: Set Realistic Goals

- Set your revenue goal and work backwards from there by applying your conversion metrics at each stage of your sales funnel (see formula on page 4).
- Understand your outreach conversion metrics:
 - Volume of calls it takes to reach a prospect
 - Number of reaches to get a meeting
 - Number of meetings to get to Opportunity
 - Number of Opportunities to get to Close/Won goal
- Track your goals:
 - By understanding your Average Deal Size and Length of Sales Cycle, you can then forecast your growth goals.

The Most Critical KPI:

Track revenue moving into your pipeline.

- At ML, our goal is \$1M/Quarter in Opportunity pipeline.
- We set our activity goal based on what's required to hit that number every quarter.
- We have achieved 8 consecutive quarters tracking this metric and achieving our new business goal.



Step 4: Develop a Communication Plan

Here are the top 3 strategies we use to nurture clients into new revenue:

1.

Maintain a Regular One-Way Dialogue.

Reach out with thought leadership content on a regular basis via email to stay top-of-mind. This should rotate on a cycle to mix things up:

- Emails to “check in”
- Promote your latest blog, “I thought this might be of interest”
- Send new thought leadership content, “Our latest client success story”.

This is all part of what we call the **one-way dialogue**. Then, monitor what your audience is reacting to in order to gauge their motivations and interests.

2.

Pro-Active Follow-up.

Proactive follow-up means using insights from content reaction and social media activity to determine when to reach out to your FANs – particularly when you have a new story to tell or when you notice something in their life has changed.



3.

Calling Strategy.

The FANS calling campaign will depend on multiple factors: what you already know about your FANS, your sales cycle, the client's fiscal year and how long the client has been inactive.

At ML, we develop a calling cadence based on the category we've assigned each target, and designate a specific month to follow-up. If progress isn't made, the lead stays in the monthly email cadence and is recycled back in for phone follow up in 6 months, unless behavior such as engagement with email content or company news or a career change warrants pulling them back into a cycle earlier.

A typical calling sequence is every 6 months, but this can be shorter based on what we learn during communication.

Some best practice tips:

- Be prepared - always approach the conversation with a solution to one of their challenges. The goal is to transition them from a passive consumer of your content into someone who is ready for a serious conversation.
- Review their website / news and understand what is happening in their business.
- Call with a purpose - bring value to the call by sharing best practices or techniques they would be interested in hearing about.
- Check in with the client or offer a special promotion.
- Always ask for the meeting if it makes sense. Don't be afraid to ask your clients what it would take for them to come back.



Real World Tips from a Pro

Dyan Klein
Vice President of Business Development



Spend some time daily scanning your publications – follow information that helps inform where to spend time in your FANS base.

“I am on LinkedIn daily – at least 30 minutes scanning my feed, following active/past client companies and relationships – this gives me real time updates on their business initiatives.

“A real example: I was following a client contact from a company ML had worked with for several years. Our contact had left the client company and moved on to a similar position at a new company. I reached out on LinkedIn and congratulated him on his new role. As he started to post regularly, I would comment and like the posts. One day he posted about hiring SDR’s, I sent a personal message that we should talk further about this need and see if ML could augment what they are trying to do. He responded with an introduction to the company’s global CMO for a Discovery call.”

“I read ZoomInfo Scoops/updates, PE Hubwire for investment updates to inform market activity, look for clients receiving funding. Triggers like this help me be more strategic with outreach to FANS – calling with informed knowledge on their business, and congratulating them on recent funding, – further discussing what initiatives are being put in place based on funding, etc.

“I regularly review client websites / news pages – this is a good place to view before a call – what are they talking about that is something you can reference – if it’s there, it’s important to them and should be important to you when calling. Front page of website – what are they featuring? Look for updates/changes, information that is valuable to call with purpose.”





Stephen Kirkpatrick
Sales Content Manager

More About the Importance of Content

The goal of any FANS strategy is to remind the client you exist, which means staying in front of them in a timely manner to stay top of mind. One way to do this is to get your thought leadership content directly into their hands in a personalized way that your customer will find helpful (blog posts, social media, podcasts).

At ML, we create a monthly cadence of thought leadership blogs, and use social media posts recognizing employee accomplishments and promotions.

Use an email marketing platform (like Marketo, Pardot, HubSpot) to push out monthly content to your FANS-base.

Let your CRM work for you – see who is opening / clicking on emails to direct further strategic outreach.

Avoid just randomly sending Call-to-Action Emails (CTA's) to your FANS.

If you have a surplus of content already created, you can pick and choose based on what each customer might find relevant and send it off with a personalized 1:1 email.

Categorization of the FANS is key here, so ensure you're only sending content that will resonate with each customer.

Offer a special promotion to your FANS. All FANS want to feel appreciated, which is why sending out a special offer has been one of our most effective reengagement strategies.

At ML, every year in Q2, we reach out to our FANS base and offer a special promotion on Target Market Development work at a 20% discount.

This is a great way to show customer appreciation and tap into a new stream of revenue.





Invest in the Best Tools to Manage Your Data

Technology is key to helping you manage all of your data so that you can analyze, report and nimbly pivot but it's not enough to simply license products. You must also identify internal owners of the technology and invest in their education to use it to its fullest potential. ML's entire team is encouraged and supported in keeping current with all the software we license and most have obtained... and maintain... multiple accreditations. Most software publishers have online courses available that make this quite easy and inexpensive.

“We use HubSpot’s strong automation capabilities to track a variety of data points. We also have team members responsible for ensuring our data is complete and accurate and updated regularly, using ZoomInfo and other list sources. We have full adoption of the HubSpot sales platform at ML and each team member understands the importance of tracking every touchpoint within HubSpot.”

The HubSpot Flywheel & How it Aligns Your Success with Your Client's Success



The [HubSpot Flywheel](#) model explains the momentum gained when you align your entire organization around delivering a remarkable client experience. How fast it spins and how much value it delivers is impacted by a number of factors.

ML is a HubSpot Platinum Partner and keen proponent of the Flywheel model. Both of our companies share a “client first” attitude. Embracing a client-centric corporate philosophy will align your success with your clients’, to create delight, loyalty, and trust.

At ML we employ a personalized nurturing process to stay connected and help create the remarkable client experience the Flywheel espouses. Our process is very similar to our overall ABS methodology but personalized to this unique audience of buyers who have familiarity with our brand.

Once you have invested in the foundational strategy, processes and tools, the execution is quite simple, low cost... and effective.





MARKETLAUNCHER

Thank You

We hope you found this playbook helpful.

If you would like to learn more about MarketLauncher and how we can help you achieve your lead development goals, visit us at www.marketlauncher.com.