

What's Holding Back Your Manufacturing Marketing?

6 Questions to Ask Before You Spend More on Marketing Tactics

Six key questions—and brief answers—based on nearly four decades of manufacturing marketing experience.

Developed by **Achinta Mitra | Tiecas, Inc.**



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Ask the right
questions!



The Problem May Not Be What You Think

Your website may not be generating good leads. Sales may complain that Marketing sends them “crappy” leads. Inquiries may come in but never turn into serious conversations, RFQs, or sales opportunities.

These may look like separate problems.

They often aren't.

Before you spend more time and money on another marketing tactic, step back and look at what may be causing the problems.

Manufacturing marketing rarely succeeds because of one tactic working in isolation. Your website, search visibility, content, positioning, lead generation, Sales follow-up, and measurement all affect one another.

That is why fixing the most obvious symptom does not always fix the underlying problem.

1. Is Your Website Really the Problem?

An underperforming website is an easy target.

Maybe it looks dated. Traffic is disappointing. Visitors are not converting. Sales says the website is not generating useful leads.

A redesign may be necessary—but changing the appearance alone may do very little if the underlying problems remain.

For example:

- Are the right prospects finding you?
- Can technical buyers quickly determine whether you can solve their problem?
- Does your content provide enough substance to evaluate your capabilities?
- Do you give visitors logical next steps beyond a generic Contact Us button?
- Does the site give prospects convincing reasons to choose you over other qualified suppliers?

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A new design cannot compensate for weak positioning, poor content, limited visibility, or an unclear buyer journey.

The better question is: What is preventing the website from contributing more effectively to sales opportunities?

Want to examine your marketing systematically?

The **Manufacturing Marketing Performance Diagnostic** is a 48-question self-assessment covering eight areas that influence manufacturing marketing performance.

[Complete the assessment yourself for \\$179 →](#)

Leads May Be the Symptom, Not The Problem

2. Why Aren't Marketing Leads Turning into Serious Sales Conversations?

You are generating inquiries, but Sales says they are poor quality.

Or perhaps inquiries look promising initially but rarely become serious conversations, RFQs, or legitimate sales opportunities.

The natural response is often:

"We need better lead generation."

Maybe. But the problem could begin much earlier—or later.

Your targeting may be too broad. Your message may attract companies that are not a good fit. Your website may not qualify visitors effectively. Marketing and Sales may have different definitions of a good lead. Follow-up may be inconsistent.

If you only measure the number of inquiries generated, you may never discover where the real breakdown occurs.

Lead quality is not just a lead-generation issue. It is connected to targeting, positioning, content, qualification, follow-up, and measurement.

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3. Do Sales and Marketing Agree on What a Good Lead Looks Like?

This is a common source of frustration.

Marketing reports that it generated 40 leads. Sales says, **“Most of them were junk.”**

Both may be telling the truth.

If Sales and Marketing have never agreed on what constitutes a qualified lead or legitimate sales opportunity, lead-volume reports can create a misleading picture of performance.

For manufacturers, qualification may depend on factors such as company fit, application, technical requirements, buying role, timing, project potential, and willingness to engage.

Marketing also needs feedback after the handoff.

Was the lead contacted? Was it qualified? Did it become an opportunity? Was an RFQ issued? Why was it rejected?

Without that visibility, Marketing may keep investing in sources that generate responses but little sales value.

Before trying to generate more leads, make sure everyone agrees on the definition of a good lead.

More Tactics Do Not Automatically Create a Marketing Program

4. Are Your Marketing Tactics Working Together—or Just Happening at the Same Time?

Your company may already be investing in several marketing activities:

SEO. Email. Content. LinkedIn. Trade shows. Advertising. Sales collateral. Website updates.

That can look like an active marketing program. But activity is not the same as coordination and reinforcement.

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Ask yourself whether those efforts are:

- Focused on the same business priorities.
- Targeting the same markets and buyers.
- Communicating a consistent value proposition.
- Providing useful information throughout the buying process.
- Guiding prospects toward appropriate next steps.
- Generating information that Sales can use.
- Measured against meaningful business outcomes.

When each tactic operates independently, marketing becomes fragmented. One supplier handles SEO, someone internally posts on LinkedIn, Sales asks for collateral, another vendor runs advertising, and the website gets updated when someone has time.

Lots of activity. Nobody owns the overall result.

Think the problem may be broader than one tactic?

My [30-Day Manufacturing Marketing Acceleration Plan](#) is designed to identify what is holding marketing back, establish priorities, and develop a practical Plan of Action before more money is committed to execution.

[Explore the 30-Day Acceleration Plan →](#)

5. Are You Measuring Marketing Activity—or Business Impact?

- Website traffic increased.
- Search rankings improved.
- Email opens look good.
- LinkedIn engagement is up.

Those numbers can be useful.

But management ultimately wants to know:

Is Marketing contributing to qualified sales opportunities, RFQs, pipeline, and revenue?

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If measurement stops when someone fills out a form, you may know which tactics generate responses without knowing which ones generate business.

Industrial buying journeys are rarely simple. A prospect may discover an article through search, visit your website several times, read technical content, see an email, return weeks later, and finally submit an RFQ.

No single metric tells that story. You do not need perfect attribution.

You do need enough visibility to make better decisions about where to invest—and where to stop investing.

The Most Important Question

6. Do You Know What to Fix First?

This is where many companies get stuck.

- Weak lead generation does not automatically mean you need more advertising.
- Poor website performance does not automatically mean you need a redesign.
- Weak search visibility does not automatically mean you need more blog posts.
- Sales complaining about poor leads does not necessarily mean Marketing needs to generate more of them.

The real issue may involve targeting, positioning, website content, search visibility, differentiation, lead qualification, Sales follow-up, measurement, resources, ownership—or several of these working together.

That is why I recommend assessing the broader marketing picture **before prescribing another tactic.**

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Diagnose Before You Spend More

The purpose of an assessment is not to produce a score for the sake of a score. It is to help answer three practical questions:

- Where are the weaknesses?
- How are they connected?
- Which ones deserve attention first?

Once you understand that, you can develop an action plan that ties individual tactics together around the business results you actually want.

Before approving the next website project, ad campaign, SEO initiative, content program, or marketing technology purchase, ask one more question:

Are we addressing the underlying problem—or simply adding more activity?

Two Ways to Move Forward

Ready to Look More Closely at What's Holding Your Marketing Back?

You have two ways to take the next step.

Prefer to Assess It Yourself?

Manufacturing Marketing Performance Diagnostic — \$179

The Manufacturing Marketing Performance Diagnostic gives you a structured way to evaluate your marketing across eight areas.

It includes 48 questions, explanations of why each area matters, Diagnostic Flags that highlight potentially consequential weaknesses, and automatic scoring that helps identify where closer attention may be needed.

You complete it yourself, at your own pace.

Get the Manufacturing Marketing Performance Diagnostic →

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Prefer Experienced Help?

[30-Day Manufacturing Marketing Acceleration Plan](#)

If you would rather have me work with you to assess your current situation, identify the important gaps, establish priorities, and determine what should happen next, the 30-Day Manufacturing Marketing Acceleration Plan provides a customized path forward.

Whichever path you choose, the principle is the same:

Understand the problem before spending more money trying to solve it.

[Explore the 30-Day Acceleration Plan →](#)

What's Coming Next

Planning a Website Redesign?

Coming Soon: Industrial Website Redesign Planning Kit

A website redesign can be a significant investment. Before you begin, it is worth asking whether you are fixing the issues that actually affect marketing and sales performance—or simply putting a new design on top of old problems.

My upcoming Industrial Website Redesign Planning Kit will help manufacturers think through the strategic, content, buyer-experience, and technical issues that should be addressed before the redesign begins.

About Achinta Mitra

I'm a Mechanical Engineer with an MBA in Marketing and have spent nearly four decades helping manufacturers, industrial distributors, and engineering companies market technical products and services.

I founded Tiecas in 1987 to combine engineering understanding with marketing expertise—especially for companies dealing with complex buying processes, long sales cycles, technical decision-makers, and the challenge of turning marketing activity into meaningful sales opportunities.

Achinta Mitra, *Founder & President*

Tiecas, Inc. — Manufacturing Marketing