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## For Immediate Release

For a review copy of the e-book or an interview with the author, please contact Dottie DeHart, DeHart & Company Public Relations, at (828) 325-4966 or [Dottie@dehartandcompany.com](mailto:Dottie@dehartandcompany.com).



# The Prospect-Driven Launch: Three Ways to Put Potential Customers to Work Pushing Your New B2B Product (Without Putting Them on the Payroll!)

*If your “old school” new product launches aren’t delivering exciting results, there’s a good chance you’re working too hard. Dan Adams—author of an informative (and free) e-book on the subject—says the 21<sup>st</sup> century solution is to put your prospects to work for you.*

**Cuyahoga Falls, OH** (June 2009)—Want to hear some good news? If you’re launching a B2B product, your job is far easier than that of the poor saps who must convince a horde of faceless, fickle, and uninvested consumers to buy their new gadget or gizmo. In their world, a new product launch requires a good amount of guesswork and “elbow grease” by the vat. In yours, on the other hand, your potential customers can do much of the heavy lifting for you—and according to Dan Adams, they’ll do it willingly.

“Compared to end consumers, your B2B buyers are more insightful, interested, rational, and fewer in number,” notes Adams, president of Advanced Industrial Marketing, Inc. “They are the perfect marketing partners for you. If you don’t take advantage of their clear-headed wisdom, your new product launch is going to suffer.”

Actually, Adams’ proprietary B2B product development process is built on a similar partner-with-your-prospect principle (and is the subject of his 2008 book, *New Product Blueprinting: The Handbook for B2B Organic Growth*). But while it deeply involves the potential

customer in “early stage marketing,” that’s only part of the story. Adams says your prospects should play a vital role in every stage of your marketing process.

“Traditional product launch methodologies don’t mesh well with the way people work now,” he adds. “In a business world fueled by digital technology and characterized by the free exchange of information, it makes more sense to let your prospects find you on their own timetable and spread the word about your new product organically.”

In his new e-book, *12 New Rules of B2B Product Launch* (26 pages, free download at [www.b2bproductlaunch.com/e-book](http://www.b2bproductlaunch.com/e-book)), Adams shares three ways to put your prospects to work:

**1. Make it easy for prospects to find and study your new product.** Think less about helping your sales reps convince prospects. Think more about helping prospects find your product when *they* are ready. Research by MarketingSherpa ([www.marketingsherpa.com](http://www.marketingsherpa.com)) shows that customers now find suppliers—not the other way around—in 80 percent of B2B transactions.

B2B buyers like to research, analyze, and make rational group decisions. You can either make their job difficult or easy. Easy looks like this: Your B2B prospect does a Google search using his favorite keyword, and a top hit has some content he finds interesting... which happens to be linked to your website. To make this work, you have to be *accessible* and *interesting*: Send out news releases full of content that will appeal to readers (and editors) of online magazines, journals, and blogs. Include both a link to your website and the keywords your prospects will likely use in their Google searches. When prospects search, they’ll find articles that lead them to your website. If your website is packed with interesting presentations, videos, comparisons, etc., they could spend an hour doing the work your sales reps normally do.

**2. Encourage word of mouth marketing.** A kind word about your new product from a trusted colleague or expert will be far more convincing than a spiel from your sales rep. Consider these six approaches from Adams’ e-book:

- ✓Identify and promote to industry thought leaders. Use communications to VIP editors & bloggers.
- ✓Promote to people *already* in groups—e.g., trade shows & conferences—so they can discuss your product.
- ✓Seek opinions from industry experts: Commission lab tests... seek evaluations... create advisory panels.
- ✓Gain testimonials from respected early adopters. Get advance samples in the hands of willing customers.
- ✓Locate the key decision influencers at prospect companies and build relations with them.
- ✓Make it easy for these decision influencers to tell their colleagues about your product, with leave-behind presentations & sales aids... e-mails with links to interesting videos, etc.... and newsletters rich in content.

**3. Let your prospects help you figure out your new product launch message and media mix.** To get the message right, Adams recommends uncovering customers’ *hot buttons* during the same “voice-of-the-customer” interviews you (hopefully) used to help design your new product.

Then you shamelessly use *their* specific language in your advertising copy, as keywords to attract their Google searches, etc. (In fact, Adams' company, AIM, has developed B2B interviewing software that lets you data-mine your customers' comments for this.)

"And while you're at it, ask this simple question, 'How does your company learn about new ideas?'" suggests Adams. "This lets you understand your target market's media preferences—trade shows, seminars, websites, e-mail, and so forth—so you can optimize your media mix."

If you *just* put prospects to work with these three steps, will you have a great new product launch? Nope. There's still plenty of work left for you and your hard-working sales force. But it sure makes sense to let prospects carry much of the load. And here's the really good news: When you put your B2B prospects to work, they actually *like* it.

"Basically, you're making it easy for them to do what they *naturally* do," notes Adams. "They're going to research new ideas. They're going to share their opinions with colleagues. And they're going to give advice to suppliers clever enough to ask for it. Bottom line: You'll have a much better product launch when you recognize your B2B prospects are willing and able to help you with it."

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**About the Author:**

Dan Adams is all about B2B product development: His 2008 hardcover book, *New Product Blueprinting: The Handbook for B2B Organic Growth* ([www.newproductblueprinting.com](http://www.newproductblueprinting.com)) clarifies the "fuzzy front end" of innovation, and his 2009 e-book, *12 New Rules of B2B Product Launch* (free download at [www.b2bproductlaunch.com/e-book](http://www.b2bproductlaunch.com/e-book)) boosts launch success. As president of Advanced Industrial Marketing, he conducts training workshops in every region of the world.

**Illustrations:**

Most of the graphics from the e-book are available for reprint upon request. (Please specify desired format and resolution.)

**For more information, visit [www.b2bproductlaunch.com/e-book](http://www.b2bproductlaunch.com/e-book).**