

A B2B MarketView® Report

**\*\*SAMPLE REPORT\*\***  
How should you approach your target market?  
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# Welding in Automotive Assembly

For YourCompany

Marketing guidance  
for *your* market  
segment

Created exclusively for  
SubmitterName

## MARKET SEGMENT OVERVIEW

Offering Class: **Equipment**

Ultimate Industry: **Automotive**

Value Chain Position: **1 Business between us and end-consumer**





## B2B MarketView® Report

### Marketing guidance for **Company Name's Welding in Automotive Assembly** market segment

*Created on July 15*



## Realities of B2B marketing

Compared to B2C, your customers probably have more knowledge, interest, objectivity, and foresight... and there are fewer of them. These are great advantages, but many B2B marketers fail to take advantage of their advantages. Further complicating matters, each B2B market segment is unique... so copying marketing methods from colleagues or your last job practically guarantees you'll sub-optimize.

This diagnostic changes the game, with market-specific recommendations drawn from a library containing hundreds of possibilities. The answers you provided to questions at [www.b2bmarketview.com](http://www.b2bmarketview.com)—for your market segment—will now let you optimize your early-stage marketing (understanding customer needs) and late-stage marketing (promoting solutions for these needs).



## About “market segments”

This report concerns a single market segment of interest to you. The AIM Institute defines a market segment as a “cluster of customers with similar needs.” Here are some observations:

- It is more efficient to develop offerings for a market segment than for many individual customers.

- It is more effective to innovate for each market segment than to offer a “one-size-fits-all” solution for all markets.
- The optimal unit for innovating and marketing is therefore the market segment: Know yours well!
- Many B2B marketers are responsible for several segments, each with its own unique characteristics.

## Using this report

Your report contains three sections: B2B Index Score, B2B Market Map Chart, and Recommendations:

**B2B Index Score:** The higher your market segment’s index, the “more B2B” it is. This is your *engagement potential*. A high index score lets you enter customers’ worlds to gain valuable insight into their needs (early-stage marketing)... and communicate a compelling message about your solution (late-stage marketing).

**B2B Market Map Chart:** Any given market segment’s B2B Index score should be the same for you as for your competitors. But the B2B Market Map Chart adds another component: *your* market position. You may be the leading supplier, a follower, or not supplying at all... and this impacts many of your marketing activities.

**Recommendations:** This is the heart of your report. You’ll receive specific recommendations on marketing practices for your market segment. These are organized around key marketing “jobs” that you will likely do... eight for early-stage marketing, and seven for late-stage marketing.

## B2B Index Score

Generally speaking, you have more potential to engage customers if they are businesses (B2B) than end-consumers (B2C). But not always. A better approach is to understand each market’s underlying engagement factors. The AIM Institute has identified five... which make up your market’s B2B Index Chart.

**Knowledge:** If your customers have high knowledge, they are *able* to help you innovate for them... and they’ll understand the benefits of your offering when launched. Customers have high knowledge when their jobs require a lot of training and they spend significant time thinking about this part of their job.

**Interest:** Customers with high interest are *willing* to help you innovate on their behalf... and are eager to receive your new offering when launched. Customer interest is high when your offering can strongly impact business success and when it can lead to personal recognition and reward for the individual.

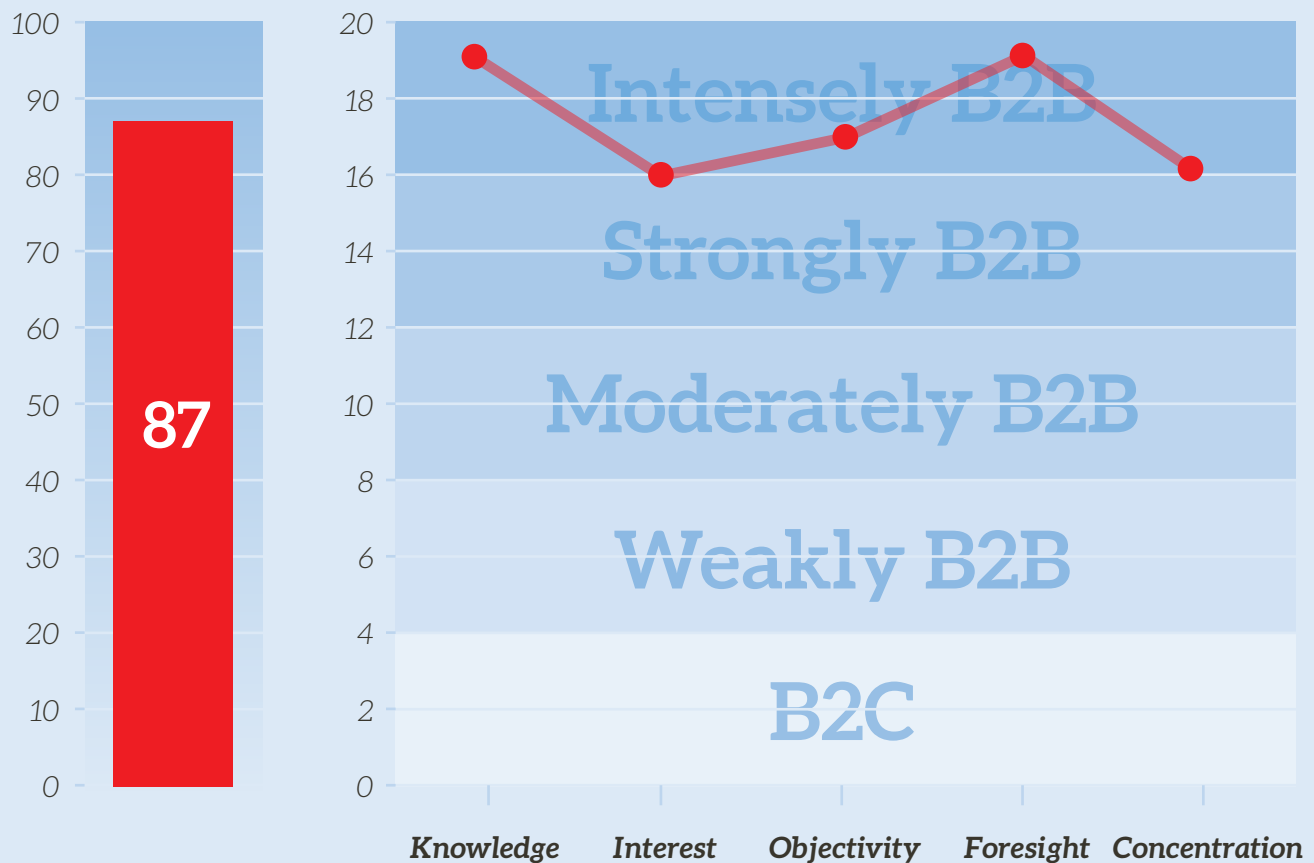
**Objectivity:** High customer objectivity lets you understand their needs in logical, stable terms... and you can later promote your new offering in the same way. Objectivity is higher when multiple people are involved in buying decisions, and when they are held accountable to policies, procedures and superiors.

**Foresight:** Customers with high foresight can explain what your offering should do *before* you design and develop it... and can appreciate its advantages before trying it themselves. Such customers are able to predict the impact of an offering beforehand, and then measure economic results when using it.

**Concentration:** A highly-concentrated market segment is one in which a few large customers represent most of the market's buying power. These customers are easy to identify and reach when you want to understand their needs... and when you're ready to promote your new offering.

## Your B2B Index Chart

Your market segment's B2B Index score is ... **87** (Intensely B2B)

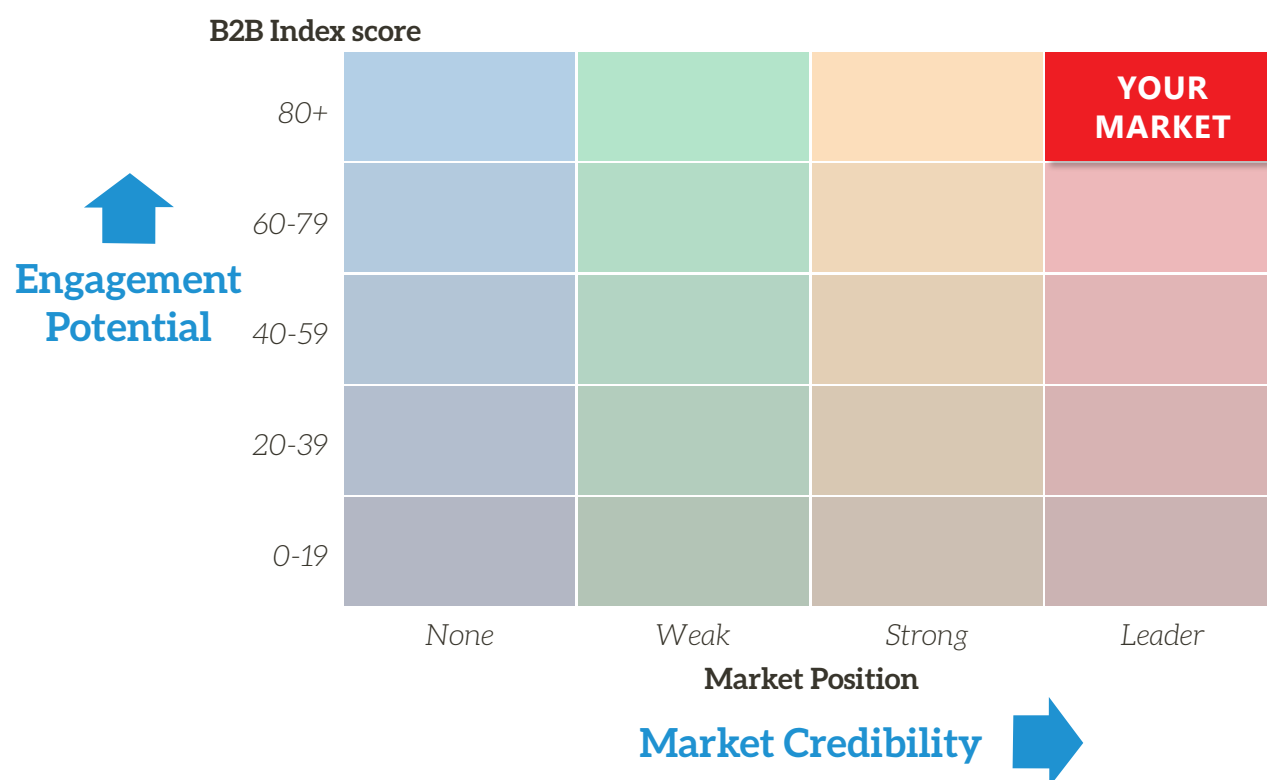


# B2B Market Map Chart

Your market segment's B2B Index—your engagement potential—is displayed on the vertical axis. Your market position is displayed on the horizontal axis. This is how customers in this segment see you... as a leading supplier on one hand, or a complete unknown in the other extreme.

Your market position impacts your market credibility. If you are a leading supplier, customers will be more willing to explain their needs to you during early-stage marketing... and more receptive to reviewing your prototypes and new-product promotions in late-stage marketing.

## Your B2B Market Map Chart



## Implications for your market segment

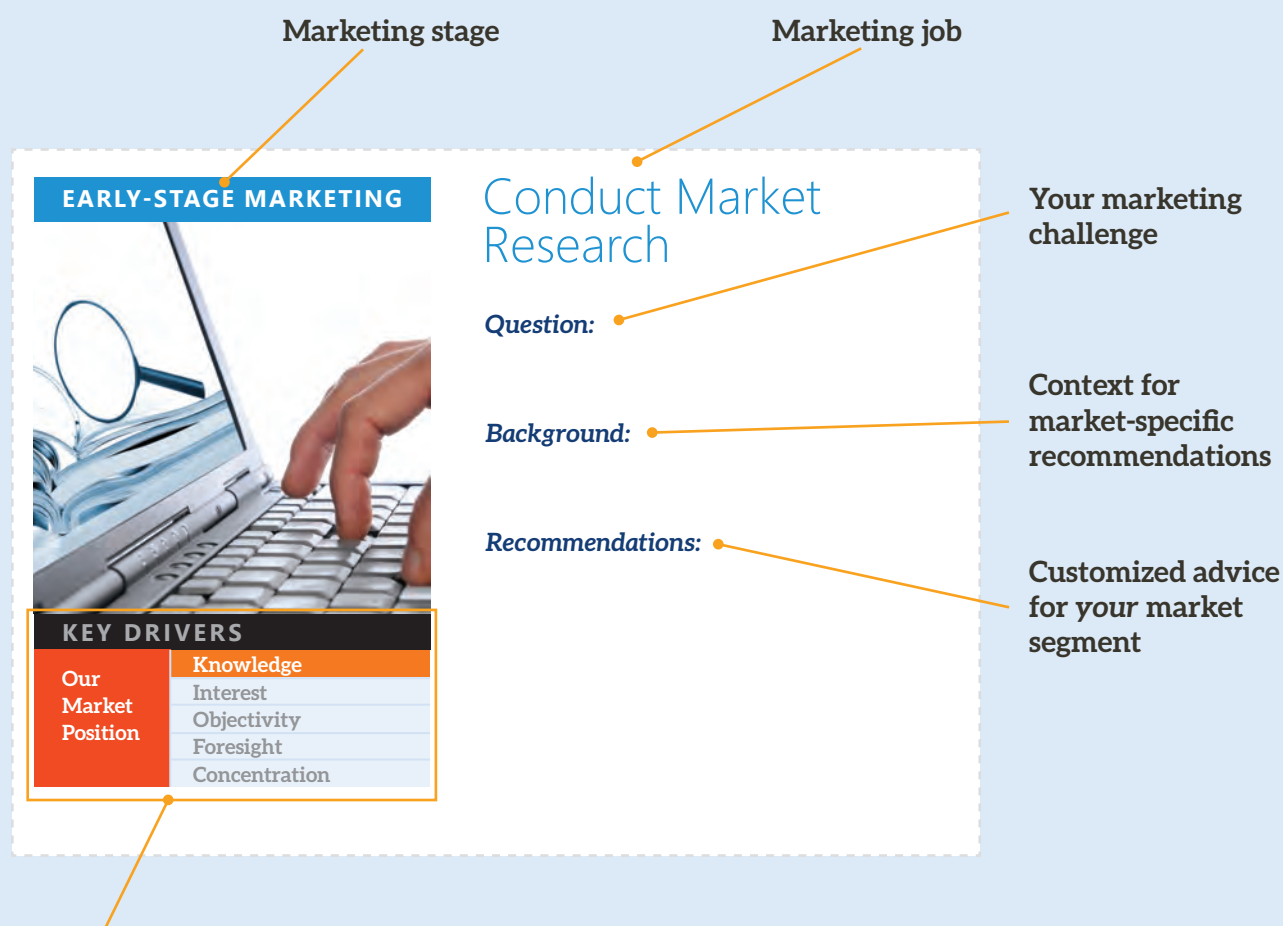
This market has a very high level of engagement potential: Customers are completely capable of giving you insights into their world so you can innovate on their behalf. They are also very well qualified to understand and appreciate your innovative offerings when you launch them. Because you are seen as a market leader, your requests for interviews and tours are likely to be granted, and your launch promotions respected. You are in a very enviable position.

# Recommendations

The rest of this report contains market-specific recommendations for your target market segment. These recommendations are organized around 15 “jobs” B2B marketers are typically concerned with at one time or another.... Eight for early-stage marketing, and seven for late-stage marketing.

The 15 recommendations in this report are drawn from hundreds of possibilities, and have been selected based on the unique characteristics of your market segment. In some cases, the recommendation “drivers” could be Market Position and Customer Knowledge for example. For others, they might be Customer Objectivity and Concentration. The illustration below serves as your guide.

## How to Understand the Recommendations



For each marketing job (e.g. *Conduct Market Research*), there are two factors that drive *Recommendations*. These are highlighted in color... in this case, *Our Market Position* & *Customer Knowledge*.



## EARLY-STAGE MARKETING



### KEY DRIVERS

Our  
Market  
Position

Knowledge  
Interest  
Objectivity  
Foresight  
Concentration

## Conduct Market Research

**Question:** How do we learn about market trends, size, growth rate, competition, discontinuities, etc.?

**Background:** A basic “shopping list” for understanding a market segment includes size, growth, structure, trends, customers, and competitors. When approaching unfamiliar markets, it’s often wise to begin with secondary research, followed by primary research, e.g. direct customer interviewing.

**Recommendations:** You are a leading supplier, so your market knowledge is probably high. Supplement this with secondary market research you purchase. You have excellent market credibility and your market contacts are highly knowledgeable—so also use personal visits by your commercial and technical staff to increase your market knowledge. Assign “perennial” questions to ask customers on an ongoing basis and store this market intelligence in a central place.

## EARLY-STAGE MARKETING



### KEY DRIVERS

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## Uncover Market Needs

**Question:** How do we diverge to reach a full range of desired customer outcomes in this segment?

**Background:** Most new offerings fail due to poor market insight... and incur either errors of omission or commission. The former occurs when you fail to uncover unarticulated customer needs. To avoid such errors, begin by diverging to all possible customer outcomes, not by testing your hypotheses.

**Recommendations:** Customers are very knowledgeable and able to describe the outcomes they would like... and why they are important. Customer contacts are also very interested in possible improvements, so they should be quite willing to discuss their needs. This is an ideal situation for qualitative Discovery interviews. Project your notes during the meeting, and let the customer “lead” the interview by asking “what else?”... instead of using an interview guide.

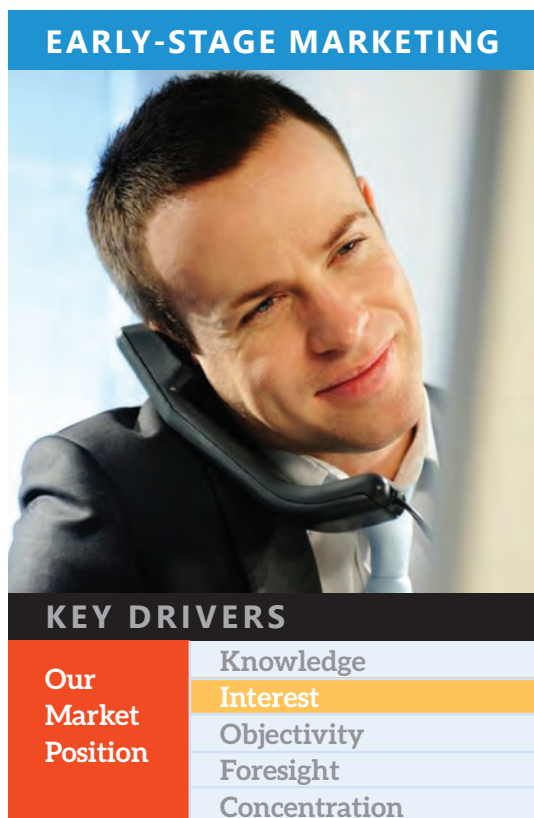


## Prioritize Market Needs

**Question:** How do we converge to those outcomes customers will reward us for satisfying?

**Background:** Errors of commission occur when suppliers try to improve the wrong customer outcomes... often because they started the process with their own solutions, not an open mind. Instead, only pursue outcomes customers have rated as both important and currently unsatisfied.

**Recommendations:** Customers can prioritize and explain their needs in a highly rational way... and a small number of customers represents most of the buying power in this market. Pursue quantitative Preference interviews, to gather customers' Importance and Satisfaction ratings on key outcomes. Make sure all customer decision-influencers are present, so their real decision-making is captured. This also engages and "primes" these contacts to later buy your offering.



## Recruit VOC Participants

**Question:** Who do we interview to understand market needs... and how do we recruit them?

**Background:** VOC (voice-of-customer) interviews are powerful for both diverging and converging on the best outcomes to pursue when innovating. But your interviews will only be as good as the participants you meet with. Carefully consider which businesses *and* job functions to interview.

**Recommendations:** Since you are a leading supplier, you have many customer contacts with whom you've developed very strong relationships. They should be very open to meet with you, because your innovative offering(s) could lead to personal and business success. Interview all the decision-influencers at key customers... but also be sure to interview companies that don't buy from you. Interview other businesses in the eco-system, e.g. co-suppliers and customers' customers.



**EARLY-STAGE MARKETING**



**KEY DRIVERS**

Our Market Position	Knowledge
	Interest
	Objectivity
	Foresight
	Concentration

## Conduct Tours & Ethnography

**Question:** How do we observe customers “on the job” to uncover needs they might not articulate?

**Background:** Customer tours give you insight in three ways: 1) gaining context for your interviews, 2) observing improvement possibilities that customers have not noticed, and 3) capturing economic data so you can later build a value calculator (to estimate the value your offering delivers).

**Recommendations:** As a leading supplier, you have strong personal customer relationships: Request tours from these contacts. Use your industry familiarity to create an “orientation” process map for your team prior to the tour... which they’ll update afterwards. Customers are very knowledgeable, so ask many questions before, during and after tours. During tours, look for areas to improve, and mentally collect economic data that could help you estimate your offering’s value later.

**EARLY-STAGE MARKETING**



**KEY DRIVERS**

Our Market Position	Knowledge
	Interest
	Objectivity
	Foresight
	Concentration

## Offer Prototypes & Samples

**Question:** How and when do we use prototypes or samples to gain feedback from customers?

**Background:** Prototypes are valuable for gaining customer insight... and doing so rapidly is laudable. But in B2B, an important question is “How much insight could customers have *first* given us in an interview?” Prototypes may only be needed for *refining* your design, and for further engaging customers.

**Recommendations:** Customers have keen foresight and can easily predict desired outcomes before they see a prototype. During quantitative Preference interviews, learn how they measure key outcomes. Then conduct side-by-side testing so you can design a product exceeding their next best alternative. You have a very limited pool of prototype testers, so don’t “wear out your welcome” with sloppy prototypes. Use solid prototypes to refine your design and engage prospects.

## EARLY-STAGE MARKETING



### KEY DRIVERS

Our Market Position	Knowledge
	Interest
	Objectivity
	Foresight
	Concentration

## Benchmark Competitive Offerings

**Question:** How do we understand the “next best alternatives” customers have access to?

**Background:** Customers only pay a premium for a product if it delivers value beyond the next best alternative. Without quantitatively understanding this alternative, it’s impossible to establish optimum pricing. Benchmarking must be done on *customers* preferred outcomes using *their* preferred tests.

**Recommendations:** Customers are very capable of predicting the outcomes that will directly benefit their business... and even the needed performance levels for these outcomes. Their decision-making is highly rational, understandable, and stable from customer to customer. Probe during Preference interviews to understand outcomes, performance levels, and competing alternatives; then conduct side-by-side testing so your new design clearly beats the next best alternative.

## EARLY-STAGE MARKETING



### KEY DRIVERS

Our Market Position	Knowledge
	Interest
	Objectivity
	Foresight
	Concentration

## Predict Value to Customers

**Question:** How do we estimate how much value a potential new offering could deliver to customers?

**Background:** The better you can predict the value customers receive from your offering, the better you can optimize pricing. But customers may not want to divulge this information. They tend to be most open when helping you understand their world, so you can create a high-value offering for them.

**Recommendations:** Customers can accurately predict the economic benefits of a possible new offering. But in this highly-concentrated market, they know any pricing intelligence they give you may be used against them later in negotiations. So you can’t ask, “How much would you pay?” Rather, as you learn how to create value through interviews and tours, also gather economic data to build a value calculator later. Use this and side-by-side testing to replicate customers’ decision-making.

## LATE-STAGE MARKETING



### KEY DRIVERS

Our  
Market  
Position

Knowledge  
Interest  
Objectivity  
Foresight  
Concentration

## Plan Product Launch Strategy

**Question:** What are the main considerations for launching a new product in this market?

**Background:** A strong B2B product launch addresses *who* to tell (market segment & job functions), *what* to tell (positioning & messaging), and *how* to tell (traditional and online promotional media). The latter is guided by your market position (leader vs. weak) and number of customers in the market.

**Recommendations:** Your market position (leading vs. weak supplier) dictates your strategy (leverage relationships vs. build credibility)... and industry concentration (many vs. few prospects) informs your media selection (being findable vs. pursuing prospects). Since you are a leading supplier, you should leverage the relationships you've already built. Since there are very few prospects in this market, you'll want to aggressively pursue them. You have a very strong overall starting position.

## LATE-STAGE MARKETING



### KEY DRIVERS

Our  
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Position

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Interest  
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Foresight  
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## Use Traditional Promotion

**Question:** Which traditional (non-digital) promotional tools should we use in this market?

**Background:** Traditional promotional media include print advertising, press kit, print article, direct mail, trade speech, trade show, road show, customer seminar and sales visit. Some of these are losing favor to online media, but others are still powerful for word-of-mouth and high persuasive impact.

**Recommendations:** Your position as a leading supplier should make it very easy to get an audience with large prospects in this highly-concentrated market. Make the most of this with in-house customer seminars... private sessions between your team and key decision-makers at large prospects. Arm your sales force with top-quality sales tools and train them well in their use. Also consider pursuing decision-makers using other traditional tools, e.g. attention-getting 3-dimensional direct mail.





## Use Online Promotion

**Question:** Which online (digital) promotional tools should we use in this market?

**Background:** Online promotional media include online advertising, news release, white paper, email marketing, online presentation, social media, webinar, web microsite, and search marketing. These media often have lower cost per lead, are more measurable, and make the supplier more “findable.”

**Recommendations:** To reach key prospects, use sales visits and in-house customer seminars (see traditional promotion above). But also use online promotion to reach “hidden” decision-influencers inside companies. Create a web microsite focused on your offering, with video and other compelling content. Attract visitors with focused email & links in all your materials. You have very strong relationships, so offer champions a “buyers kit” (e.g. PowerPoint slides) to sell internally for you.



## Create Positioning & Messaging

**Question:** How do we position our product and craft effective messaging for this market?

**Background:** Positioning principles include: Present information as “news” ... don’t try to change a convinced mind... be the first to occupy mind-space... and use very simple messages. Your messaging should include “awareness” content for early learners, and persuasive content for those considering.

**Recommendations:** Prospects have a very high interest level in this subject area, so your messaging should directly address the benefits they’ll see. They are also very capable of predicting measurable economic impact, so get as quantitative as possible in your message. Embed your copy with keywords they would use, and include offers, e.g. case studies, informational videos, in-depth brochures & data sheets, content-rich white papers, value calculators, and free samples/trials.

## LATE-STAGE MARKETING



### KEY DRIVERS

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**Objectivity**  
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Concentration

## Create Sales Tools

**Question:** Which sales tools should we arm our sales force with in this market segment?

**Background:** If sales visits are important in your marketing mix, carefully select which sales tools to develop, create first-class tools to make your sales pros look great, and train them in their use. Also, set up a lead-qualification system so you don't squander your sales force on the wrong prospects.

**Recommendations:** Since there are a few very important large accounts in this market, high-impact sales tools—and sales training in their use—should comprise much of your budget. Select tools that address the highly rational decision-making of prospects. Examples include technical report, data sheet, product specifications, competitive comparison, product brochure, product reviewer's guide, PowerPoint presentation, case studies, testimonials, white papers, and product videos.

## LATE-STAGE MARKETING



### KEY DRIVERS

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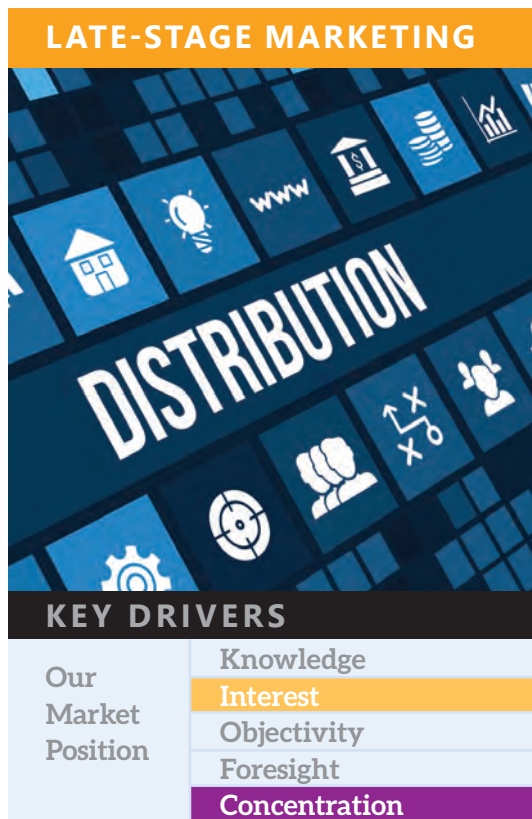
## Formulate Pricing Strategy

**Question:** How do we establish pricing for products we introduce to this market?

**Background:** For pricing insight, you can either ask for price decisions or understand price decision-making. The former (pricing surveys) can work in some B2B markets. But most B2B suppliers must use interviews and tours to understand customers world... and then model it with a value calculator.

**Recommendations:** Prospects will be very reluctant to tell you how much they'll pay: With just a few buyers—each perhaps negotiating its own price—they don't want to give you pricing intelligence. Since your offering could have a very large impact on prospects' success, though, they do want you to understand how to innovate on their behalf. So use front-end-of-innovation customer tours and interviews to gather as much economic data as possible... to build a value calculator later.





## Plan Distribution Strategy

**Question:** How do we develop a distribution strategy for this market?

**Background:** In B2B markets with just a few buying companies, it's common for suppliers to rely on their own direct sales force. Suppliers serving markets with many customers often rely on distributors or agents to some extent. Customer interest should also impact your use of distributors.

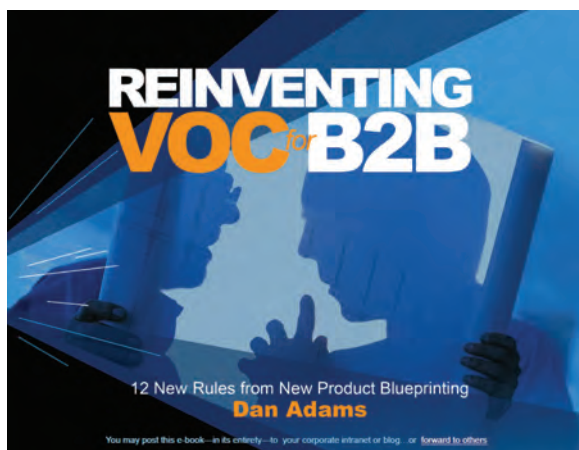
**Recommendations:** With just a few large customers in this market, it will be cost-effective for you to reach them with a direct sales force. These customers are very interested in the innovation you could bring them, so it's critical that your sellers be highly-qualified to both understand their needs and promote your offerings. This again, points to a direct sales force. If you do engage a distributor, select a highly-specialized firm that will behave much as your direct sales team would.

# Learning More

We hope this report has provided helpful strategic and tactical marketing guidance for your market segment. To move to the “next level,” consider these free resources from The AIM Institute.

## Early-Stage Marketing Resources

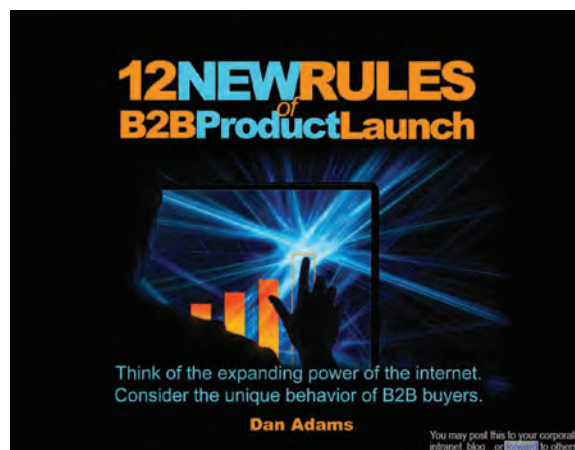
Since 2005, The AIM Institute has pioneered many game-changing innovations for gaining B2B customer insights, including qualitative Discovery and quantitative Preference interviews. For more information, visit [www.newproductblueprinting.com](http://www.newproductblueprinting.com). Perhaps our most helpful free resource is this e-book.



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## Late-Stage Marketing Resources

In 2009, The AIM Institute introduced the most advanced software and training for launching products into B2B markets. Learn more about this approach—and especially 9 online and 9 traditional promotional tools—by visiting [www.launchstar.com](http://www.launchstar.com). Our top B2B product launch tips are available in this free e-book.



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