

The Stages of **MARKETING ENGAGEMENT**

A one-size-fits-all approach doesn't work for content marketing (or dating)



Nu **GROWTH**
Solutions

A man in a light blue button-down shirt is lying on his back on a reddish-brown gravel path. He is holding a small black ring box in his right hand, which is raised towards a woman's leg. The woman is wearing a light-colored, textured sweater, blue jeans, and black high-heeled shoes. She is standing on the same path, and her right leg is extended towards the man. The background is a bright, overcast sky. A semi-transparent dark grey banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing white text.

Most people would agree that a first date
is *not* the ideal time to propose.

WHY

is it then that so many marketers ask prospects to buy before they've even had a "first date," let alone developed a long-term relationship?

It doesn't make much sense to send the same message to someone who has never heard of your business as someone who has been in serious discussions with your team for months.

One-size-fits all marketing doesn't work for a complex B2B sales process in the same way a too-soon marriage proposal sends dates running. You have to take the time to build trust and get to know each other before

taking any relationship to the next level.

Sales-oriented marketing teams know this. They work side by side with sales to develop messaging and methodology that attracts, nurtures, engages, and cultivates prospects as they move their way from unknown entity to repeat customer.



HUNT
CLOSE
FARM

Because the purpose of marketing is to drive leads to sales at each stage of the game, it is important to understand the breakdown of the sales cycle.

To maximize efficiency, a growth company—particularly one with a recurring revenue product or service—should have three separate areas of proficiency within its sales department: hunters, closers, and farmers. (Note—do NOT use these terms in dating!)

For more on these three areas, check out [Managing a Sales Territory: Lessons from Baseball](#)



HUNT

Hunters in the territory management/business development realm work to target, engage, qualify, and nurture accounts.



CLOSE

Closers in the opportunity management realm work to advance, propose, and win.



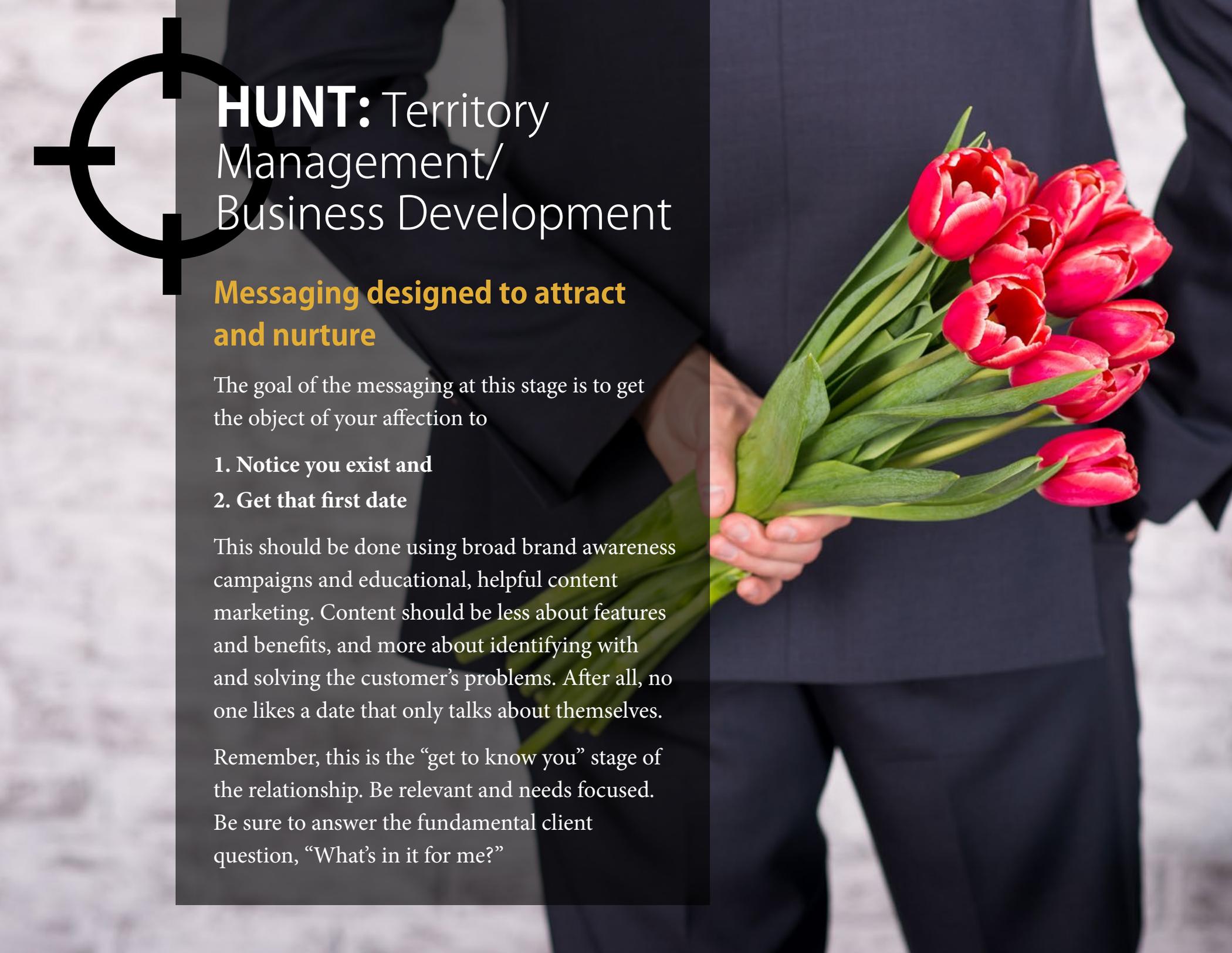
FARM

Farmers in the account management realm deliver, expand, and renew to cultivate and grow the client base.

ATTRACT, NURTURE, ENGAGE AND CULTIVATE

While sales is hard at work hunting, closing, and farming, marketing should be sending specific messaging to support and enhance their efforts. This tailored messaging should serve to attract, nurture, engage, and cultivate relationships.

Read on for a brief outline/explanation of messaging at each stage of the sales cycle.

A person in a dark suit is holding a bouquet of red tulips. The background is a blurred outdoor setting. On the left side, there is a dark grey vertical bar containing a white target icon and text.

HUNT: Territory Management/ Business Development

Messaging designed to attract and nurture

The goal of the messaging at this stage is to get the object of your affection to

1. **Notice you exist and**
2. **Get that first date**

This should be done using broad brand awareness campaigns and educational, helpful content marketing. Content should be less about features and benefits, and more about identifying with and solving the customer's problems. After all, no one likes a date that only talks about themselves.

Remember, this is the “get to know you” stage of the relationship. Be relevant and needs focused. Be sure to answer the fundamental client question, “What’s in it for me?”



CLOSE: Opportunity Management

Engage prospects on a higher level and speed up the close

The goal of outbound messaging in the opportunity management stage should be more aggressive. You are well past the “getting to know you” stage, but there’s no long-term commitment quite yet. What can you do to seal the deal? Because you’re no longer talking to an unknown, messaging should be much more personal.



FARM: Account Management

Cultivate & grow existing accounts

The communication needs in a relationship don't end with the words "I do." If anything, they increase. Messaging at the account management stage in the game, therefore needs to be frequent enough to reinforce your commitment but not too frequent to be annoying.

Newsletters, webinars, product/service updates and announcements are all good ways to create brand loyalty, as are tips and tricks and other helpful content.



While most people probably don't have a team helping them in their dating life, two-way communication and teamwork between sales and marketing is critical to putting relevant messaging in front of your prospects at each stage of the relationship. After all, though it's the marketing team creating and executing the campaigns, it is the sales team that is out on the front lines engaging in day-to-day conversations and garnering firsthand

insight into the wants and needs of the prospect or client. This information is an absolute necessity for creating engaging content and messaging and must be shared with all team members.

Not only that, but in order to get total buy-in and be able to measure the effectiveness of an effort, everyone involved needs to understand the goals and success indicators at each stage of the sales and marketing cycle.

INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE, PRACTICE DISCIPLINE & MEASURE, MEASURE, MEASURE

One last point: Before you can segment your sales team and/or the marketing messaging that supports them, you have to have the infrastructure (tools, people, and systems) in place to do so. You also have to have the discipline to consistently execute, religiously record key information about customers and prospects, and analyze and interpret that information so that you can act upon what you have learned.



PARTNER EFFECTIVELY

If you don't have the resources or desire to build the infrastructure needed to plan and execute an ongoing, segmented marketing campaign or to consistently generate relevant messaging and content, partnering with a virtual sales and marketing organization like NuGrowth Solutions can be an attractive alternative.

NuGrowth is a team of innovative, seasoned business development professionals passionately committed to increasing your client base through outsourced marketing and sales services. Not only do we have the infrastructure in place and the sales systems and segmentation down to a science, we understand the sales/marketing connection better than most. Our sales and marketing teams work together day in and day out with the sole purpose of generating new business for our clients.

We bring the people, the processes and the system to take your business to new heights in customer acquisition. If you are interested in working with a partner you can trust to grow business, please give us a call at **800-966-3051**.



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