

Important Notice

Expand your Export through Global B2B Market Place

The proper selection and management of online tools and channels into effective strategies to serve Indian manufacturing businesses is critical to manufacturers' success. Without proper selection - knowing what will work for your business and what will not - you will waste resources, be less effective, and leave money on the table.

As attractive as the many emerging online channels are, they do not all serve the unique B2B needs of manufacturers. Social Media, Social and Professional Communities, Online Marketplaces, Search Engines and our own Websites are instruments that CAN play the right music for your enterprise.

If you think of yourself as the conductor of your business symphony, you must select which instruments (channels) to use. You must conduct these instruments correctly, based on the talent available to get the best results. You must know the music, in order to arrange and conduct effectively.

Understand what it is that your customers and prospects want and need. Determine the message that serves your business best. Construct a system of online channels that your prospects and customers use for business - not for personal use. And know which instruments to leave out.

It is incumbent upon Indian manufacturers to construct a sound set of appropriate solutions to maximize effectiveness, reduce wasted efforts and increase the likelihood of profits *and* profitable relationships.

- **It is not who you know, it's when you know them** - Focusing on mass numbers and traffic is fool's gold when marketing an industrial business on the Internet. That strategy works fine for consumer markets, but for us the game is different. It's about quality information and higher quality relationships. It's about establishing relationships with prospects when they are acting as a buyer of your products or services to make his business better. A prospect may be a parent, but trying to attract her attention when she's looking for a movie to take the children to is pointless. Speak through Social Media and your Website with a message that attracts them while they are engaged in the tasks that are in line with your motives. Select Online Marketplaces and other online outposts where they congregate while working, not playing. You'll have richer, more valuable relationships, and spend less time engaging prospects that are not interested in your business.

Do not be afraid to walk away from seemingly active channels. Be selective. Orkut, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, eBay and others may seem attractive based on numbers or even topics, but avoid them if they don't specifically serve the prospects you want your business to partner with. For example, LinkedIn may seem like it attracts professionals in the industries you serve - but look closely: is the majority of information exchanged meant for self-promotion and employment? Are there amounts of technical and industrial information exchanged around the selection of services and suppliers to work with?

The answer is different for each company. Choose wisely, because you could waste effort for little reward.

- **Numbers are meaningless. Quality is the only useful measurement** - Driving traffic to your Website or Blog is stimulating and feels very good. But large numbers are actually easier to attract and less profitable than meaningful traffic that leads to sales and relationships with your business. For example, many new members of Online Marketplaces will begin quoting as many specific jobs or Requests For Quote (RFQs) as possible, in hopes of winning a project. But the most successful members look at the potential buyer rather than the specific part or product. Why? Because determining if a partner is the right fit for a business reduces risk, and it helps to ensure a longer relationship and greater rewards for both parties.

The key is to attract lower quantities of higher quality prospects. Think of it this way - would you rather have 150 leads that result in 40 buyers, or spend time on 400 leads that result in 25 customers?

- **Your customers are your guide, fads or gimmicks are not** - Business conditions, buying patterns, and the challenges your customers face all paint personas of the people you want to reach. And they always offer opportunities for you to capitalize over strategies that chase the latest online community or popular online destination.

As I write this, China is in the midst of several challenges, particularly labour unrest and rising costs. Strikes by workers demanding higher wages - and higher prices for materials, shipping, logistics and those higher wages - all add up to supply chain disruptions and loss of the more attractive price points that drove buyers to do business with China in the first place.

And in the most recent MFGWatch survey of North American manufacturing buyers conducted by MFG.com, 35% said they had experienced a serious supply chain disruption in the previous 3 months.

Buyers in the West are reassessing their original decisions to base production in China, and they are looking for alternatives. Indian manufacturers offer excellent, stable technical solutions & alternatives, but buyers must find you for them to know that. If you have established the right message, and begin communicating your value in relation to these events – stable costs, reliable quality, a dependable workforce – it will attract more of these prospects while they are in disruption. During times of disruptions for your customers, being found and communicating the right message is critical.

Understanding your customers and communicating your value will win more business and translate into better return for your marketing investment.

- **Create content for your customers, not for yourself** – Too often, manufacturers and industrial businesses neglect the value of giving prospects and customers what they're actually looking for via their Websites. The reasons vary, but they include concerns about divulging proprietary information, giving competitors too much information and the time it takes to generate volumes of data.

The fact is, it takes less information than you might expect to effectively serve prospects. But it does take the RIGHT information.

For example, a buyer looking for acceptable suppliers of custom discrete aerospace parts, made to precise tolerances and specifications, wants to see similar work done in the past for customers like them. They also want to see the strengths that define your business as a strong partner. The examples shown communicate those strengths much better than simply stating that your company is committed to high standards of quality – they show it.

Feed your Website and other online outposts where your business is represented (Online Marketplaces, Directories, Online Professional Communities) with these **Parts & Project Vignettes** – short, easy to read statements of what your business has done for others. They will portray your core strengths and services and differentiate you from your competitors.



Part Name	Fuel Line Fitting
Industry	Automotive
Material	403 Steel
Quantity Details	Strict proprietary specifications from customer
Quantity Details	Initial Order - 18,000; subsequent orders - 4 @ 15,000 each (116,000 total to date)
Quantity Details	Initial cycle time - 37.7 sec machining time
Quantity Details	Cycle time @ end of first run - 21.9 sec machining time
Quantity Details	Current cycle time 23.7 sec machining time *
Quantity Details	Total machining time savings - 37%
Applications	High speed turning (27,000 rpm); hole-making/drilling; machining
Project Milestones	Project duration - 6 months (2016 - 2018)
Project Milestones	Moved to multi-task (turn-Mill) machine - improved cycle time

Vignette 1



Part Name	Aircraft Frame Support Bracket
Industry	Aerospace
Material	Aluminum
Quality Details	NASA, HAS & MIL-STD-883 compliant
Quantity Details	Initial Order - 3,000; subsequent orders - 18 @ 1,500 each (29,900 total to date)
Quantity Details	Initial Cycle Time - 127 min machining time
Quantity Details	Cycle Time @ end of first run - 114 min machining time *
Quantity Details	Current Cycle Time 108 min machining time **
Quantity Details	Total machining time savings - 14.94%
Applications	High speed machining (17,000 rpm); ream-drilling; 5-axis machining
Project Milestones	Project duration - 2 years (2017 - present)
Project Milestones	Changed delivery provider (11/17) - improved delivery by 3 days
Project Milestones	Tooling change reworked (2017) - improved cycle time
Project Milestones	3 design changes rec'd to date - improved cycle time

Vignette 2

- **Your Website is the center of your business' universe** – Regardless of your selection of channels and how you choose to manage them, all communications should lead prospects to your Website. It is the hub of your business. It is where prospects look for deeper information about you as a potential partner, and were they expect to find it.

Focus on and understand your customers' traits, qualities and problems. Select the right online channels for your business, where your prospects go to do work. Work those channels to communicate and connect with them, and lead them to your Website. Feed your site with the information about your company that distinguishes you from your competitors and identifies you as an exceptional manufacturing and industrial partner.

These are the keys to capitalizing on change, and to winning more business online.

(Source : Mr. A. J. Sweatt, Director, Global Social Media, MFG.Com)