

CASE STUDY

Data-Driven Demand Generation and Reporting Accelerates Revenue Growth for GuideSpark



About GuideSpark

GuideSpark is the future of employee communications. The company transforms how organizations communicate and engage with their employees through customized video and mobile experiences for every stage of the employee life cycle, from onboarding to benefits, compensation and more. GuideSpark, named to the Inc. 5000 list of "America's Fastest-Growing Companies," serves hundreds of enterprise customers across all industries and millions of employees.

Digital Pi Services Used

- Marketing Automation Reporting
- Data Structuring
- Demand Generation Analytics
- Revenue Cycle Analytics

Impact/Results

- 2x the marketing influence to pipeline with effective nurturing programs
- Cut cost per lead by 50% with faster, smarter data driven marketing decisions
- Quickly aligned marketing programs with sales revenue metrics
- Experienced a 15-fold increase in customer engagement with focused nurturing programs

CHALLENGE

GuideSpark is a fast-growing company with a huge target market. The company delivers employee engagement and communications video solutions across all industries for common human resource communication needs such as onboarding, benefits, compliance, 401(k) information, financial wellness, and more. GuideSpark helps companies move from communicating complex HR topics via seminars or lunch meetings, to communicating that information using customized easy-to-consume videos. The market opportunity is significant since virtually every company has a need for more efficient employee communications.

In 2014, the company found it had insufficient demand-generation capacity after its sales team had grown 7 times larger than its marketing team. The company was using a customer relationship management system for its sales team, but was not effectively using their marketing automation system to track marketing's activities to drive revenue. "We did as much of our tracking and reporting as we could using our CRM, Microsoft Excel, and duct tape," says Jessica Kao, senior manager of demand generation at GuideSpark. "but we still needed to review each deal separately to determine marketing's influence."

Decisions about where to invest critical marketing dollars were equally laborious and often made with little insight or supporting data. Kao remarks, "Pay per click (PPC) was a great example. We used to invest in Bing, Google, and LinkedIn, but we still could not determine where our deal-generating leads were coming from. The vice president of marketing and I were spending hours and hours manually pulling data to help us decide where to invest."

SOLUTION

With high-growth goals in a nascent space, GuideSpark does not have the luxury to spend a lot of money and time on tactics and programs that do not produce results. "If we are going to spend money, we want to know when it's working, when it's not, and how we can improve" Kao states. "GuideSpark is metrics driven, so we want the numbers to show the revenue returned on our marketing investments."

GuideSpark chose Digital Pi to help it understand and create the reporting infrastructure required to track marketing's contribution to sales results. In her role overseeing both demand generation and marketing operations, Kao sets a high bar for quality, accurate data reporting, and analytics. "I love that the Digital Pi team views data modeling and reporting with the same discipline that an academic would, while applying hard-won best-practice processes."

The marketing automation deployment at GuideSpark is built on Digital Pi's Gold Standard architecture, shaped by its years of marketing automation experience. By viewing all of GuideSpark's marketing processes holistically, Digital Pi was able to

“Digital Pi has taught me how to fish. Now, we start every program by looking at how we are going to report on it and where it will tie in with Salesforce.com. I always have reports at my fingertips to answer the key questions from sales and management.”

“With Digital Pi, we have doubled the marketing influence on pipeline. Digital Pi makes us more efficient and allowed us to create a virtual marketing army. We have increased our conversion rates, increased sales lead velocity, and accelerated deals. Structure, lead scoring, channel definition—Digital Pi has a gold standard.”

– Jessica Kao, Senior Manager
Demand Generation, Guidespark

design a system that tracks every marketing touch point, starting with data collection. With a proper structure in place, GuideSpark is now able to segment leads, score them, and identify channels and how each is performing. Standardized reports and analytics created by Digital Pi keep the entire lead lifecycle, from acquisition through revenue attainment, which is GuideSpark’s measure of success. According to Kao, *“Data empowers the marketer to make smart decisions. Data gives marketing the right to ask for money, because it’s clear to the management team what that money is producing. Simply put, you’re burning money if you cannot justify your marketing spend through reporting.”*

RESULTS/BUSINESS IMPACT

Accurately connecting marketing spend to revenue creation, knowing what influence marketing has on revenues ensures that GuideSpark is not fooled by vanity metrics or high lead numbers that do not result in pipeline. *“Vanity metrics—the number of leads, number of scanned names, number of open/clicks—do not matter. The bottom line is tying marketing programs to pipeline and revenue.”*

The solution GuideSpark implemented with Digital Pi touches not only the marketing operations and demand generation team, but also extends to the sales team and executive management. The positive business impact for GuideSpark includes:

- **More effective programs** With advice from Digital Pi, GuideSpark has set up a nurturing program triggered on behaviors. This approach has delivered a 15-fold increase in engagement. *“With our high-growth goals at GuideSpark, working smarter is the only way to scale.”*
- **Better and more nimble decision making** GuideSpark now knows exactly where marketing investments are going and is not making decisions in the dark. *“The reporting set up by Digital Pi has given us better leads at a lower price. Our cost per lead has dropped 50%, we can see how to adjust our strategies on the fly, and we can spend more on the things that matter! We are constantly optimizing and making our programs better.”*
- **Increased marketing efficiency without adding headcount** GuideSpark still has a very small marketing team supporting a larger, growing sales force. Kao has found that Digital Pi has created a marketing automation engine for GuideSpark that is analogous to a “virtual army” of marketers. *“My marketing team plays bigger than it really is.”*
- **Better relationships with sales leadership and executive team** With an eye to communicating complex information to different audiences, Digital Pi worked with GuideSpark to ensure that their reports create the right business level conversations. *“Digital Pi makes me look like a rock star. They have shown me the data to have the high level conversations for me and for my boss, so that we can frame it in the language of the CEO or the board,”* says Kao.

About Digital Pi

Digital Pi helps companies to deliver rapid, meaningful value from marketing automation. We believe that marketing automation is at the intersection of every facet of marketing from content strategy to messaging.

With our relentless focus on connecting revenue to pipeline, Digital Pi brings together marketing strategy, processes, data, and applications to make marketing automation work for your business.

We know the technology and how to get to the business requirements, expertly linking marketing automation to other applications such as CRM, e-commerce and online advertising so you can understand online customer and prospect behavior.

The work of Digital Pi is specific to each customer and we practice the lost art of listening and asking the right questions to discern your needs, always keeping an eye on revenue and opportunities to apply best practices and standards to streamline your implementation. When you depend on your marketing automation system, you can't afford to be without an expert who understands your system.

WHY DIGITAL PI?

From GuideSpark's perspective, the breadth of experience that Digital Pi brought to the table set it apart. In addition to its knowledge of Marketo and Salesforce.com, Digital Pi's expertise in communicating with C-level stakeholders shaped a reporting strategy that helps Kao address the needs of all stakeholders—from the sales executive who wants to know about pipeline contribution, to the agency who wants to know where to spend advertising dollars, to the executive team who want to forecast revenue projections based on the marketing funnel. *"Digital Pi makes me look like a rock star,"* Kao concludes. *"All the way from business strategy to tactics, I cannot do my job without them—period, end of story."*

Demand Waterfall

					Sales	Marketing	
					Average Deal Size	\$ 20,000	
					2015 New Business Target	\$5,000,000	
					New Customers Required for \$ Goal	150	
					Revenue Contribution	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 2,000,000
					Time from raw to closed won (months)		12
					Percent of leads expected from Sales vs. Marketing	60%	40%
Cumulative conversion from Raw	15.00%	3.75%	1.31%	0.53%	0.24%		
Conversion from this stage to next	Raw	Inquiry	MQL	SAL	SQL	Customer	Revenue
	15%	25%	35%	40%	45%		
Duration for this stage (months)	0	2	1	3	6		
January-15	300	45					\$ -
February-15	350	53					\$ -
March-15	400	60	11				\$ -
April-15	500	75	13	4			\$ -
May-15	500	75	15	5			\$ -
June-15	500	75	19	5			\$ -
July-15	500	75	19	7	2		\$ -
August-15	600	90	19	7	2		\$ -

GuideSpark uses this "demand planner" from Digital Pi to help forecast the forward flow of net new leads at top of the funnel through a demand model through to customer.

Campaign Topic	Program Channel	Program Cost	Success (Total)	(MT) Opportunities Created	Cost/Opportunity Created	(MT) Pipeline Created	(MT) Revenue Won	(MT) Pipeline to Cost	(MT) Revenue Won to Cost
Compensation	Webinar	\$15,240	47%	17	\$894	\$153,877	\$95,233	\$12	\$4
	Content Syndication	\$16,000	30%	88	\$182	\$45,390	\$145,882	\$19	\$11
	Online Advertising	\$15,387	20%	17	\$905	\$72,347	\$12,200	\$19	\$7
Compensation Total		\$46,627	\$1,241	122	\$386	\$271,614	\$253,315	\$19	\$12
Onboarding	Webinar	\$17,300	80%	42	\$412	\$100,000	\$42,247	\$16	\$2
	Content Syndication	\$15,000	70%	10	\$1,500	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$10	\$10
	Online Advertising	\$15,000	60%	10	\$1,500	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$10	\$10
Onboarding Total		\$47,300	\$1,500	62	\$762	\$200,000	\$242,247	\$16	\$12
Open Enrollment	Webinar	\$13,750	90%	100	\$137.5	\$1,000,000	\$45,200	\$100	\$100
	Content Syndication	\$16,000	80%	100	\$160	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$10	\$10
	Online Advertising	\$16,000	70%	100	\$160	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$10	\$10
Open Enrollment Total		\$45,750	\$1,500	200	\$228.75	\$2,000,000	\$2,445,200	\$10	\$10
Performance Management	Webinar	\$15,000	90%	100	\$150	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$10	\$10
	Content Syndication	\$15,000	80%	100	\$150	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$10	\$10
	Online Advertising	\$15,000	70%	100	\$150	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$10	\$10
Performance Management Total		\$45,000	\$1,500	300	\$150	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$10	\$10
Wellness	Webinar	\$15,000	90%	100	\$150	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$10	\$10
	Content Syndication	\$15,000	80%	100	\$150	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$10	\$10
	Online Advertising	\$15,000	70%	100	\$150	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$10	\$10
Wellness Total		\$45,000	\$1,500	300	\$150	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$10	\$10
Grand Total		\$188,687	\$1,400	1,222	\$154.32	\$7,287,614	\$5,445,515	\$19	\$12

*Onboarding had the highest number of successes but lowest close rate
Open enrollment created the most (MT) Pipeline and Revenue*

Don't be fooled by large numbers! GuideSpark used this data from Digital Pi-created reports to accurately track its pipeline from lead to revenue—making better decisions about where to invest its marketing dollars.



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