

## What Do You Gain — or Lose — by Gating Your Content?

The question is this — When providing B2B content, should your marketing materials be left open and easily accessible, free to all, or should it be hosted behind a form that only grants access in exchange for business contact information. The argument hinges on the question: is content a brand awareness tool, or is it a lead generation tool? What do you gain or lose by gating your content?

### Pros

- ✓ Collect lead information
- ✓ Increase conversion rate on target leads

#### Gated



### Cons

- ✗ Fewer Visitors
- ✗ Not SEO Friendly
- ✗ Leads will look to competitors for similar ungated content

- ✓ More website visitors
- ✓ More opportunities to share content
- ✓ Higher website traffic

#### Ungated



- ✗ Content is available for competitors
- ✗ Unpredictable or inconsistent lead volumes
- ✗ Lower conversion rate
- ✗ Doesn't help populate database
- ✗ Not able to control lead nurturing

The theory behind gating content is that a person who is willing to raise their hand and say, "I am interested in downloading your content," is they are presumably a better prospect. The other side of the argument is that you are turning good prospects away and losing them when you put up a barrier to your information. Email inboxes are overloaded with marketing messages, and business users are leery of signing up for yet another list — even if they are interested in what you are selling.

When to gate specifically is not clear. If you gate too hard, you never will reach customers, offer everything for free and you may not have solid marketing prospects.

### ***Deciding to Gate Content or Not?***

Start with the Buyer's Journey. Content should follow the needs of the prospect. In the initial stages, consumers want to see engaging content demonstrating a level of understanding of their pain points and find related solutions from knowledgeable experts. Once this critical level of trust is established, prospects will look deeper, for white papers and product demos, before deciding to engage with a company or purchase. The goal is to keep the content relevant, and the buyer engaged throughout the entire journey.

### ***There is another way. Track your anonymous website visitors.***

Lenati reported that 67% of the typical B2B buyer's journey takes place digitally, and 9 out

of 10 B2B buyers say online content has a moderate to major effect on their purchasing decisions.

In the end, it's proven that only 2% of website visitors are going to identify themselves to read gated content or ask for more information. If you are solely relying on visitors to fill out a form to know who is visiting your website -- you are not taking advantage of your site's full potential.

Anonymously tracking who is visiting your site and what they did while they were there holds the key to identifying a prospect in the very early information gathering stage. Tracking anonymous visits, how often they visit and how long they spend on your site provides a gauge for how interested a prospect is. It also gives you the opportunity to proactively engage with an organization to improve the top of funnel qualified leads and increase your marketing ROI.

By tracking, identifying and capturing anonymous business visitors to your website, you can boost your B2B sales strategy. Ultimately, by using a combination of gated, ungated, and anonymous website visitor tracking, you will increase your qualified leads in the earlier stages of the buyer's journey.

As the debate carries on, learn more about how NetFactor's VisitorTrack turns anonymous web visitor intelligence into qualified leads.