

# If you're NOT in Atlanta it's time to catch up on more than just your laundry!

by Bethany Foyt



**Y**ou've heard it before- Convergence is a great opportunity to grow your business. But whether you only go every other year or just couldn't commit to the extra cost of sending your team, there are good reasons why many partners can't reap the benefits of meeting customers face-to-face, attending the training sessions and learning about all the great products at the Expo. Don't hang your head too long, because if you follow this checklist for each day of the Convergence week, you may be reaping more benefits than you can handle!



**Monday:** Block off the afternoon to research a new vertical by...

1. Calling that new customer the sales team closed last quarter to find out their pain points.
2. Going to InfoUSA to determine the size of that vertical in your geography.
3. Researching associations that serve the industry to learn who the “players” are, the pain points, and perhaps marketing opportunities through that association.
4. Researching the competition. Is the Timberline VAR just down the street working on this vertical?
5. Preparing a recommendation for the boss on why you should invest in marketing to the chosen vertical. Is it the “low hanging fruit” in your city?

### **Tuesday:** Build up your reference base by...

6. Identifying your best customers. The ones that (a) drive the most revenue to your firm, (b) are the most profitable, and (c) are the best “fit” for your organization.
7. Calling five of the customers that come to the top of the above three criteria and ask them the following questions:
  - How has your organization helped them alleviate their specific pain points?
  - What tangible benefits are they seeing from working with you and the solution you provide?
  - What can you do more of or less of to ensure they remain happy customers?
  - Can you use their testimonials in your marketing materials? (Website, social media, brochures, etc.)
8. Leveraging your social media groups to engage your customers on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Ask them an engaging question about their business and get those conversations started! (And if you haven't set up a company profile on LinkedIn and Twitter, today is a good day to accomplish it.)

### **Wednesday:** Catch up on your marketing training by...

1. Viewing the Microsoft Marketing Monarch Webcasts. Pick three specific areas you want to work on, take time to view the informative webcasts and don't forget to take notes! You can find all the recordings here on PartnerSource: <https://mbs.microsoft.com/partnersource/communities/marketing/training/MarketingMonarchHomePage> And while you're at it, join the Marketing Monarchs on LinkedIn for those lively and interesting discussions with other marketers. Just search for “Microsoft Dynamics Marketing Monarchs.”
2. Download a few marketing-specific whitepapers and catch up on your reading. Here are some suggestions to get you started: <http://www.hubspot.com/marketing-resources/> , [www.marketingsherpa.com](http://www.marketingsherpa.com) , and <https://partner.microsoft.com/US/salesmarketingsection> .

### **Thursday:** Catch up on customer communications by...

1. Creating thank you notes or sending appreciation gifts to customers who have given you a good reference, been a loyal customer or are a new customer to you. Solidify the relationships you have with your most valuable assets and map out a plan to continue correspondence with them in the future. Search for ready-made thank you note templates on <http://office.microsoft.com>.
2. Creating an email and resource guide for your customers that outlines key takeaways from Convergence. The customers who attended as well as those who did not will be grateful to have key learning's in hand. (<http://www.microsoft.com/dynamics/convergence/atlantau1/>)

### **Friday:** Updated your marketing calendar by...

1. Deciding on how many times per month to post blogs and creating a dedicated Google Calendar ([www.google.com/support/calendar/](http://www.google.com/support/calendar/)) or an Excel document to stay committed to those dates. Go one step further by planning the topics you will write about on those specific days, always keeping in mind your audience and considering topics that might line up with timely elements like upcoming events and/or offers.
2. Adding to your email marketing activities. Do you have some special offers and/or events in your marketing future? Let your email marketing list know and create a small informative message with your call to action clearly defined. Doing more than just your monthly newsletter can sometimes make the difference between a suspect and lead. With that said, remember to be careful not to overwhelm your readers.

Although you might not have been able to attend Convergence, I hope this checklist will get you started and ending on a great week. If you check all these things off your to-do list, you will be ahead of the competition while everyone else is playing catch up after returning from Atlanta. You may even be able to take that week to catch up on your laundry.

Feel free to contact Bethany Foyt ([bethany@thepartnermarketinggroup.com](mailto:bethany@thepartnermarketinggroup.com)) at The Partner Marketing Group ([www.ThePartnerMarketingGroup.com](http://www.ThePartnerMarketingGroup.com)) with questions on how to optimize the checklist provided above. With the blog writing services and e-newsletter content services, among others, The Partner Marketing Group can help you whittle down your checklist in no time!