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PROPOSED DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY FOR LEAD GENERATION IN B2B SAAS INDUSTRY: (A CASE STUDY OF EMPLORAX IN SINGAPORE)

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Abstract

The Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) business-to-business (B2B) industry in Singapore faces much difficulty in acquiring qualified leads and then converting them in environments with risk averse and multi stakeholder purchasing decisions. The present study examines how Emplorax an imaginary name for a Singapore-based SaaS firm may digitalize its marketing strategy and raise leads quality, conversion, and marketing return on investment (ROI). The study is a paradigm mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies through the integration of data from CRM systems, advertisements dashboards as well as websites analytics, with the qualitative insightes coming from internal interviews. A strategic framework outlines the analysis, which includes both external and internal diagnostics, funnel-based channel mapping, and performance optimization levers. The results demonstrate the clear differences in the performance of the channels. SEO and Google Ads can offer along with the lowest cost per lead the highest number of leads and conversely, Meta Ads affect the pipeline quality the least. Internally, critical limitations appear in CRM segmentation, mid-funnel email automation, and the lack of performance feedback loops. Particular market limitations such as stringent procurement procedures and the need for integration readiness further decrease the conversion rate. The proposed approach is the introduction of two sequential executions' playbooks. Playbook A deals with Capture and Qualify Leads through Digital Acquisition. Besides, Playbook B will meet the conversion with the help of retargeting offline engagement and the structured sales follow-up, which is tagged for high-intent leads identification. The scheme also proposes standardizing CRM lifecycle, automating nurture workflows, and using multi-touch attribution modeling, specifically for the Singapore context. This thesis shows a realistic plan for SaaS marketers, who are working in high-consideration B2B environments. By employing a data driven, funnel aligned strategy accompanied by structured playbooks, the companies will be enabled to improve lead qualification, pipeline velocity, and marketing-to-sales collaboration. The framework is a remediable model for regional SaaS companies, which are willing to perform through digital marketing integrated.

Keywords: ***B2B SaaS, Lead Generation, Digital Marketing, SEO, PPC, Content Marketing, Singapore.***

INTRODUCTION

The global business-to-business software as a service (B2B SaaS) sector has immensely increased, and according to predictions, its market value will reach over USD 390 billion by the end of 2025 (Statista, 2023). Southeast Asia is also following in this program where cloud computing is changing the ways in which businesses run. This is also seen in the digital transformation rate typical of the region as most of them are cloud-oriented (Google, Temasek & Bain, 2023). Amid the reality that most vendors have shifted from the traditional way of selling products, which focuses on the person-to-person sales channel to software as a service (SaaS) firms opening more to digital-first acquisition sales to meet the needs of a global customer base that is both geographically distributed and digitally literate. In this condition, the generation, nurturing, and converting of high-quality leads through digital means are the keys to maintaining growth in subscription-based business models (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). The capacity to do digital lead generation decisively, influence the revenue early, and become fast in marketing would make such companies be successfully agile, and that makes it a decisive factor of success for B2B SaaS companies. Despite that role, lead generation is still notoriously ridden with significant challenges. Reasons why it is difficult are the long and winding sales cycles, which usually have many stakeholders to meet and prolonged time recommences before a decision can be made (Barney & Hesterly, 2019). This complicity is often the cause of rise in campaign cost and inconsistency in lead quality, as sometimes marketing activities would generate high levels of top of funnel interest that do not convert into qualified opportunities (Gartner, 2022). Really, many SaaS companies go through a mess due to the disconnectedness between digital marketing channels and customer relationship management (CRM) systems which lead to data mismatches and suboptimal lead nurturing (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). Campaigns should be aligned from the outset in terms of the awareness of the product which leads to the direct conversions so as to ensure that there is only one cohesive digital marketing plan with data driven strategies. Data-driven marketing is the use of data systematically collected from customer interactions, analytics platforms, and third-party sources to inform and optimize marketing decisions (Gartner, 2025). Companies that carried out data-driven marketing had more of ROI and conversion rate since marketers could adjust the scheme and use resources based on the actual situation (HubSpot, 2025; IDC, 2023). The complicated and laborious B2B SaaS contracting process, which involves numerous stakeholders, is where data-driven marketing is particularly important. It is the process through which sales and marketing staff are able to leverage data to provide more relevant content to their customers at the right time and through the most targeted channels, thus driving continual pipeline growth and added customers.

Typically, the journey of a customer in the business-to-business software as a service contracts starts from the point of becoming aware through the point of consideration, and then to the evaluation and ending purchase. The particular aims of this research are marketing qualified leads and converted deals, both of which are segments in the final purchasing phase that are primarily impacted by digital engagement. As shown in the figure, this customer funnel, based on Hall's (2020) theory, has the highlighted part which is the key area of interest for this study. Singapore has got its status as a regional hub for B2B SaaS companies due to its advanced digital infrastructure, pro-business environment, and central location in the region (Callbox, 2024; TMG, 2024). Singapore's digital maturity and risk-averse corporate culture create a trust-based environment for SaaS companies targeting Southeast Asia, Australia, China, and India (Callbox, 2024; Devhaus, 2024). In addition, the government's proactive support for the technology sector in the form of grants, regulatory clarity, and schemes such as Smart Nation encourages SaaS innovation and adoption (TMG, 2024). For the Indonesian specialists, Singapore's SaaS ecosystem represents a wonderful opportunity: the remote working model expands, Singaporean companies engage significantly more with the Indonesian technology workforce (for instance, Nongsa digital park, Batam) (The Jakarta Post, 2019; Nongsa Digital, 2024). Getting a grip on this subject is critical for Indonesians who want to work in these companies because of the increasing available employment opportunities.

A notable player in Singapore's B2B SaaS market is Emplorax, a provider of employee loyalty solutions through its digital platform (Emplorax, 2024). This is in spite of the fact that the market demand continues to increase as more and more are becoming aware of the role of employee well-being in workplace success (Deloitte, 2021; Emplorax, 2025). However, Emplorax stubbornly still has the problem of attracting and converting high intent traffic. Funnel leaks, poor conversion rates, and lack of coherence between digital content and customer needs point out that Emplorax's current lead generation approach has a strategic gap. This research plans to introduce the data-driven digital marketing strategy that enhances Emplorax's lead generation outcomes. This research intends to find the most effective channels and tactics for the B2B buyer journey using historical data from sources like CRM systems, Google Analytics, and paid media platforms. The research is a mix of quantitative analysis and contextual market insights and thus will provide proposals that lead to the expansion of Emplorax and also the development of the B2B SaaS marketing best practices in the region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

A successful business strategy results from the constant interaction of internal capabilities and external pressures. The study of the mechanisms that allow companies to deal with such complexities is one of the essential aspects of this subject. Drawing from the foundations that explain competitive advantage, resource allocation, market behavior, and strategic alignment. These approaches represent an analysis of strategic decision making within high growth digital ecosystems.

A. External Strategic Frameworks

1) Porter's Five Forces Analysis

The examination of the competitive interactions existing within a certain sector is structured by the Porter's Five Forces framework (1979). The Porter model allows for a systematic judgment of an industry's competitive environment contributing to the possibility of finding together strategic opportunities and threats by means of recognizing and discussing the competitive rivalry, the possibility of new entrants, buyer and supplier bargaining power, and the substitute threat. This analytical tool is crucial for evaluating the competitive situation in the Business-to-Business (B2B) Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) industry for employee engagement solutions.

The B2B SaaS market for employee engagement is marked by high competitive rivalry, as many providers offer similar features and compete based on pricing, integration, security, and support. While larger firms dominate with all-in-one HR solutions, smaller vendors differentiate through niche services and AI-driven analytics. The threat of new entrants is moderate; although barriers to entry are low due to digitalization and affordable tools, gaining enterprise trust remains a challenge. Strategic partnerships and strong compliance help established firms maintain their advantage. Buyer power is high, as enterprise clients exert strong influence over pricing and customization, with many preferring digital self-service during the purchasing process. This pushes SaaS providers to be transparent and ROI-focused. On the supplier side, reliance on major cloud services grants moderate power to vendors, though competition among them mitigates monopolistic risks. Diversification and in-house development help SaaS firms reduce dependency. Lastly, the threat of substitutes is moderate to high, including in-house systems and emerging AI tools; to stay relevant, platforms must continuously innovate through gamification, intelligent recommendations, and seamless HRIS integration.

2) PESTEL Analysis

The PESTEL framework is a strategic tool that is utilized to analyze macro-environmental factors that affect a company's market operations. This tool consists of six dimensions for evaluation; namely, Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal factors. The businesses are probe those external forces through which they are able to tell what works against them and what happens for their strategy to work out better (Johnson, Scholes, & Whittington, 2011). In Business-to-Business (B2B) Software as a Service (SaaS) firms or those involved in the employee engagement and corporate wellness sector, PESTEL analysis is critical in understanding the differences among regions as well as regulatory landscapes and technological changes that impact lead generation and customer acquisition strategies. The macro-environmental landscape for B2B SaaS firms in Singapore is shaped by strong political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal forces. Government initiatives like the Smart Nation program encourage digital adoption, while stringent regulations such as the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) require strict compliance with data security and privacy standards, often tied to ESG objectives. Economically, Singapore's stable growth and tech-friendly ecosystem support SaaS expansion, though financial constraints during downturns can affect procurement decisions due to SaaS being categorized as an operational expense. Socially, a diverse workforce and the shift toward hybrid work models demand localized, inclusive platforms that emphasize mental wellness, recognition, and employee engagement. Technological advancements, especially in AI and machine learning, enhance real-time sentiment analysis and system integration, positioning innovation as a key competitive edge. Environmental considerations have also become purchasing factors, with enterprises favoring SaaS providers committed to sustainability and carbon-neutral infrastructure, supported by government incentives. Lastly, legal compliance particularly in data protection, intellectual property rights, and clearly defined Service Level Agreements (SLAs) is critical for SaaS providers to gain trust and operate effectively in Singapore's highly regulated market.

B. Internal Strategic Frameworks

1) VRIO Analysis

The VRIO framework (Barney, 1991) is a strategic tool that is utilized primarily to examine a firm's resources and capabilities in order to ascertain whether they guarantee a sustainable competitive edge. This framework, VRIO, is made up of four components, namely Value, Rarity, Imitability, and Organization that assist firms in the determination of their internal resources which will allow them to have a long-term success and which areas require amends. This analysis is particularly suitable for Business-to-Business (B2B) Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) companies operating in the employee engagement space. Employee engagement SaaS platforms create competitive advantage by enhancing employee motivation, retention, and productivity through AI-driven analytics, gamified incentives, and seamless HR system integration. While core features are often imitable, proprietary algorithms, localized cultural adaptation, and exclusive partnerships offer rare and hard-to-replicate advantages. Long-term client trust, embedded workflows, and enriched user data further increase imitation costs. Supported by agile development and data-driven operations, these firms are well-organized to maximize the value of their unique and inimitable assets.

2) SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis, developed by Gurel and Tat (2017), is a strategic tool employed to observe the internal and external factors that affect the company performance. This strategic analysis includes an evaluation of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, and it can be very useful in understanding the positioning in a competition and market trends. For Business-to-Business (B2B) Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) companies that are part of the employee engagement and corporate wellness sector, SWOT analysis is a great instrument to detect the competitive advantages, operational limitations, market opportunities, and industry threats affecting lead generation and revenue growth. In the arena of B2B SaaS lead generation, the SWOT analysis works as a primary frame to devise digital marketing strategies, pivot customer acquisition models, and improve competitive positioning. B2B SaaS platforms for employee engagement possess key strengths such as high scalability, cost-effective cloud-based models, real-time engagement analytics, and seamless integration with enterprise systems like HRIS and CRM, supported by recurring revenue through subscription pricing and effective digital marketing strategies. However, they face weaknesses including long and complex sales cycles, high customer acquisition costs (CAC), reliance on expensive digital lead generation, buyer hesitancy without trials, and growing regulatory complexities like PDPA and GDPR. Opportunities arise from post-pandemic digital workplace shifts, the rise of AI-powered marketing, expanding cloud infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific region, and government grants for digital transformation, all of which support growth and adoption. Conversely, the industry faces threats from intense competition, rising digital ad costs, economic uncertainty that limits HR tech spending, evolving data privacy laws restricting cross-border data use, and vendor lock-in concerns that deter companies from adopting inflexible SaaS contracts.

3) Marketing Mix (7Ps)

Marketing Mix is the famous strategy tool for the analysis and optimization of marketing strategies. It originally was 4Ps, introduced by McCarthy in 1960 and was later expanded to 7Ps by Booms and Bitner in 1981. These are Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence, which offer a holistic viewpoint to the marketers in meeting customer needs and driving marketing strategies in connection with company objectives. The framework fits particularly to service oriented sectors and the B2B Software as a Service (SaaS) sector is one of them. In the context of B2B SaaS marketing, the 7Ps framework offers a comprehensive approach to understanding market effectiveness. Product refers to the digital platforms or software solutions tailored to address specific organizational challenges, emphasizing innovation and adaptability (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Price is often delivered through flexible subscription or tiered models, balancing affordability with perceived value to boost customer retention. Place highlights the importance of cloud-based digital delivery, which enables global access and seamless updates without physical infrastructure limitations (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). Promotion involves strategic communication efforts such as SEO, PPC, webinars, and email marketing to build credibility and engage decision-makers. People play a vital role through customer support and success teams that influence satisfaction and brand perception (Booms & Bitner, 1981). Process ensures smooth integration with existing enterprise systems like HRIS or collaboration tools, enhancing both user experience and operational efficiency. Lastly, Physical Evidence encompasses tangible brand elements such as user guides, case studies, and intuitive interfaces that reinforce product reliability and usability.

C. Digital Marketing Frameworks

1) Digital Marketing Strategies

Digital marketing, defined as the use of internet-based technologies and digital communication channels to achieve business goals, plays a pivotal role in the B2B SaaS sector for lead generation, customer engagement, and acquisition (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). In competitive markets like Singapore, companies such as Emplorax rely heavily on SEO, PPC, content marketing, email campaigns, and social media to build brand identity and drive conversions. A successful digital marketing strategy must align with overall business objectives, ensuring cultural relevance and precise targeting. According to Bahera et al. (2020), this requires a structured, measurable approach that integrates long-term business planning, annual marketing strategies, and detailed execution roadmaps across multiple digital platforms to create a seamless user experience and impactful outcomes. Effective digital marketing in the B2B SaaS industry hinges on four core components: situation analysis, goal setting, strategic formulation, and execution. First, companies must assess internal capabilities and adopt a customer-centric approach, tailoring content to resonate with local cultures such as Singapore's diverse market (IMDA, 2023). Clear, measurable goals like boosting lead quality, reducing customer acquisition cost (CAC), and increasing share-of-voice are essential to align marketing with business outcomes (Gartner, 2022). Strategy involves segmenting audiences by business scale, crafting targeted content (e.g., blogs, webinars), and positioning the company as a thought leader in employee engagement solutions (Anastasiu et al., 2020). Execution combines SEO, PPC, email campaigns, and social media with ongoing optimization using analytics tools, ensuring continuous improvement and sustained campaign performance (Barney & Hesterly, 2019).

2) Customer Journey in B2B SaaS Lead Generation

The B2B customer journey funnel illustrates how prospects progress from initial awareness to long-term brand advocacy through five key stages: awareness, consideration, conversion, loyalty, and advocacy. This process begins with targeted marketing to create awareness, followed by evaluation and purchase decisions, and continues with efforts to foster loyalty and post-purchase engagement that drive retention and referrals (Qualtrics, 2025). In today's digital landscape, marketing plays a pivotal role in adapting to shifting buyer behaviors, providing consistent, accessible content across platforms to support independent research and informed decision-making (Gartner, 2022). Hall (2020) emphasizes the integration of sales and marketing functions to meet customer needs at every stage, with marketing evolving into a strategic enabler throughout the buying cycle. Mapping the customer journey covering need recognition, research, evaluation, comparison, purchase, and post-purchase stages enables companies to align their strategies with buyer expectations, enhance lead nurturing, and ultimately boost conversion and long-term customer value. The B2B buying process begins with need recognition, where organizations identify operational gaps through internal assessments or market insights (McKinsey & Company, 2023). This leads to need quantification and research, as buyers conduct internal discussions and independent research 77% of whom prefer self-driven exploration (Gartner, 2022). In the evaluation stage, buyers compare vendors by attending events, reviewing product features, and favoring those offering free trials or demos (Hall, 2020). This is followed by the comparison of alternatives, where decision-makers assess pricing, SLAs, and scalability, often formalized through RFPs (McKinsey & Company, 2023). The purchase decision phase involves negotiation of terms, onboarding, and legal approvals to ensure compliance (Hall, 2020). Finally, the post-purchase and retention stage focuses on implementation outcomes, training, and customer success initiatives, which influence contract renewals and upselling opportunities (Gartner, 2022).

3) Metrics and Measurement in Digital Marketing

A systematic approach combining process and outcome metrics is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies. According to Hall (2020), process-based evaluation involves creating a database to track quantitative and qualitative data such as content engagement, ad performance, and website interactions, while outcome evaluation focuses on customer behavior, brand perception, and conversion rates. This integrated measurement framework allows organizations to assess performance across different stages of the buyer's journey and align their metrics with specific marketing objectives (Hall, 2022). In the early buying cycle, marketing metrics focus on awareness and reach rather than immediate conversions. Key indicators include website traffic from channels like organic search, social media, and paid ads, as well as macro conversions (e.g., webinar sign-ups) and micro conversions (e.g., newsletter subscriptions), all of which reflect interest levels and brand visibility (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2016; Bahera et al., 2020). Impressions also play a role in measuring how often content is displayed to potential buyers, enhancing brand recall (Hall, 2020). Additionally, Cost per Lead (CPL) is a critical metric for evaluating the cost-efficiency of lead generation campaigns, calculated by dividing total marketing spend by the number of leads acquired (Hall, 2020). The distinction between Marketing Qualified Leads (MQLs), who show early interest, and Sales Qualified Leads (SQLs), who are closer to purchasing, helps align marketing and sales efforts. A well-defined CPL ensures that both teams understand lead quality and prioritize follow-ups effectively (Gartner, 2022).

4) The B2B Value Pyramid

Understanding what truly matters to business customers is fundamental for aligning marketing and sales efforts. The B2B Value Pyramid, developed by Almquist et al. (2018), provides a structured framework inspired by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, categorizing the key values businesses consider when selecting vendors. The five levels table stakes, functional value, ease of doing business, personal value, and inspirational value reflect increasing strategic and emotional engagement. At its base, table stakes represent basic qualifications such as regulatory compliance and ethical conduct, which are essential for market entry but do not offer competitive advantage. Moving upward, functional value highlights tangible business outcomes like productivity or revenue gains, while ease of doing business emphasizes usability and integration, which become differentiators in saturated markets. The upper tiers of the pyramid delve into more nuanced aspects of buyer behavior. Personal value reflects the direct benefits decision-makers gain, such as professional recognition or reduced personal risk, often influencing internal support for a vendor. At the peak lies inspirational value, where the supplier aligns with the client's long-term vision, social values, or innovation goals an increasingly vital consideration in high-value, purpose-driven markets. Altogether, the B2B Value Pyramid provides a comprehensive lens to evaluate what drives purchasing decisions beyond functionality, enabling vendors to tailor their offerings and messaging across operational, personal, and aspirational dimensions to build deeper, more strategic client relationships.

D. Conceptual Framework

The path through which Emplorax can enhance its digital lead generation is the integration of market insights, internal capabilities, and data informed strategy. Its development is grounded in the specific context of Singapore's business-to-business software sector, and places data as the main link or bridge between strategic planning and commercial performance. The framework has at its top two critical inputs: Singapore market factors and internal performance. These dimensions depict both the external conditions that Emplorax has to navigate through and the internal assets that it can leverage. The Singapore market factors are the regulatory standards, procurement norms, digital maturity, and the rising expectations of environmental and social responsibility. These elements are what shape the corporate buyers' perception of the solution providers. The Singaporean Personal Data Protection Act, the vision of a Smart Nation the government implemented, and the growing popularity of the environmental and social governance schemes in the selection of vendors are the factors that directly impact your platform needs and the way you position the market. Due to these conditions, the competitors' price sensitivity mostly complicates the differentiation in a crowded market.

Internal performance refers to the access of the organization to the operational readiness, technological infrastructure, and the execution discipline. The key capabilities that come from this foundation are found in the customer relationship systems, the synergy between marketing and sales functions, and the ability of the team to execute on time, relevance, and artistic license with regard to the persona involved in the campaigns. Issues like mismanaged funnels or slow response cycles can reverse lead conversion rates even if there is a significant demand in the market. The two areas intersect through the cross-section of data-led foundation. This capabilities at the core converted the contextual insights into the course of action for the product. The figures of information fund customer segmentation, let scoring, attribution analysis, and feedback loops that are informed by campaign optimization. The tool is used to prove the concept, which is to remove the obstacles, and result in a project that is faster, better, and cheaper. On this basis, Emplorax can roll out digital marketing that operates both the funnel and the persona with precision. The development of the strategy will go through all the stages of awareness, consideration, and decision in the business to business purchasing cycle. It consists of the most precise placement of content via search engine optimization, search engine advertising, email engagement, social media outreach, and event based activation. defeater-guided prioritization via segmentation and positioning model, enables distinct messaging for different audiences whom the procurement leads, hr directors, and senior executives are interested in. The last element of the framework that is being highlighted here is the effective lead generation, which is also the specified outcome of the whole strategic process.

METHOD

This chapter outlines the methodology employed to optimize Emplorax's B2B lead generation strategy, focusing on the Singapore market and its flagship product, CERRA Applause. The research utilizes a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews with internal stakeholders and quantitative analysis of historical marketing performance data. Primary data was gathered from six interviews with sales and customer success teams, focusing on themes such as lead quality, sales friction, content effectiveness, and organizational alignment. These interviews offered a nuanced understanding of real-world challenges in converting marketing leads into clients, uncovering critical friction points and misalignments across the customer journey. Secondary data was sourced from Emplorax's CRM, Google Analytics, and digital advertising platforms over a 12–24-month period, allowing the research team to track conversion patterns, marketing efficiency, and channel performance. This data was cleaned, categorized, and analyzed using descriptive statistics, time-series analysis, and correlation methods to evaluate cost per lead, click-through rates, and lead conversion rates. Benchmarking against external reports from organizations like HubSpot and McKinsey provided context for industry positioning. The integration of internal and external data produced a comprehensive view of performance gaps and strategic opportunities in Emplorax's digital marketing operations.

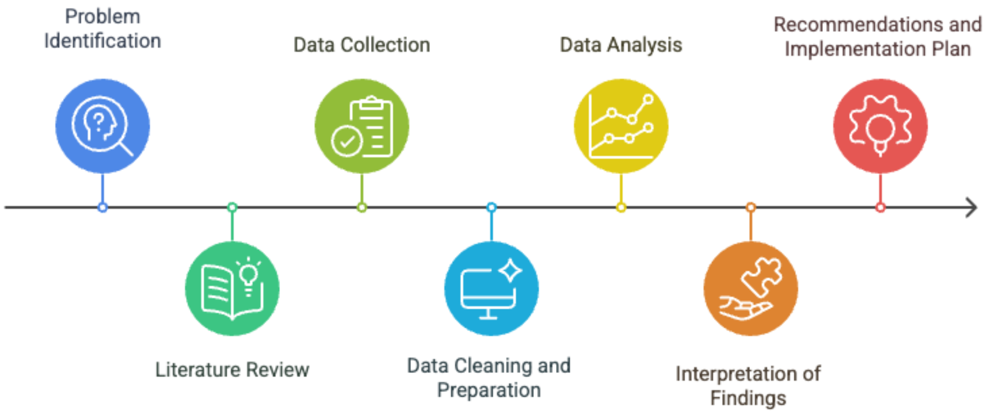

Image 1: Research Design

The research design followed a structured sequence: identifying performance issues, reviewing literature, collecting and preparing data, and conducting detailed analysis to derive actionable insights. Interpretation of findings integrated both statistical outcomes and frontline feedback, which revealed inefficiencies in content alignment, customer onboarding, and lead nurturing. Recommendations focused on refining targeting strategies, improving collaboration between marketing and sales, and deploying a real-time performance tracking framework. Altogether, this research enables Emplorax to make data-driven decisions and enhance its competitiveness in the dynamic B2B SaaS marketplace.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis

A. Overview of Lead Generation Performance

Emplorax implemented a multi-channel digital marketing strategy to drive leads for CERRA Applause in Singapore, leveraging paid ads (Google and Meta), SEO, organic social media, blogs, and email campaigns. Data from CRM (HubSpot), Google Ads, Meta Ads, and Google Analytics indicated that SEO was the top-performing channel, contributing 73% of total leads at the lowest cost per lead (SGD 95.5). Paid ads, especially Meta, had high costs with less efficiency, while blogs and email supported lead nurturing. Overall, SEO stood out as the most cost-effective and reliable channel in terms of volume and cost. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) delivered the highest number of marketing-qualified leads (471), with significant cost efficiency and a consistent rise in conversion rates. With a CPL significantly lower than industry benchmarks, SEO helped Emplorax build a long-term, sustainable pipeline. However, the lack of mid-funnel content such as gated assets or interactive tools limited its ability to capture behavioral data or advance leads through the funnel. Future improvements include embedding calls-to-action, gated content, and better CRM integration for advanced lead qualification.

Google Ads campaigns generated 128 MQLs at a high average CPL of SGD 378.8, exceeding industry benchmarks. The inefficiency stemmed from an overreliance on broad match keywords, poor alignment between ads and landing pages, and low use of advanced ad formats or retargeting. Campaigns using exact-match keywords or brand-specific terms performed better, but they received a smaller budget share. Low CTRs and misaligned landing experiences also contributed to lower conversion effectiveness, revealing the need for better targeting, messaging, and funnel progression in future campaigns. Meta Ads (Facebook and Instagram) resulted in 46 MQLs at the highest CPL of SGD 524.1. Despite being useful for brand awareness, they underperformed in lead quality and conversion. Factors such as generic ad creatives, lack of mobile-optimized landing pages, and passive user behavior limited engagement. Moreover, leads were often misaligned with the ideal customer profile. Nonetheless, niche campaigns focused on wellness and employer branding resonated better. To improve, Meta strategies should include native-style creative, sequential storytelling, and retargeting for higher ROI. LinkedIn played a key role in brand positioning and top-of-funnel engagement, though it contributed less than 2% of direct MQLs. High engagement rates on HR tips and ROI content validated its thought leadership value, but weak CTRs and limited CRM integration reduced its impact on conversions. Email campaigns also showed subpar performance due to lack of segmentation, automation, and behavioral triggers. Although open rates were within industry norms, nurturing workflows failed to convert MQLs effectively due to static messaging and absence of dynamic personalization.

Offline events such as HR forums and executive roundtables were valuable in generating high-intent leads. While participation was limited, events like leadership lunches achieved strong conversion rates (up to 15%). However, manual post-event follow-ups and lack of automation tools weakened lead tracking and conversion potential. Other firms outperformed Emplorax in this area by using event data for retargeting ads, triggered emails, and CRM integration. With proper follow-up infrastructure, Emplorax could better capitalize on the relationship-building power of in-person engagements.

B. Interview Results

To complement quantitative data, Emplorax conducted internal interviews with sales and customer success staff to uncover deeper issues in CERRA Applause's lead generation and conversion efforts in Singapore. The qualitative research, based on five key themes, revealed mismatches between client expectations and product capabilities, pricing inflexibility, operational onboarding issues, CRM gaps, and increasing buyer sophistication. These insights expose structural and communication limitations that hinder the platform's market performance and post-sale experience. One recurring issue raised was the frequent misalignment between what leads expected and what CERRA Applause actually offered. Many prospects assumed the platform had CRM features, full UI customization, or advanced marketing automation, which was not the case. This mismatch often originated from marketing messages emphasizing impact over product boundaries. As a result, both sales and customer success teams reported having to "reset" expectations, which undermined early trust and delayed the onboarding process. Leads that matched the target profile sometimes lacked contextual clarity, affecting their journey through the funnel.

Another prominent barrier was Emplorax's rigid pricing model based on full employee headcount, which made it hard for companies to pilot the platform or justify the cost to procurement teams. Sales representatives reported losing deals due to the lack of flexible, phased pricing or low-cost entry points. Even post-contract clients expressed hesitation during onboarding, as there was no small-scale testing phase. This rigidity hindered competitiveness against lighter, cheaper local solutions that appeal to customers with simpler, short-term needs. Operational inefficiencies also constrained onboarding success. The lack of localized sales materials and standardized onboarding documentation led to delays and repetitive manual tasks. Sales teams struggled with the absence of Singapore-specific case studies and ROI content, while customer success teams faced issues like login confusion, mobile redemption challenges, and repetitive user training. These gaps not only extended activation timelines but also weakened early client engagement and perception of value.

A major obstacle across departments was the fragmented use of CRM. Although HubSpot was the primary tool, it lacked consistent implementation, with incomplete lead histories and minimal integration between pre- and post-sale systems. Sales couldn't prioritize leads effectively, and customer success lacked automated triggers to re-engage inactive users. Without behavioral segmentation, automation, or shared data flow, teams operated reactively, reducing their ability to personalize outreach and optimize the customer lifecycle. Clients in the Singapore market are increasingly informed, with many comparing CERRA Applause directly to competitors like Achievers or Xoxoday. Expectations now include ESG-aligned rewards, advanced analytics, seamless integrations, and polished UX. Emplorax's current product lags in some of these areas, such as predictive reporting and green reward catalogs. While the platform's regional relevance and flexibility are strong points, internal teams feel these advantages are not well conveyed through existing sales and marketing materials.

Finally, the interviews highlighted systemic internal misalignments, especially between sales, customer success, and marketing. There was no formal feedback loop to share client expectations or objections, leading to broken handovers and inconsistent messaging. Marketing efforts were focused heavily on top-of-funnel activities, with little input on conversion-stage enablement. The absence of structured feedback systems prevented the organization from capturing insights, refining strategies, and creating a unified customer journey ultimately diminishing Emplorax's ability to scale and differentiate in a competitive B2B SaaS landscape.

Solution and Proposed Implementation Plan

Improving lead conversion and marketing ROI in B2B SaaS is not solely driven by effective campaigns but fundamentally depends on how well data is collected, structured, and applied across the customer journey especially in complex markets like Singapore, where decision-making involves multiple stakeholders and nonlinear cycles. Emplorax's earlier results reveal issues such as limited funnel visibility and poor conversion tracking, which stem not from product-market fit, but from internal gaps in how marketing performance is measured and leveraged. Without clear insights into lifecycle stages, engagement signals, or channel contributions, the marketing team struggles to optimize efforts or demonstrate impact. This section addresses the research question by illustrating how four internal areas CRM lifecycle structure, automation and lead scoring, marketing attribution, and performance alignment can drive measurable improvements in conversion and ROI when approached with a data-driven strategy.

A. Data Driven Marketing Impact

To enhance lead conversion and marketing ROI for CERRA Applause in Singapore, Emplorax must address core internal capability gaps within its data-driven infrastructure. A key issue is the absence of a standardized CRM lifecycle, which limits visibility across funnel stages and hampers sales forecasting and attribution accuracy. Implementing a clear, stage-based B2B lifecycle in the CRM with structured triggers and consistent data capture would improve tracking, reduce lead leakage, and support more reliable marketing performance analysis. Additionally, nurturing automation is lacking; leads currently receive minimal or generic follow-up. Introducing behavior-triggered workflows tailored to buyer personas, combined with lead scoring mechanisms, would improve qualification, reduce manual effort, and deliver more relevant content throughout the funnel. These actions would ensure marketing efforts are precisely aligned with buyer intent and readiness. Beyond structural improvements, Emplorax must also implement more advanced marketing attribution and performance feedback systems. Presently, the company measures only basic activity metrics, which fail to link marketing actions to revenue outcomes. Embracing multi-touch attribution models and tagging all campaigns by channel and funnel stage would allow for deeper insights into ROI and cost-per-opportunity. Equally important is fostering consistent collaboration between marketing, sales, and customer success. Currently, feedback loops are fragmented, resulting in disjointed strategy and missed optimization opportunities. Emplorax should establish formal performance review sessions and post-campaign debriefs across teams to align on lead quality, campaign effectiveness, and client insights ensuring decisions are data-informed and collaboratively owned across the funnel.

B. Aligning Strategy with Market Specific Factors in Singapore

The B2B SaaS landscape in Singapore is defined by high digital maturity, multi-stakeholder decision processes, and strict procurement standards. Despite CERRA Applause's strong global market fit, Emplorax faces challenges locally due to misaligned expectations, unclear technical documentation, rigid pricing, and a lack of localised reward catalogue options. Buyers in Singapore expect seamless integration with enterprise systems, clear ROI evidence, and locally relevant solutions. However, interviews revealed that technical ambiguity, insufficient case studies, and limited pricing flexibility slow down decisions. To build trust and accelerate conversions, Emplorax must offer clear, role-specific proposals, transparent integration capabilities, and documentation tailored for IT, finance, and procurement stakeholders. Additionally, success in this market depends on adapting to local procurement practices and user preferences. Emplorax should invest in curated technical enablement packs, flexible pricing models (such as active-user billing or pilot programs), and a localised reward catalogue that reflects Singapore's diverse workforce. Strengthening partnerships with regional merchants, providing pre-structured procurement documentation, and showcasing tangible impact through anonymised, metrics-driven case studies will further align Emplorax with buyer expectations. In Singapore's detail-oriented, compliance-driven environment, sales growth hinges not just on platform capability but on clarity, trust-building, and operational readiness demonstrated early in the buyer journey.

C. Proposed Digital Marketing Strategy

The digital marketing strategy for Emplorax's CERRA Applause in Singapore focuses on aligning digital channel efforts with each stage of the B2B customer journey awareness, consideration, and conversion using a structured, data-driven approach. Insights from performance metrics and internal stakeholder interviews shaped the framework, highlighting the need for better funnel visibility, localized targeting, and cohesive lead nurturing. At the awareness stage, SEO emerged as the most cost-efficient channel, contributing 69% of marketing-qualified leads. LinkedIn supported brand trust and visibility, while Meta Ads offered limited success due to weak targeting and misalignment with HR buyer behavior. Google Ads showed mixed results, with high costs and under-optimized post-click experiences needing refinement.

In the consideration phase, the strategy emphasizes nurturing high-intent leads through SEO, blog content, and email automation. While top-performing blog posts attracted strong traffic, a lack of gated content and mid-funnel CTAs limited lead progression. Follow-up automation via email remained underutilized, with low click-through rates and limited segmentation by persona or behavior. To improve, Emplorax must implement dynamic workflows triggered by user activity and tailored to HR or procurement needs, incorporating contextual calls-to-action and CRM-integrated scoring for better qualification. Conversion-stage efforts focus on bridging procurement concerns, justifying ROI, and empowering the sales team. The absence of personalized sales collateral and clear documentation often delayed decision-making. To address this, Emplorax integrates email sequences with CRM data, delivers downloadable decision tools, and holds offline events like HR summits and leadership roundtables for trust-building. Sales follow-up is triggered based on behavior and lead score, ensuring timely outreach with personalized messaging. Paid search remains relevant at this stage but must be optimized for high-intent queries and tightly aligned landing pages. Finally, Emplorax's integrated channel strategy highlights the importance of orchestrating digital and offline touchpoints throughout the buyer journey. Structured playbooks such as "Playbook A" for digital acquisition and "Playbook B" for offline activation enable Emplorax to capture leads early and convert them through a combination of content marketing, paid media, CRM automation, and high-touch engagement. This cohesive approach ensures improved lead quality, reduced sales cycle duration, and stronger return on marketing investment in the competitive enterprise SaaS market of Singapore.

D. Justification and Implementation Plan

The proposed marketing strategy is designed to improve lead conversion and ROI through an integrated action plan that aligns business priorities with operational capabilities. Strategic diagnosis revealed critical mid-funnel drop-offs, weak sales-marketing alignment, and insufficient funnel visibility all of which hinder conversion performance. To address this, Emplorax will adopt a dual-playbook approach: one (Playbook B) to digitally capture high-intent leads via SEO and Google Ads supported by targeted content and automation, and another (Playbook A) to convert leads through curated offline engagements like executive events, supported by sales outreach based on prior digital activity. This strategy reflects Singapore's B2B buying behaviors, where buyers demand thorough documentation, validation, and multi-stakeholder involvement before committing. Implementation will be phased over four quarters, beginning with CRM optimization, lead scoring setup, and the development of nurture workflows and content assets. Playbook B will run from Q1 onward, driving digital lead acquisition through SEO, paid search, and email campaigns. Meanwhile, preparations for Playbook A will begin in Q2, launching with an executive roundtable targeting qualified leads. The cycle of digital engagement and offline activation will continue into Q3 and Q4, reinforced by ongoing content updates and cross-functional coordination. A shared project management system and monthly/quarterly performance reviews will ensure accountability and strategy refinement throughout the campaign. To ensure successful execution, Emplorax will invest in content creation, campaign channels, automation systems, and sales alignment. Budget allocation includes 30% for paid media, 25% for content, 20% for events, 15% for CRM/automation tools, and 10% for sales enablement. Performance will be tracked through metrics such as MQL-to-SQL conversion rates, cost per opportunity, and lead engagement effectiveness. This approach offers both strategic clarity and operational accountability, enabling Emplorax to scale its lead generation in line with the expectations of Singapore's enterprise SaaS market.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how digital marketing strategies can enhance lead generation for Emplorax, a B2B SaaS provider operating in Singapore's highly competitive market. The research was driven by the need to replace inconsistent or ineffective marketing efforts with structured, data-driven strategies to build brand awareness and generate qualified leads. The study focused on three objectives: evaluating the impact of data-driven marketing on lead conversion, identifying key factors influencing lead generation in Singapore, and assessing the role of digital marketing across different stages of the B2B customer relationship. Findings revealed that while Emplorax had basic data-driven marketing tools in place, they were underutilized, leading to poor lead qualification, a lack of nurturing processes, and inadequate performance tracking. Moreover, the absence of consistent CRM workflows limited the effectiveness of marketing in supporting the sales process.

The analysis further revealed that Singaporean enterprises favor formalized procurement processes involving multiple decision-makers, making professionalism, contextual relevance, and responsiveness crucial. Although Emplorax achieved strong top-of-funnel visibility through SEO and PPC, it struggled in mid-to-late funnel engagement due to weak personalization, follow-up, and alignment with sales teams. To address this, a comprehensive digital marketing strategy was proposed, structured into two campaign playbooks: one for online lead generation and qualification, and another for offline lead activation to build trust. Ultimately, the study emphasized that visibility alone is insufficient. Success in lead generation requires full alignment of content, data, and delivery across the entire customer journey, with Emplorax needing to embed data-driven coordination to strengthen its market position and sales pipeline in Singapore's enterprise SaaS landscape. This thesis presents a strategic digital marketing roadmap designed to enhance lead generation in high-consideration B2B SaaS environments, with a focus on the Indonesian market. The proposed two-phase approach for Emplorax begins with demand capture through paid search, SEO, and email automation to drive initial engagement and improve lead scoring, followed by conversion efforts using retargeting, executive outreach, and personalized sales tactics. A quarterly roadmap aligning marketing, sales, content, and automation responsibilities is recommended, along with consistent tracking of key metrics such as funnel conversion rate and cost per opportunity. The framework encourages continuous performance evaluation and can be adapted across different markets to explore variations in buyer behavior, digital adoption, and ROI. Moreover, future research may investigate organizational structures, automation maturity, and predictive lead scoring. Overall, the thesis underscores the need for a systematic, funnel-driven, and locally tailored marketing approach, emphasizing CRM discipline, cross-functional alignment, and strategic responsiveness to buyer expectations and procurement culture.

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