PLAYBOOK · 07 STEPS

The 7-Step Process *that turns buyer vocabulary into content your ICP shares.*

A content playbook for VPs of Product Marketing at Series C B2B SaaS companies shipping gated assets that generate form-fills from low-fit accounts, *and wondering why the right buyers never download them.*

AUDIENCE Series C B2B SaaS PMM

FORMAT Content + campaign playbook

USE WHEN Gated assets underperforming

TIME TO RUN ~2 hours per asset

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PLAY/03

INTRODUCTION — PROLOGUE · THE PROBLEM

WHAT THIS PLAYBOOK SOLVES

The problem is not your content team's writing ability. It is the source material.

Most lead magnets are written in product language dressed up as thought leadership. Senior buyers, CROs, CFOs, technical evaluators, can identify vendor collateral in the first two sentences, and they scroll past it. The root cause: persona decks that describe a job title instead of the **specific problem that buyer is funded to fix this quarter.** When you build from the wrong input, you produce assets that attract category researchers, not active buyers.

CONTINUED · STEP 1 OF 7 — THE FUNDED PROBLEM

Identify *the funded problem.*

One sentence: the specific problem your buyer told their CFO they would fix this fiscal year.

STEP · 01

Write one sentence describing what your buyer told the CFO they would fix, *not what your product solves.*

Before you brief a single asset, write one sentence that describes what your target buyer told their CFO they would fix this fiscal year, not what your product solves. Pull this from win/loss calls, customer Slack language, or board update language if you have it. If your sentence includes the words "improve efficiency" or "accelerate growth," start over.

COMMON PITFALL

PMMs default to product-adjacent language ("drive adoption," "reduce churn risk") because that is what internal messaging guides contain. That language signals vendor perspective before the buyer finishes the headline.

WHEN DONE RIGHT

Briefs anchored to funded-problem language, like **"forecast confidence dropped to 58% last quarter,"** generate meaningfully higher download rates from ICP accounts than assets built from product positioning copy.

Map the *internal vocabulary.*

The exact phrases from their board updates and QBR decks, not from your marketing site.

STEP · 02

Pull the exact phrases your buyer uses in board updates, Slack, and QBR decks, *not the ones your marketing team uses.*

Build a short list of the exact phrases your buyer uses in their own board updates, internal Slack channels, and QBR decks. Not the phrases your marketing team uses to describe the same concepts. For each term on your standard persona brief, ask: would a peer send this to a colleague, or does it sound like it came from a vendor website? Replace the latter before you write a single word of the asset.

COMMON PITFALL

Generic AI and transformation language ("AI-powered," "end-to-end visibility") triggers an immediate delete reflex with senior buyers, because it signals the author has not spoken to someone in their role recently.

WHEN DONE RIGHT

Credibility vocabulary mapping cuts AE rewrite rates on campaign copy inside a single campaign cycle, because **the language field sales sees matches what prospects say on calls.**

Look like *peer research.*

Format signals whether this is research or marketing before your buyer reads the first line.

STEP · 03

Pick a format a buyer would plausibly receive from an analyst, a peer, or an industry association, *not from a vendor.*

Benchmarks with specific numbers, scored self-assessments, and diagnostic checklists perform this function. A PDF titled "[Company Name] Guide to [Category]" does not. The format itself signals whether this is research or marketing before the buyer reads the first line.

COMMON PITFALL

Watermarking or heavily co-branding research-style assets with product screenshots and CTAs inside the body copy collapses the peer-research illusion and drops completion rates.

WHEN DONE RIGHT

Lead magnets built as **scored benchmarks or diagnostic checklists** generate meaningfully more ICP-qualified downloads than gated ebooks from the same campaign, because the format signals utility before the gate.

Build for *the committee.*

The CFO and the IT evaluator are reading it too. Write for the reader who blocks the deal.

STEP · 04

Identify who the champion forwards it to, *and write one section directly to that reader.*

If your ICP champion is a CRO, the CFO who approves the budget and the IT evaluator who blocks the procurement are also reading anything the CRO passes along. Build one section of the asset that speaks directly to the concern of that second reader, not the champion's goal.

COMMON PITFALL

Assets built only around the champion's pain generate form-fills from champions who cannot get internal buy-in, which produces MQL volume that stalls at the next deal stage.

WHEN DONE RIGHT

Buying-committee-aware assets (those that address funder and blocker concerns alongside champion priorities) are associated with **shorter average sales cycles** in deals where marketing-sourced content was shared internally before the first sales call.

Title *the funded problem.*

Name the moment of discomfort, not the category of solution.

STEP · 05

Write titles that name the specific failure mode your buyer is already worried about, *not the outcome your product delivers.*

"How to defend pipeline attribution when your CRO asks which committee members actually saw your campaign" outperforms "The PMM's Guide to Pipeline Accountability" because it names the exact moment of discomfort, not the category of solution. Write the first paragraph the same way: name the situation, name who is in the room, name what goes wrong.

COMMON PITFALL

Titles written from the product benefit frame ("How to build better campaigns faster") appeal to the broadest possible audience, and therefore resonate with none of your actual ICP.

WHEN DONE RIGHT

Subject lines and asset titles that name **a specific failure mode, not a desired outcome**, generate higher open and download rates among director-level and above ICP contacts in B2B SaaS campaigns.

Ship inside *the sprint.*

5 to 10 business days to complete. Not a 2 to 4 week agency cycle.

STEP · 06

The asset must be complete before the campaign goes live, *which means the brief is one hour and the asset is one day.*

Set a hard constraint: the asset must be complete before the campaign goes live, which means your production process cannot exceed the campaign planning window. For most PMM teams, that is five to ten business days. Build your asset from a repeatable brief template (funded problem, vocabulary list, committee map, format choice) so the brief takes one hour and the asset takes one day, not four weeks.

COMMON PITFALL

Two-to-four week content agency cycles produce assets that launch after the campaign window closes, so the content team is always writing for the last campaign while PMM is running the next one.

WHEN DONE RIGHT

PMM teams using pre-structured buyer brief templates ship campaign-ready lead magnets **in under 5 business days**, compared to a 2 to 4 week agency cycle, without a measurable drop in asset quality scores from ICP reviewers.

CONTINUED · STEP 7 OF 7 — THE MEASUREMENT

Measure *ICP-fit downloads.*

Report the ratio of ICP-fit downloads. Not total form-fills.

STEP · 07

Match downloaders against your ICP definition, *and report the ratio, not the volume.*

After the asset goes live, pull the list of downloaders and match them against your ICP definition: title, company size, vertical, and active deal stage if available. Report the ratio of ICP-fit downloads to total downloads, not total form-fills. If your ICP download rate is below 50%, the asset is attracting category researchers, and the title or distribution targeting needs to change before the next campaign.

COMMON PITFALL

Reporting total MQL volume from a gated asset as the success metric hides the signal that matters, whether active buyers with budget are engaging, and produces a false positive that delays the copy correction.

WHEN DONE RIGHT

Teams tracking **ICP-fit download rate** as the primary content metric surface underperforming asset topics 2 to 3 campaign cycles earlier than teams reporting on total MQL volume, which cuts wasted content spend per quarter.

Not better PDFs. *Better source material.*

The bar every future asset has to clear is the ICP-fit download rate, not the form-fill count.

The assets your ICP actually downloads.

The assets your ICP actually downloads are not better-designed PDFs. They are documents built from the language your buyers already use internally, formatted to look like research your champion would forward to a CFO without apology.

Run this process once with a single persona and a single asset format. Measure the ICP-fit download rate. Use that number, **not total form-fills,** as the bar every future asset has to clear.

EXAMPLE PROFILE APPENDIX A · A PROFILE IN THE WILD

Meet *Sara.*

One decision profile, pulled directly from the BIA library. Not a template. Real research on the exact buyer this playbook is written for.

SARA

Information Security Analyst *, US regional bank, OCC-regulated*

INDUSTRY US regional banking, OCC-regulated

ORG $8B assets, 300–1,200 employees

TEAM Security team of 2–3, dual CISO/CIO reporting

FRAMEWORK FFIEC · NIST CSF 2.0 · GLBA

THE METRIC

Surviving the next OCC exam cycle without a formal Matter Requiring Attention. Continuous FFIEC alignment. NIST CSF 2.0 documented across all functions (the FFIEC CAT was retired August 2025). Mean Time to Contain trending toward the 15-minute threshold.

THE MANDATE

Cut manual analyst workload by 40%+ so the team of two to three can hunt threats instead of drowning in SIEM alerts. Consolidate 12–16 point solutions into fewer platforms. Prevent this bank from becoming the next SEC Form 8-K shadow-AI disclosure.

THE GRAVEYARD

Verbatim: "If I bring this in and it shows up as a gap or a misconfiguration in my next OCC exam, that's not just a bad quarter, that's a formal Matter Requiring Attention that follows this institution for years."

WHAT ACTUALLY MOVES SARA

Peer references from other $6B–$10B OCC-regulated banks with 2–3 person security teams. FS-ISAC and CB-ISAC-aware vendors, not Fortune 500 logos. Named core-processor fluency (Jack Henry, Fiserv, FIS) with proof of native SIEM integration, not manual CSV correlation from Excel.

NOW LIVE

See a real buyer brief *before you write the next asset.*

Inside the Buyer Intel Accelerator, pull a live decision profile for the enterprise buyer your next campaign is targeting: **the funded problem, the vocabulary they use in board updates, and the committee that reads what they forward.** The source material the seven steps assume you already have.

getbuyerintel.ai →

80 free credits, no card required. Pull the brief, then write the asset.