

## SONNY'S leverages digital technologies to stay ahead of the competition in an evolving car wash industry.

Today's car washes combine complex equipment and software that includes digitally controlled car wash conveyors, entry gates, and pay stations as well as sophisticated cloud-based services that handle both point-of-sale transactions and other key aspects of the business. SONNY'S Enterprises, LLC is the leading provider of this type of advanced car wash equipment and technology. The largest manufacturer of conveyorized car wash equipment, parts, and supplies in the world, SONNY'S designs and manufactures not only equipment and software, but also provides training through its Car Wash College and in-depth website content that educates owners and operators on how to run their businesses efficiently and profitably.

According to Timothy Paskowski, Digital Marketing Manager, despite the rapidly changing nature of the car wash business, most equipment providers take a low-tech approach to marketing. SONNY'S marketing team, however, have fully embraced digital. To that end, SONNY'S implemented Marketo, which the digital marketing team is leveraging across all of the business: Car Wash College, Car Wash Equipment, Car Wash Controls, and Car Wash Parts.

The team is focused on translating SONNY'S 60-year history in the business into products and programs that help customers take their business to the next level. Everything Timothy and his team do is designed to support client success in the market. Marketo is helping SONNY'S expand its already dominant market share by reaching prospects and customers through digital channels and providing them with captivating campaigns that engage, inspire, and educate. Marketo is at the center of the team's demand generation and customer contact strategies.

### Objectives

- Launch digital campaigns at a scale that competitors can't match, capitalizing on SONNY'S leadership position to maintain its "unfair share of the market."
- Bring more leads into the funnel by leveraging display ads, search, email, and other digital channels.
- Increase lead conversions with captivating content and innovative presentations such as VR.

Monthly conversion  
increase (first 90 days)

**63%**

Average monthly traffic  
increase (first 90 days)

**20%**

Site conversion rate  
increase (first 120 days)

**145%**

“Marketo is foundational to our stack and will continue to be as we move forward with plans for more intelligent lead prioritization and nurturing programs.”



**Timothy Paskowski**

Digital Marketing Manager  
SONNY'S Enterprises, LLC



## Rich Content Delivers More Leads and More Conversions

The high average order value for conveyORIZED equipment makes every qualified lead a valuable asset but it also means a long sales cycle. To increase the number of leads in the funnel and bring more of them to fruition, Timothy and the team have developed a digital strategy designed to engage a diverse audience of investors and entrepreneurs, including:

- Business people interested in opening their first car wash
- Car wash operators expanding their businesses by adding locations
- Convenience store and gas station owners looking for new revenue opportunities that align with their current businesses
- Auto dealers and repair shops differentiating themselves by providing value-add services
- Car wash operators who need replacement parts to maintain not only SONNY'S equipment but also equipment manufactured by other companies

The team is using a variety of channels to capture new leads, from in-person interactions at trade shows to search, display ads, email, and the [sonnysdirect.com](http://sonnysdirect.com) site. To shepherd those leads through the sales cycle, the team engages prospects with high-quality content that educates them on all aspects of the car wash business—from investment opportunities and the ins and outs of opening a first car wash to operating and repairing the automated equipment and running a profitable business. In exchange for access, prospects are asked to complete a Marketo form that captures their contact information and details on their specific interests and goals.

**“ We had built an extensive library of articles, videos, best practices guides, and white papers tailored to individual audiences, but we had no way of gauging its effectiveness in generating sales. If someone downloaded an investor kit or received an equipment quote, we couldn't track it. We didn't know how many leads the content was generating and we had no way to interact with prospects in any kind of meaningful way. Meaningful interactions are essential for success in today's Engagement Economy, especially when it comes to asking people to make the major investment that opening a car wash requires. We have to gain trust by demonstrating SONNY'S industry expertise and thought leadership as well as its commitment to customers. The combination of our rich content and Marketo digital marketing capabilities are enabling us to do just that.”**



## Innovating with Virtual Reality

SONNY'S marketers recently launched what is proving to be a highly successful campaign for bringing leads into the funnel and nurturing them through the sales cycle. Working with an outside production company, the marketing team shot 17 360° virtual reality (VR) videos that provide rich insight into SONNY'S and its product offerings. The videos enable prospects with a computer or mobile device to participate in virtual factory tours, car wash tours, product tours, and many other engaging experiences.

According to Timothy, some competitors have attempted to match SONNY'S campaign by creating VR videos that they use in their tradeshow booths. But SONNY'S took an innovative approach: Marketers created an exciting and realistic experience that prospects can view on any device without installing any apps or software, putting the experience right at the prospect's fingertips. The company printed VR goggles and gave away hundreds of them at the recent International Car Wash Association tradeshow. The goggles are also available to website visitors who click a link and complete a Marketo form. Spurred on by the success of the VR campaign, marketing is now advertising in 360° virtual reality using a remarketing tag and the Google Display Network. The team can even track the geospatial orientation of visitors' smartphones when they view videos, which helps marketing improve future videos.

“ When we set our expectations for demand generation at the beginning of the year, we conservatively estimated a single digit percentage of month-over-month growth while we worked to develop a stable model of returns. What we observed in reality was a 63% 90-day increase in website conversions from a 20% growth in website traffic in the same period. We're excited about these tangible results. What's also exciting is how Marketo is freeing us to think creatively about how to interact more effectively with customers and prospects in the Engagement Economy.”