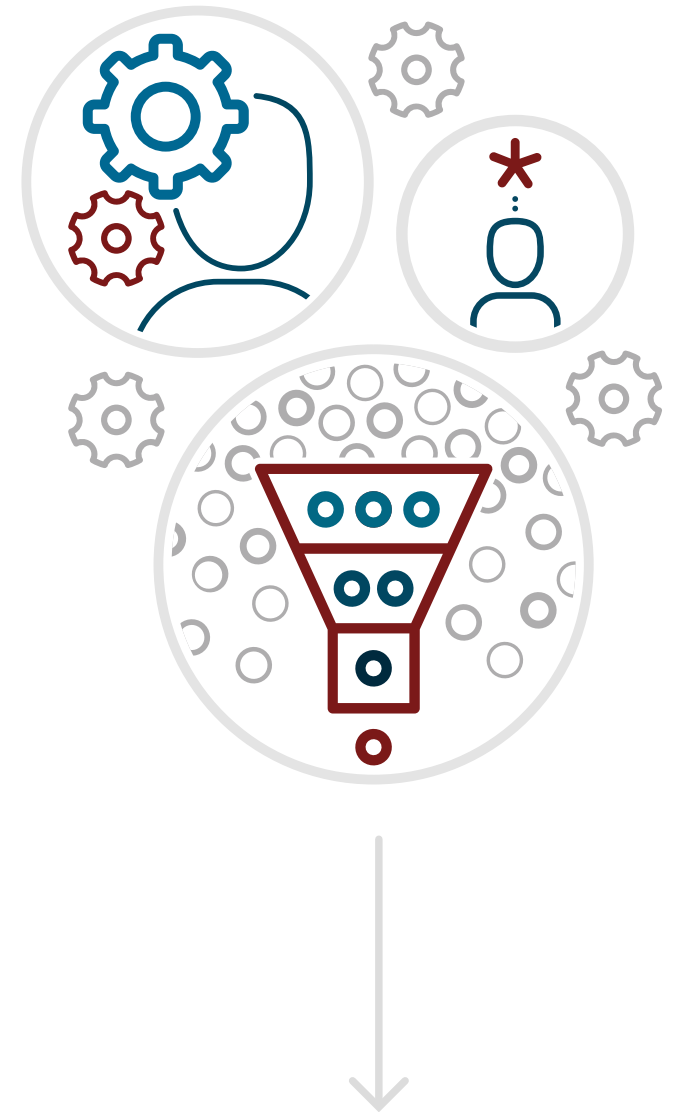




# TechTarget and SimpliVity: How the Smart Take from the Strong

As presented by Andrea Benson, former VP  
Demand Generation & Marketing Operations,  
SimpliVity Corporation, and Jillian Coffin,  
VP and Publisher, TechTarget



## Today's technology landscape is hard and your job is hard

### Marketing and sales leaders face internal and external challenges

#### Market Challenges

- Shift to the cloud
- Commoditization
- Data growth
- Digitization
- Consolidation
- **Delivering ROI**

#### Sales and Marketing Challenges

- Differentiation & awareness
- In-bound and web visibility
- Prospect identification & ABM
- Pipeline sales conversion
- Nurturing & attribution
- **Tracking ROI**



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SimpliVity was a hyper-converge startup getting out of the startup phase. Originally based in Massachusetts, it was acquired by HPE in February 2017.



## Our story

- Founded in 2009, launched first product in 2012
- **\$276M** in funding to fuel product development, marketing & fast sales growth in 2015
- **New market:** Hyperconverged infrastructure
- Aggressive hiring across **Sales and Marketing**
- **Early on, marketing was more simplified:** event heavy
- Transition from **start-up with limited consideration to revenue generating powerhouse**
- Delivered **7X increase in consideration of SimpliVity among in-market hyperconvergence buyers**

## Market backdrop

HCI estimated to be a **\$6 billion market** by 2020 (IDC)

**1 in 3 enterprises** will consolidate & replace existing hardware by 2020 (TBR)

## The Competition

Nutanix	Maxta
Scale	HPE
SpringPath (Cisco)	VMWare
	EMC

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SimpliVity was founded in 2009 and launched their first product in 2012.

In the early days, Sales was doing all the marketing themselves, including demand generation and executing everything on their own. They didn't have a Field Marketing organization, and Sales had huge sales growth goals. They were facing many challenges, such as a crowded marketplace of big brands and an immature market.

## SimpliVity State of the Union

### Good News

- We had a compelling story: Hyperconvergence market getting lots of buzz and growing fast
- SimpliVity solutions offer simplicity, consolidation and align well to broader trend of “Next Gen IT”
- Strong product offering and identified key differentiator (Data Protection)
- VC-funded

### Bad News

- Very immature market
  - Who is the buyer?
  - Daunting task of educating a broad audience
  - And need to influence too many different stakeholders across IT (expensive)
- No brand awareness, lack of visibility & low consideration

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### **SimpliVity had several things in their favor:**

- They had a compelling story and a strong product offering, at a time when hyperconvergence was gaining a lot of buzz in the market.
- As organizations were figuring out how to get to the next generation of legacy infrastructure and build the data center of the future, SimpliVity offered some key differentiators—even if they hadn’t yet figured out how to communicate it.

### **Among the challenges they faced:**

- Because SimpliVity’s target audience included all of the different personas that bought infrastructure for the data center, it was hard to determine where to start. How should they focus and spend their money?
- Because this was a very immature market, they didn’t know what buyers they should target.

## The new reality of BtoB marketing

### More buyers to reach and more channels to support

- Personalization not realistic with resources
- Prospects want to talk to sales later in the process
- Huge pressure on marketing to be everywhere

**78%**  
of B2B buyers turn to Google

**90%**  
click on first page organic results



Sources: Infront, Pardot

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SimpliVity was challenged with how to practice personalization, search and relevant content with available resources. They also faced huge pressure to grow.

## Five biggest challenges to activate marketing

1. Ambitious growth goals
2. Define the market
3. Find and engage relevant IT roles who care about HCI
4. Source the right accounts, the right people, in the right places
5. Messaging and content



Sources: Infront, Pardot

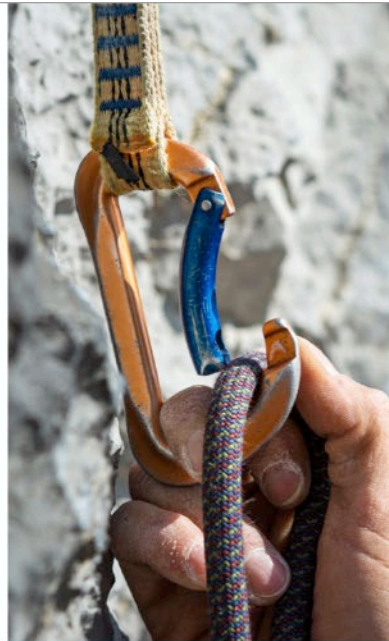
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They needed to define the market. They needed to find the relevant roles and personas that they were trying to speak to and influence. SimpliVity needed to determine how to reach the right people at the right accounts, in the right places.

Our strategy for each challenge:

## Content, integration and intent data

- ✓ Expand digital marketing effort beyond events
- ✓ Focus efforts with partners who can make the greatest impact
- ✓ **Take advantage of TechTarget's search authority in Google**
- ✓ Ramp content marketing to **educate and drive demand**
- ✓ **Introduce purchase intent data to give SimpliVity an edge**



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In order to scale, SimpliVity had to expand their marketing mix beyond just physical events. They focused on increasing search—ramping up the right marketing content and updating their website.

To get on page one of Google to reach the audience searching on topics or terms relevant to their industry, they partnered with TechTarget to provide insight, not just data, about the individuals that were on their properties. This allowed them to be much more targeted with not just the content delivered but also with follow-up communications.

## Why TechTarget?



### Audiences

Find the buyers you want



### Purchase Intent

See the facts you need



### Marketing Activation

Gain the outcomes you seek

## Benefits to SimpliVity

### Market insight

- Intelligence on what prospects do when not engaging with SimpliVity
- New, emerging points of entry for SimpliVity to exploit
- Direction on messaging, content best practices

### Focused Reach:

- Access to the right audiences
- Ability to influence across display, content and data

### Thought leadership:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> party platform to influence SimpliVity's Target Influencers/Buyers

## Why did SimpliVity partner with TechTarget?

1. TechTarget provides insight on what properties buyers are visiting and thus helped SimpliVity solidify their early-stage messaging.
2. TechTarget has the intent data that allowed SimpliVity to not only buy lists but to understand the behavior of individuals they were trying to get in front of.
3. TechTarget has extensive reach across their properties, which allows them to leverage a number of different tactics—everything from brand awareness to syndication to display advertising. SimpliVity partnered with TechTarget across multiple tactics.



## #1 established the “four P’s plan”

### Building a foundation for success

#### People

Marketing resources and tools

#### Positioning

Market messaging

#### Process

Lead to close process

#### Performance

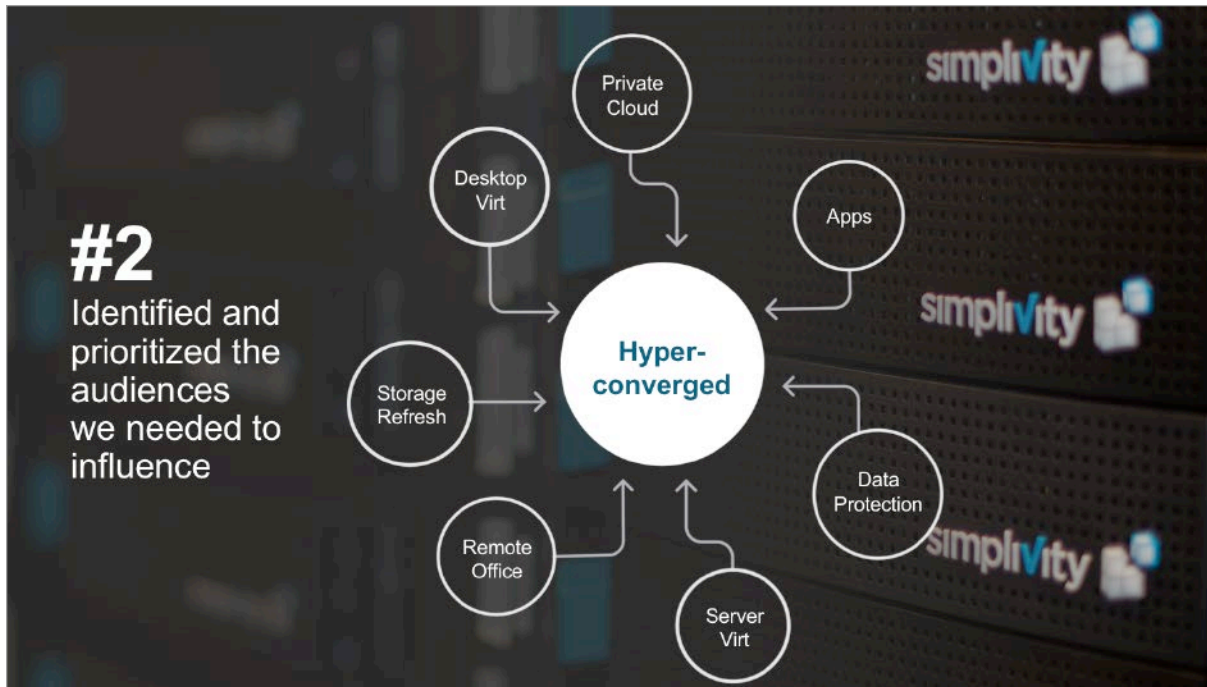
Track performance and ROI



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SimpliVity started slowly before hitting their stride. Their first step was to build a foundation. They brought all the stakeholders together and came to agreement on how to move forward.

1. **People:** SimpliVity didn’t have a Marketing Ops person or someone who owned the market automation platform. They thought about how they would put those processes into place and ensure closer alignment between Sales and Marketing.
2. **Positioning:** What were they going to say and to whom? What are the personas and what are the key messages for each?
3. **Process:** What does it mean to go from a lead to a close/won sale? What are the steps in between? Which department is responsible for which process(es)? SimpliVity reviewed this once a year to confirm with the key stakeholders that everyone was still on the same page and that none of the processes or definitions needed to evolve.
4. **Performance:** What were they going to measure? What’s important? They looked at what the business actually needed—new pipeline, more leads, etc.



The second step was to prioritize who their target audience was, since they knew they couldn't go after all personas and communities.

## #3 built an always-on integrated plan

### What does integration really mean?

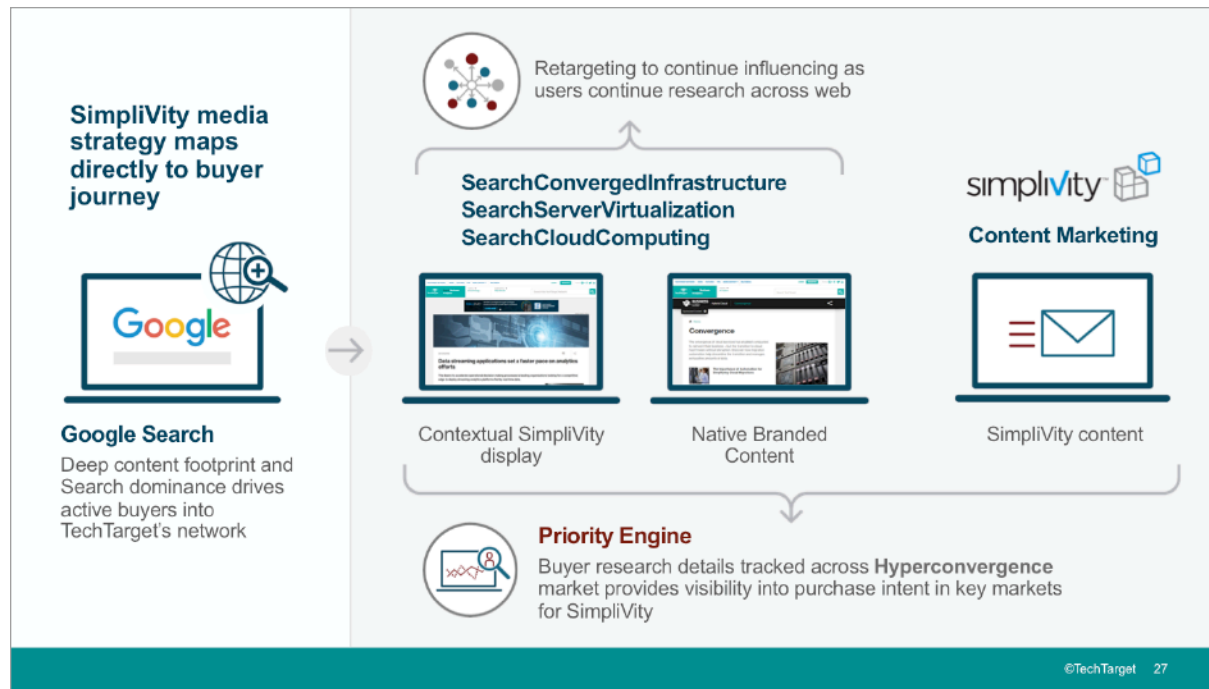
- Architecting a marketing strategy that maps tactics to business needs
- Efficiently surrounding the buyer at all times across different channels
- Consistently learning, optimizing

### Essential elements

- Social channels
- **Search**
- **Content development: blogs, articles, webinars, video, whitepapers, etc.**
- **Research**
- **Digital advertising: targeting, retargeting**
- **Native advertising**
- **Content marketing**
- **Intent data**
- **Physical & Virtual Events**

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The third step was to build an “always-on,” or integrated, marketing plan. This enabled them to reach the right people at the right time, where they were. Highlighted in red is everything they were able to achieve by partnering with TechTarget.



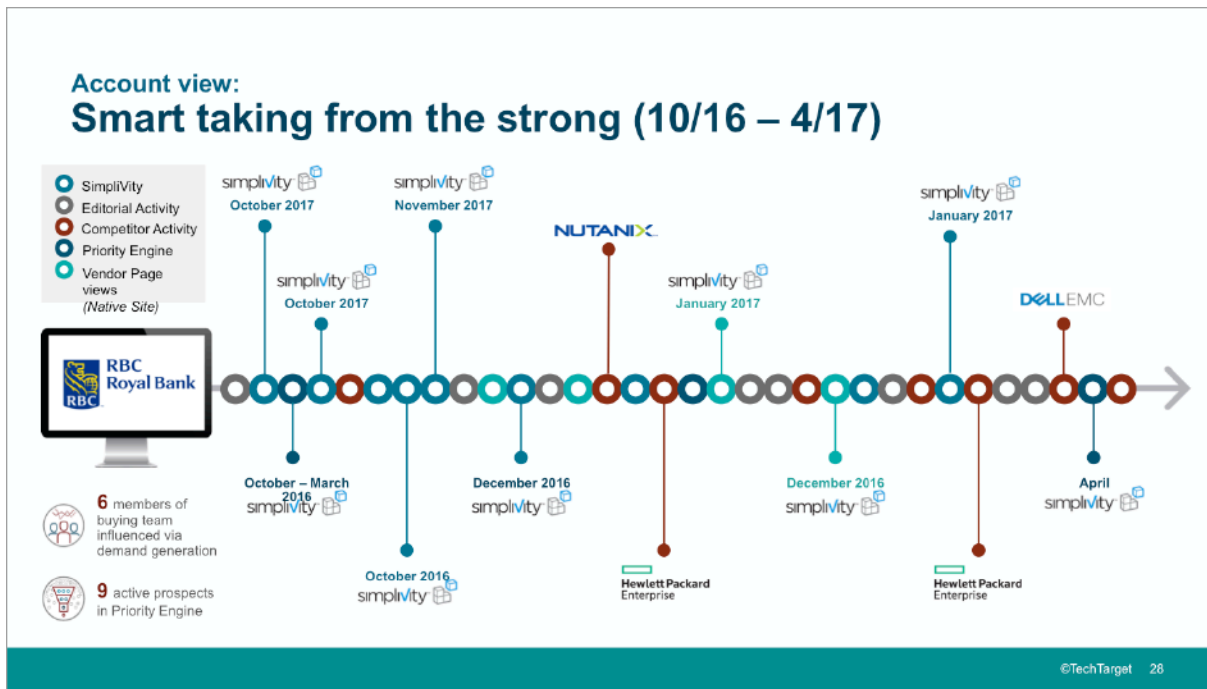
### So how did SimpliVity partner with TechTarget?

- They developed this integrated approach so they could leverage TechTarget's search capabilities and site authority, drive prospects to the TechTarget site and hit them right away with a display ad.
- They increased brand awareness and drove traffic to their site from TechTarget's site.

SimpliVity then served up content that was relevant to a topic related to whatever they were searching on.

- They did the same with display ads, and a native site also housed branded content.

Underneath it all was **TechTarget's Priority Engine™**, which enabled SimpliVity to see what people were doing across TechTarget's sites so they could understand their behavior and interests, allowing SimpliVity to target how they followed up.



Here is an example of one customer that SimpliVity closed. Over the course of several months, they had interactions on the TechTarget sites with SimpliVity and their competitors. SimpliVity wanted to ensure they surrounded them as much as possible across different channels so that they were showing up along the research journey.

## Results by the numbers

### Reach & Amplification

- **+14.7M** targeted, relevant impressions
- **+2X content volume** than relying on vendor content alone
- **Leads & intelligence on +16K accounts in market** for converged IT solutions

### Consideration

- **700% increase in purchase consideration**
- From **3% consideration to 24%**

### Pipeline

- **+30% of total pipeline influenced** via TechTarget
- Represents **10:1 return on investment**

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SimpliVity's three-year partnership with TechTarget focused on pipeline contribution, pipeline development and pipeline influence. By the time SimpliVity was acquired, 30 percent of their total pipeline was being influenced by a TechTarget activity. They had the right buyers on the right property, consuming content and being influenced.

This reflected a 10-to-1 ROI for their entire spend.

## Keys to success

- **Embrace the same goal = producing revenue**
- **Secure buy-in from all stakeholders**
  - Sales, Marketing, Channel, Operations
- **Build a plan for success**
  - Common sense marketing begins with a strong foundation
- **Establish right processes**
  - Don't re-create the wheel – put pieces together in a meaningful way
- **Execute and optimize**
  - Tweak as needed to align activities with desired business results

**“We view TechTarget as a critical ‘must-have’ partner across all aspects of our marketing strategy with demonstrated impact on pipeline and MQL conversions.”**

**Marianne Budnik**  
Senior Vice President,  
Chief Marketing Officer  
SimpliVity

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SimpliVity's keys to success takeaways:

- Sales and Marketing have the same goal. They all want to produce revenue for the company.
- Build a commonsense plan for success. It's not about the new shiny object or the new piece of technology plug-in. It's about going back to basics, getting in a room together and talking about how you get to the right people in the right locations with the right content. Help them from the beginning to the end of the sales process.
- Establish the right processes, and don't recreate the wheel. You might need to evolve it and edit for your own company, but use what other people have done.
- The more transparent you are, the better. Share results—the good and the bad. That's how you build trust and alignment.
- Be brave. Try new things, but be prepared to change course quickly if you need to. Execute, test, and optimize—in the context of alignment and transparency. Even if you don't have quantitative facts, get qualitative facts about whether the strategy is working or not.

# About TechTarget

TechTarget (Nasdaq: TTGT) is the global leader in purchase intent-driven marketing and sales services that deliver business impact for enterprise technology companies. By creating abundant, high-quality editorial content across more than 140 highly targeted technology-specific websites, TechTarget attracts and nurtures communities of technology buyers researching their companies' information technology needs. By understanding these buyers' content consumption behaviors, TechTarget creates the purchase intent insights that fuel efficient and effective marketing and sales activities for clients around the world.

TechTarget has offices in Beijing, Boston, London, Munich, Paris, San Francisco, Singapore and Sydney. For more information, visit [techtarget.com](http://techtarget.com) and follow us on Twitter [@TechTarget](https://twitter.com/TechTarget).



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