



The Ultimate Inbound Marketing Guide



How To Add A Powerful Inbound Marketing Program To Your Business In 30 Days

WHY DO YOU NEED INBOUND MARKETING?

In a perfect world, prospective customers would not be searching on Google for your product or service. They would head directly to your website, no questions asked. But, as you know, things aren't that easy... and **you're not your competitors trying to steal your lunch.**

Unfortunately, many business owners, entrepreneurs and marketers are expanding incorrectly to their lack of leads and lagging sales. They're trying to "get their business out there" with intrusive, impersonal outbound tactics - especially forcing their company on their audience via cold calling, direct mailing and hard selling. **But this outbound approach doesn't work anymore** and it's never going to work again. Today's savvy consumers are sick and tired of intrusive outbound marketing and traditional advertising campaigns.

Inbound marketing is the only way to gain the **trust, respect and loyalty** of your prospects and survive in this competitive market.

THE 30-DAY REGIMEN

In this ebook, we'll show you how to add an inbound marketing program to your business in 30 days.

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MONDAY

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Unfortunately, many business owners, entrepreneurs and marketers are responding incorrectly to their lack of leads and lagging sales. They're trying to "get their business out there" with intrusive, impersonal outbound tactics -- essentially forcing their company on their audience via cold calling, direct mailing and hard selling. **But this outbound approach doesn't work anymore** and it's never going to work again. Today's savvy consumers are sick and tired of interruptive outbound marketing and traditional advertising campaigns.

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Week #1: Strategize

Inbound marketing needs more than just the right set of tactics.

Landing pages, blogs, emails, and educational videos are great but without a sound marketing strategy they won't fully deliver on the promise of getting found, getting leads and driving sales. It is critical that you maintain a "strategy before tactics" philosophy.

Make sure you fully understand the personas for your target prospects. This means you know who they are, what they look like (yes, what they look like), their titles, what websites they visit, what blogs they read and what emails they subscribe to.



You need to know exactly what "pains" they deal with day in and day out. What issues and challenges do they have with similar products and services? Then you need to know how your company solves those challenges and hopefully how you do it in a remarkable way.

REALITY CHECK: It's critical that you have something interesting to say. Make sure what you think makes you special is really special. If any of your competitors say the same things then it's not special. Being remarkable means being able to do and say things that your competitors wouldn't dream of saying. It might not be easy, but it's required to help you grow your business.

What Are Your Offers? Hint: It's Not Just "Buy Now"

The outdated outbound way of thinking is that your offer is "buy my product or service." With inbound marketing, this is just *one* of your offers -- and it should only be offered to prospects at the bottom of your funnel who are ready to make that decision.

But customers aren't "born ready" -- they have to be prepped and primed to like, know and trust your company first. To do this, you must present them with *helpful* offers. These are pieces of content that educate them and portray your business as not only an industry thought leader, but also an informative resource that's not just out for the hard sell.

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Nurture Prospects Through Your Funnel. Get Them Ready To Buy.

Brainstorm content that fit your targets' needs at every stage of the decision-making process. Use the information below to dictate the types of content you offer according to a contact's location in your sales funnel, with lower risk offers (tip sheets and whitepapers) offered at the beginning of the decision-making process and higher risk offers (webinars, free trials and consultations) offered toward the end.

Contact

With Awareness Of Your Business

Before any awareness of your brand, this person is simply a contact. But with awareness of your business and realization of the need for your product or service, the former contact becomes a suspect.

Suspect

Researching Ways To Solve Their Pains

The former contact recognizes their pain and researches potential solutions, including your product/service.

Prospect

Ready To Do Business, Perhaps With You

The former suspect examines the options and begins narrowing down the list of available vendors, which includes your business.

Sales Opportunity

Does Business With You

The former prospect is now a viable sales opportunity because they have chosen your product/service as the solution to his or her pain. It's now time to close.

Think About Your Content Topics. Create A Content Calendar.

In order to find what topics capture the attention of your target prospect, you should look at past data and **strategize your content marketing**. What are the most popular blog articles you have published? What are some of the most viewed pages on your website? Your historical performance should dictate your direction for new marketing content.



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Figure Out Your Content Format.

Create content in different formats, from text-based content like blog posts, whitepapers, reports and ebooks to media content like webinars, videos and audio interviews. And don't forget infographics! Switch it up; keep your audience intrigued and wanting more. Don't get stuck in a content rut by publishing the same stuff over and over.

Who Are Your Content Curators?

You should consider different perspectives, while maintaining consistent voice and tone, from inside your organization.

REALITY CHECK: Not everyone is going to be particularly enthused to help contribute to your content marketing efforts. Plus, it's very difficult to not only produce the amount of content that you need, but also to make sure it's presented with a consistent, reliable voice and tone. It's a smart idea to partner with an inbound marketing agency to make sure your content is plentiful and compelling.



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Week #2: Implement

Think About Your Content Topics. Create A Content Calendar

If you created a marketing strategy then you know what issues and challenges face your prospects. Create educational content that speaks directly to their pains. **By strategizing your content marketing** you will know, in advance, what to blog about, what emails to create, what videos to shoot and what whitepapers to publish.

This transaction is an exchange of information -- visitors get the information they are interested in and you get their contact information. They transition into the next step of their decision-making process and the next level of your funnel.

Make Your Landing Page Effective.

There are several key components that make a landing page effective for converting a higher percentage of visitors into leads and prospects.

Headline

People's attention spans are short, especially online. This means you need to make sure your offer is as clear as possible. The best way to do this is by using a clear, informative headline.

REALITY CHECK: Does your landing page pass the "blink test"? In other words, can the viewer understand the offer and what you're asking them to do in less than five seconds?

Body Copy

The body of your landing page should provide a short description of what your offer is -- shoot for 100 words or less -- and why your visitors should download or sign up. Use bullet points and numbering to simplify the visual layout of the text and use bold or italicized text to highlight the main points.

Image

Your landing page needs to feature an image of the offer you are presenting. Visuals have the power to instantly capture the attention of visitors and should be leveraged to the fullest in your marketing. This could be an image of the cover page for a whitepaper or ebook, or headshots of webinar presenters.

The Form

Remember that the ultimate goal of your landing page is to get people to fill out your form. Keep in mind that if the form is too long, viewers may doubt whether it's worth their time. However, there is also a filtering factor to the length of your form: Shorter forms usually result in more leads, while longer forms result in fewer, but higher-quality leads.



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Drive People To Your Landing Page With Calls To Action (CTAs).

The goal of a CTA is to drive traffic to a landing page. In order to increase conversion opportunities, you need to create multiple CTAs, optimizing them and distributing them throughout your website.



How Will You Follow Up? Create A Lead Nurturing Campaign.

A **lead nurturing campaign** is an automated series of emails or other communications that educates, pre-qualifies and gains the respect of prospects and early-stage leads before handing them over to sales. Essentially, it lays the foundation for a long-term relationship between the prospective customer and your company.



- You *educate* the lead overtime with helpful, informative content.
- You *pre-qualify* them as viable sales opportunities who are serious about your offerings.
- You *gain their trust and respect*, making the sales team’s job easier -- the sale happens more organically and the customer is more likely to become a *loyal* customer.

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Week #3: Promote

Reach Out To Your Existing Contacts With Dedicated Email Sends.

Notify your target prospects about a new whitepaper you have released or invite them to attend an event that you're hosting. Dedicated sends can be used to reach out to your entire email database or just a segment to which a specific marketing offer applies.

Put The Spotlight On One Call To Action (CTA).

It's easy to confuse prospects with too many CTAs. MarketingSherpa advises that CTAs shouldn't be stuffed in at the end of a newsletter or tacked onto another message. They should be a focus of a dedicated email, which will give them the impact they deserve.

Personalize Emails.

Show your suspects and prospects that you know them and you care enough to put some time in to customize their email experience. Personalized emails not only increase your open and click-through rates, but they also demonstrate a deeper relationship with your contacts.

Make Your Emails Social & SEO-Friendly.

Make sure that your recipients can share your email content via social networks by integrating social media sharing buttons. Also, make sure that your emails incorporate a web-only version, which will ensure you're leveraging your email for SEO.

Promote Through Blogging.

When putting your blog post together, **optimize your content to grab people's attention and to rank well in search engines**. Also, make sure to include the following:

Compelling Image

Include an image that clearly conveys the blog post's main message. Using a photograph, an illustration or some type of infographic is visually appealing to readers and helps them engage with the text-based content more easily.

Chunking Format

Online reading is not like reading a physical book -- the online reader wants to get the message quickly, often scrolling and skimming through the content. Make your content more visually engaging and easier to digest with headlines, sub headlines, bolded content and bullet points.

Social Media Sharing

Give your blog content extended reach by including social sharing buttons -- "Like," "Share on LinkedIn," "Tweet," etc. -- on each post. This encourages readers to share your content with their personal networks.



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Make Your Social Communication Effective.

While Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+ and Pinterest are all different social media platforms with different audiences, they have a few fundamental best practices in common.

Keep Self-Promotion In-Check

Control how often you share your offers to ensure your account doesn't turn into a spam-bot.

*REALITY CHECK: Always check in with the motive of your post -- does it benefit your audience? Are you helping your targets, informing/educating them and giving them advice? A little self-promotion is okay, **but if it's all about you, your fans are going to get fed up pretty quickly.***

Decide On Your Networks

Different social networks are effective at promoting different types of content. While visual content performs well on **Pinterest** and **Facebook**, simple copy is a better fit for **Twitter** and **LinkedIn**. **YouTube**, on the other hand, is strictly a video-sharing platform. Think about which social network makes the most sense for the type of marketing offer you created.



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Week #4: Measure

Measure Every Element Of Your Campaign.

There is a wide range of metrics you need to consider in order to **evaluate the success of your inbound marketing**. If you just want a quick look at your overall performance, you should start with the analytics tied to the landing pages that hosts your marketing offers.

Poor Performance? Find Out Why.

Different metrics tell different stories. So if your performance was poor, you need to spend time and **find out exactly which metric needs to be improved.** For instance:

If the number of page views on the landing page is low, you need to do more promoting for the offer to attract more traffic to the landing page. **Are you taking full advantage of your social presence?**

If the conversion rate of the landing page is low, you need to focus on creating a more compelling offer or optimizing your landing page. What's holding people back from taking you up on your offer?

If the number of new leads this offer brought you is low, it could mean that your existing contacts are not sharing your offer with new people. You need to either incentivize them or brainstorm additional venues of promotion to new, untapped audiences.

If the number of customers the offer brought you isn't very high, that could mean your **lead nurturing** efforts aren't successfully qualifying leads to convert them into customers.

When it comes to calls to action (CTAs), for instance, there are two key metrics that you can monitor in order to improve their effectiveness.

If the view-to-click rate of your CTAs is low, make your offer more compelling so more people are enticed to click through.

If the click-to-submission rate of your CTAs is low, focus on optimizing your landing page and making sure it's perfectly aligned with your CTA.



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The metrics behind lead nurturing and email marketing overlap. They show the performance of your email sends and the extent to which recipients engage with your email content.

If the click-through rate of your emails is low, that could mean your offer isn't appealing enough to your email recipients. Start creating more compelling offers or spend more time on segmentation.

*Note: Open rate might be a helpful metric, but **isn't very reliable**.*

For blogging and other social marketing, look at page views, inbound links, sharing and CTA click-through rates.

REALITY CHECK: Remember, strategy before tactics. Putting the time, energy and resources into strategizing your inbound marketing efforts before implementing them is the only way to achieve scalable, stable success -- success that your metrics will confirm over time.

What Have You Learned?

This guide showed you how to piece together the main components of a holistic inbound marketing program. Most importantly, you now know how to make each of these components valuable, consistent and timely -- all crucial prerequisites for creating marketing that your prospects like, trust and respect.

The new buyer doesn't want to be pushed around anymore. Pull him in with content that solves his pains and guide him to your business with Reality Marketing.

For more advice on integrating a powerful inbound marketing channel into your business, visit www.square2marketing.com or call 215.491.0100 to schedule a consultation with one of the Marketing Strategists at Square 2 Marketing.

