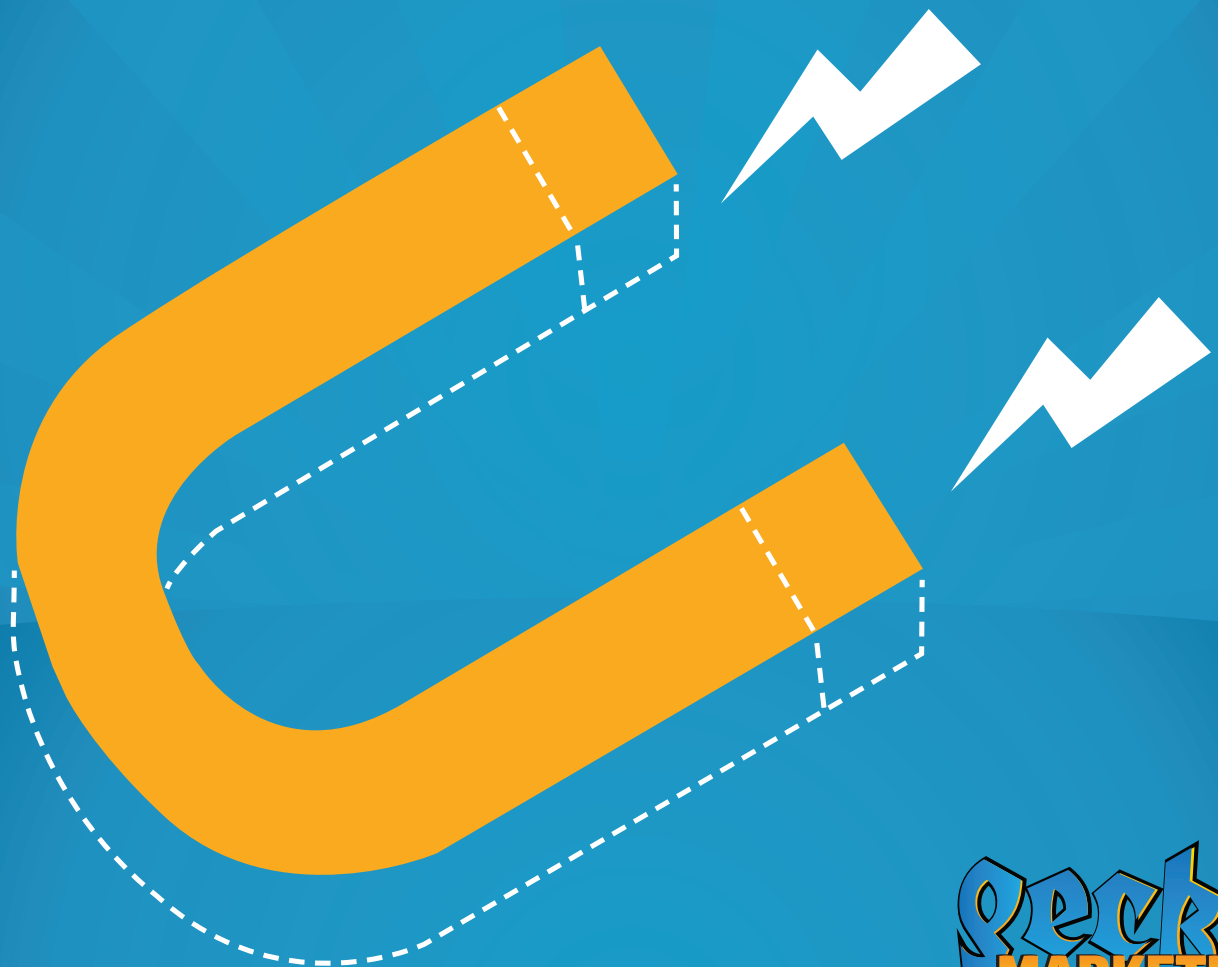


UNDERSTANDING

INBOUND MARKETING

The What, How and Why of
Inbound Marketing Strategy



Recko
MARKETING

Table of Contents

Inbound marketing is about creating and sharing content with the world. By creating content specifically to appeal to your potential customers, inbound attracts qualified prospects to your business and keeps them coming back for more.

In this ebook, we strive to give marketers and business owners the basic definition of inbound marketing, a thorough understanding of how it works and proof that any ROI spent on an inbound marketing strategy is well worth your budget spend.

New to Inbound Marketing? Here's How It Works.....	3
What Is Inbound Marketing?.....	6
Why Inbound Marketing?	9
What's Next?.....	12



New to Inbound Marketing? Here's How It Works.

You can consider yourself an inbound marketing “newcomer” without being new to marketing in general. Many online marketers have worked in sales, advertising, or offline marketing for years, but inbound marketing is a recent discovery for them. Someone with years of experience may feel equal to someone entering the field with zero experience. If you're just beginning your journey and you want to avoid many beginner pitfalls, make one mental adjustment right now:

Stop chasing customers. Let them come to you.

Adjust Your Thinking

If you're accustomed to aggressive direct sales, you've probably noticed that your winning strategies are no longer sealing the deal. *Consumers have changed.* They aren't waiting around for you to reach them through a traditional marketing campaign, and they tune out anything that even slightly resembles an advertisement. They proactively search online for the information and products they need, and they want to choose you rather than being pursued.

When these savvy consumers come across your business, they want genuine interaction, expert advice, and instant access. They want to see who you are and what you have to offer, and they want to trust you.

Your job is to make it easy for those customers to find you, understand you, and learn from you. They're going to respond to the genuine character of your brand, your industry expertise, and your willingness to help them accomplish goals and solve problems. Here's the amazing thing about inbound marketing:

They're going to feel like working with you was all their idea.

Who are You, Really?

Your customers are going to find you online, but they will click away quickly if you don't look and sound genuine. Make sure you have something to say that's of value to current and future customers.

When you infuse your content with knowledge, humour, compassion, and/or creative thinking, potential customers become more comfortable interacting with your business. They feel like they're talking to a real person rather than being tracked down by a robot out to sell them something. This is when they ask you a question, spend time mining information from your website, sign up for your webinar, and share your blog posts on social media.

You don't have to sell because they chose you.

Where the Magic Happens

Inbound marketing requires you to track down customers and convince them to listen before you launch into a memorized sales pitch designed to seal the deal as quickly as possible. Inbound marketing turns this all around:

- › The majority of your work happens behind the scenes before you interact with customers. You're placing yourself in the mouse trap in hopes of being discovered rather than exhausting yourself in the chase.
- › You throw away the elevator pitch in favor of authentic communication. You don't want to chase down just anyone willing to listen. You want to interact with people genuinely interested in your products and services. It's all about targeted traffic and stellar content that gently persuades and smoothly converts on your behalf.



The magic happens when you add a creative post to your blog or finalize your landing page with just the right wording. It happens when you answer a stranger's question on Facebook and they respond by downloading your eBook for more information.

Inbound marketing should be far less stressful than begging for attention through direct ads, and much more successful.

Try Something New

As a brand-new inbound marketer, you're going to step out of your comfort zone and try new things and it may confuse you at times. When you put down the carefully rehearsed sales pitch and focus on helping others and earning their trust, you may have to override your instinct to pounce on every lead aggressively.

It's essential to adjust your thinking and trust the work you've done behind the scenes. You have to identify your ideal customers, plant the information they need in just the right places, and then watch the magic play out once they find you.

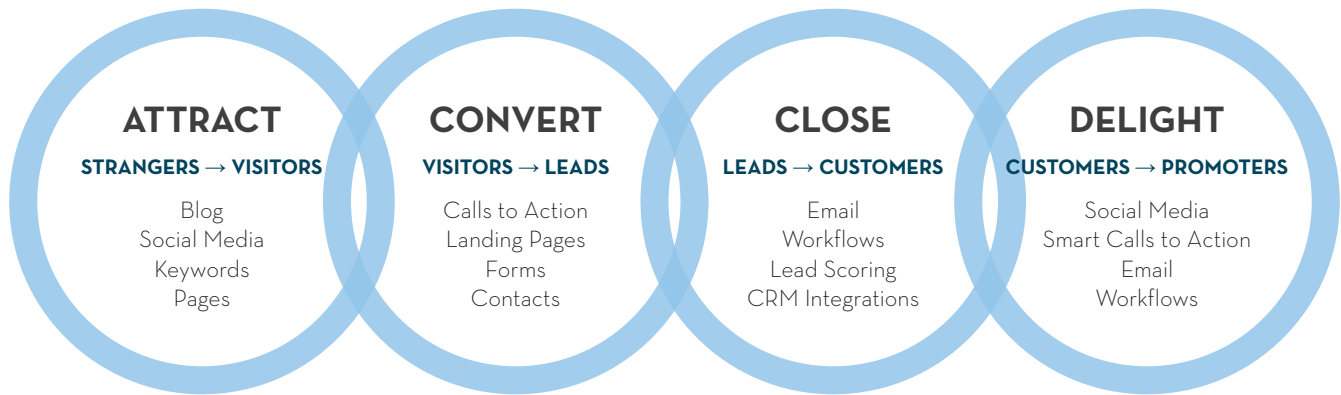
So now that your brain has been calibrated appropriately, let's move on to chapter 2... Inbound marketing: What the heck is, it exactly? How does it work?

What Is Inbound Marketing?

“The traditional marketing model is broken.”

– Richard Edelman

Inbound versus outbound, search engine optimization, keywords, meta data... It all sounds so complicated. But really, it boils down to this: **Inbound marketing brings potential customers to you, rather than you reaching out to them.** Inbound focuses on marketers creating engaging content and publishing that content on a variety of online platforms strategically so that people can find it. To break it down, there are four basic steps to the inbound methodology. Here’s what each of them involves.



This is the step that first gets your prospects' attention. Through a variety of different methods, including pay-per-click advertising, search engine optimization (SEO), remarketing, and other online promotional channels, you create valuable content that people actually want to read.

1
STAGE
ATTRACT

The simplest example of this process is a blog. To get people engaged with your blog, use social media platforms (like Facebook and Twitter) to promote new posts linking to your blog. Much easier than direct mail, paid email lists, and carrier pigeons, right?



Okay, you've gotten their attention. What now? Get those visitors to turn into leads by giving them something they want in exchange for information. This can be done with website forms, calls-to-action,

2
STAGE
CONVERT

and landing pages. Just make sure what you're offering is relevant, interesting and worthwhile. After all, nobody's going to give up any info for a sell sheet.

'Do you want this information? Give me your email address and permission to market to you in the future, and it's yours.' - You

This is the point when your leads turn into customers. Close the deal with a personalized email workflow. Have you ever signed up for something on a website and then received a series of emails from that business? That's an email workflow - and it's pretty effective.

3
STAGE
CLOSE

From the data received through inbound marketing, we can gauge what people's interests are - and tailor content especially for your audience segments. That way your customers are happy - they are receiving less of what they would consider "spam" and more of the information they want to see.

...but wait. Your job isn't done yet.



Your work doesn't end once you make the sale. To keep customers coming back and becoming promoters of your brand, you must "delight" them. Provide them with useful content, fun contests, and more. Inbound is about nurturing relationships, not hard-selling people.

4
STAGE
DELIGHT

The point of this stage is to turn simple customers into cheerleaders for your brand. So, that's what inbound marketing is and how it works. Let's move on to some hard numbers (yay, stats!) that prove the 'why' of inbound marketing.

It's the difference between someone who bought something once from you and someone willing to rave about you to all their friends.

Why Inbound Marketing?

So we've explained the 'what' and 'how'... but what about the 'why'? These days, the benefits of inbound marketing are practically being shouted from the rooftops. When compared to more traditional outbound sales methods, inbound strategies are touted as more efficient, more effective and less costly.

That's great to say, but where are the stats to back up this claim, and just how tangible are the advantages of inbound marketing when trying to optimize conversions and build up your business? Let's take a look at the real ROI of inbound marketing by the numbers.

Is Inbound Marketing really more cost-effective?

Yes, it is! The average cost per lead *drops 80 percent* after five months of consistent inbound marketing, and yields *three times more leads per dollar* than traditional methods.

So, what exactly does consistent inbound marketing entail? Basics include curating relevant content, building up your online presence on social media hotspots like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, and directing traffic to your website through SEO keyword search. Additionally, you should add landing pages where possible to collect contact information for your marketing database and sales team.

Does Inbound Marketing really do a better job converting leads?

Yes, it does! Inbound strategies can result in a doubling of the average website conversion rate *from 6 percent to 12 percent*.

When attempting to build brand awareness and boost sales, the more content you post, the bigger jump in conversions you'll see. According to *Hubspot's State of Inbound 2016*, blogs that publish 15 blog posts per month, convert an average of 1,200 new leads over the same time period. Content equals conversions.

Does Inbound Marketing really lead to higher sales overall?

Yes, it does! Nurtured leads, or potential customers who engage or communicate with your brand in some way, make *47 percent greater purchases* compared to non-nurtured leads. Additionally, companies that go a step farther and automate their lead nurturing process, see a *10 percent or more increase* in revenue within 6 to 9 months.

Nurturing tactics include targeted content, personalized follow-up emails, and better alignment of sales and marketing. Engagement equals loyalty.



Do buyer habits measure up to the hype?

Yes, they do! As many as *80 percent of business decision makers* prefer to get their brand information from a series of ads than traditional advertisements, with B2B customers conducting an average of 12 searches before they even visit a specific brand's website.

For online shoppers, engaging and useful content is key, with *nearly 70 percent* spending considerable time reading content from brands they are interested in. This means the majority of both B2B and B2C customers research and form brand opinions based on web content. This evens the playing field somewhat for smaller businesses looking to find a slice of market share, but means it's more important than ever to be visible online and not get lost in the scroll.



What are successful Inbound marketing teams actually doing?

In terms of B2B, marketers are giving the highest priority to three main content types -- *blogs, eBooks, and whitepapers*, with the majority viewing inbound campaigns as a top priority within their overall strategy.

B2B companies with more than 250 employees are dedicating *55 percent* of their total marketing budget to content creation and production.

And, within the last few years, at least one in three brands has *increased spending on inbound strategy* to stay in the game.

Whichever way you slice it, when you take a look at it by the numbers, it's clear that those praising inbound marketing as the best thing since, well, let's say sliced bread, have a point.

Using inbound techniques has proven ROI, costs less and offers better results, period. The numbers don't lie.

So, that's the what, how and why of inbound marketing. We hope we've given you a basic understanding of inbound marketing strategy and why it's a growing movement within the marketing industry. If you want to continue your journey learning more about inbound, we have loads of resources to help.

The first one could be arriving in your inbox any moment...



What's Next?

If you've read this eBook and wan to continue the learning process, you're in for a treat... You're about to see an inbound marketing email in action!

An email workflow is one of the critical elements of any inbound marketing campaign. It's a series of emails that are sent based on a person's behavior or contact information. With workflows, you can trigger actions based on any information you have about your leads, allowing you to send the right message to the right person at the right time

So, check your email inbox and see what's waiting for you!

If you're still curious to learn more, we'd love to continue the conversation and answer any questions you might have about inbound marketing.

[TELL ME MORE](#)
