
THE 5 ASPECTS OF A STRATEGIC INBOUND MARKETING CAMPAIGN



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Inbound marketing is sometimes passed over in favor of traditional marketing because it seems too complex or too time consuming. But in most cases it's more cost-effective, measurable, and successful... when done correctly.

As with any marketing effort, strategic inbound marketing campaigns must be based on larger company marketing goals and planned with the right resources. In essence, they must be strategic in order to be successful; we've outlined five things needed to create those programs.

1. Clear sales and marketing goals



A bit of brutal honesty: your marketing goal cannot be "to generate more leads." It cannot be "to gain more customers." When a waiter asks what you want at a restaurant, you do not say, "I would like some food."

Specific goals are the foundation of successful inbound marketing campaigns: "I want to generate 100 new qualified leads through our free trial program in September," will make for a stronger program because of its definability. This definition grows not just from revenue goals, but also from a larger marketing strategy. As a company, what are your goals for growth, culture and brand awareness?

Similarly, your marketing goals have to align with your sales efforts: what is the minimum number of leads your sales team can and should be following up on? What does each department need to bring to the table in order to combine efforts seamlessly? Internal alignment of goals and strategy is an integral first step in producing a great campaign.

2. An understanding of key metrics



Like establishing well-defined marketing goals, outlining the right success metrics allows for clearer tracking and measurement. In other words, these metrics should quickly and easily track positive campaign results.

What are the 5-10 key metrics that would best highlight these results: number of leads, cost per lead, total customer conversions, content downloads, blog subscribers, website visits? Identify these prior to launch so that you can implement all of the necessary tracking analytics and create a benchmark report for your current site performance.

3. Resources and responsibility



We hear again and again that the biggest roadblock in launching successful inbound marketing campaigns is a lack of company resources. There are simply not enough people to create content, actively monitor analytics and create reports, and tweak campaigns during the length of the program.

Thankfully, this is why you have a partner.

Chief tasks, including content creation and measurement, can be delegated to members of your marketing team, company services specialists, your partner marketing agency, or outside copywriters and brand journalists. It's not just a matter of responsibility, but also one of curating new ideas on content topic, formatting (eBook, webinar, blog post), and marketing channels. Use your team's best assets to delegate appropriately and maximize output.

4. Supporting data and measurement



Another factor in resourcing is ensuring the ability to monitor measurement and maintain a set standard of data. Think of data as part of the flow, not an end point: data is used to show concrete results; results are used to determine goal completion; goal completion is used to measure campaign effectiveness; campaign effectiveness is used to evaluate current and future marketing strategy.

Data should not sit stagnant in your Google Analytics account; it should be your most powerful tool in ensuring a successful campaign. Did it meet expectations? Where were there surprises, weaknesses? Do the numbers reflect your initial goals and expectations? Active measurement ensures that your campaign is performing to the best of its ability, or, if not, leads to point #5.

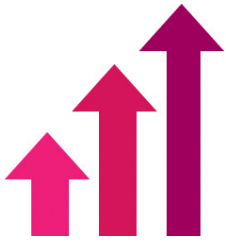


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5. Continuous improvement



Content and campaigns need to be improved, using key analytics, to keep you on track with your goal. The most effective way is to look for lagging points in the data and make tweaks to the content, offer, requirements, and channel distribution accordingly. This is a surprisingly easy way to progress your inbound marketing programs in a timely fashion.

But those aren't the only aspects of improvement; those are just the tactical ones.

Improvement is also based on analyzing the completion and results of your campaigns and evaluating leads and customers. Where is the quality? Is this the right audience? Was the sales process longer than anticipated? Analytics from hard data are a great way to measure a campaign's effectiveness; but as a company, you must look holistically at how these inform your marketing goals to the point where they reflect the bigger picture of your brand and clients or customers.

What have you found are indicators of success in your marketing campaigns?

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