

# INBOUND MARKETING

## THE BLUEPRINT TO YOUR SUCCESS



# INBOUND MARKETING: THE BLUEPRINT TO YOUR SUCCESS

Building a solid, thoughtful and well-planned inbound marketing campaign is crucial to growing your company in the digital age. To define inbound marketing in basic terms, it is achieving goals and business growth by using digital channels in a mindful and measurable way, with an end goal for your consumers in mind.

Inbound marketing promotes your company through content marketing mediums, such as blogs, newsletters, whitepapers, social media marketing, video, podcasts, eBooks, SEO and more, which aim to attract customers through the various stages of purchasing decisions.

Your website serves as the hub of all inbound marketing activity, but many don't know the other essential components driving its traffic and the campaign as a whole. From start to finish, Front Porch Solutions' approach is to strategize, design, implement and deploy testing and maintenance to ensure your website's inbound marketing success.

As experienced content marketers and web developers, Front Porch Solutions understands the progression of an inbound marketing campaign necessary for success and how these ten steps to a great campaign can be the blueprint to your success, across any industry, audience or end goal you are working towards.

## GENERATING TRAFFIC

- At its core, inbound marketing is about bringing the traffic to you. And a good inbound marketing strategy will bring the right traffic by reaching and attracting your target audience specifically.

## CONVERTING LEADS

- Generate AND convert leads.
- The proven methodology for inbound marketing follows the natural progression of attracting, converting, closing and delighting. (Cite: <http://www.hubspot.com/inbound-marketing>).
- By creating appealing content, you convert leads through landing pages and calls-to-action, and then continue to attract them to your business.

## SUCCESSFUL CALL-TO-ACTION

- Once you've reeled your target audience in, ensure they take action. Whether you're looking for brand awareness or making a sale, quality design and content will inspire viewers to take a step further than simply viewing your site and initiate contact.
- Even if a majority of your target audience isn't currently in the market to buy, a strong marketing strategy should ensure your brand resonates in their minds until they are.



Now that you have a general understanding of what inbound marketing is,  
**let's dive into how you use it.**

## IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

- Developing a persona can help you every step of the way in content marketing. A persona is a representation of your target audience, created with research on actual customers. It goes beyond demographics to give you a deeper understanding of what works and what doesn't when speaking to your target audience as a whole.
- Personas help form your messaging with a solid understanding of the content you'll be crafting

## DETERMINE GOALS

- With your target audience in mind, define and set **S.M.A.R.T.** goals – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely.
- It's important to define **S.M.A.R.T.** goals for every inbound marketing campaign and, based on these five categories, to consider how you performed in the past and where there's room for improvement when setting new ones.

## DEFINE YOUR CONTENT

- The next step is to determine what kind of content you will be marketing to your personas in order to reach the goals you've established.
- Content marketing should add value and be memorable to your persona, and materials are best left without a direct sales pitch.
- It's helpful to provide a range of content applicable to each stage of a buyer's purchase decision – AWARENESS, CONSIDERATION and DECISION.
- It's also important to use your social mediums to your advantage. Your persona – whoever it may be – can smell a sales pitch from a mile away, and chances are, they're not interested. By sharing relevant, helpful content, you pull people into whatever you're selling in a non-obvious way and get a foot in the door so when they are looking to buy, it can be from you.



## WEBSITE

- Your website will be as unique as your brand is, but there are a few key features every effective conversion path needs:
  - **CALL-TO-ACTION:** A call-to-action (CTA) is arguably the entire point of your inbound marketing campaign. What do you want your persona to do? Tie that persuasive CTA in with your content, but make it stand out.
  - **LANDING PAGE:** A landing page should be visually appealing, brief and easily readable, and its value should be obvious to viewers.
  - **THANK YOU:** Once a user enters your conversion path, they are considered to be a potential lead. Let viewers get to know more about you, and give them an idea of what they should do next.
  - **FOLLOW-UP:** Present yourself to new leads outside of your site. An easy way to do this is through marketing automation, sending out a simple 'Thank You' email for their interest or interaction with your content (i.e., after they've downloaded a Whitepaper). Reiterating your presence is necessary to capture leads, and who doesn't love good manners?
- Tying in with inbound marketing plans is a growth-driven web design. Growth-driven design (**GDD**) is building and optimizing your website to focus on not only achieving, but exceeding your goals. **GDD** is built around analytics and buyer personas, optimizing your website for performance and to find the best ways to connect with your target audience(s).
- With an outdated, "traditional" model of work for website development and design, it's easy to fall behind on trends and miss opportunities. Only having design updates every few years is high cost, both financially and for growth potential.
- Growth-driven design is the future of online brand development, and **Front Porch Solutions** works with this in mind for our clients. With our growth-driven model of work, small monthly payments bring a constantly evolving design receiving regular feedback and updates. In return, continuous growth is projected for your website and business as a whole, as website design and development drive traffic and sales.



## ENGAGE LEADS WITH PROMOTIONAL EMAILS

- Once you have leads, follow up with them in a way just as valuable as the content that reeled them in.
- Using the content a lead interacted with as a starting point (i.e., a whitepaper they downloaded), follow up on their activity with an email relevant not only to the content, but to the specific persona and current stage of their buyer's journey.

**For example,** if someone downloaded your whitepaper on web design, you may want to share a link to your blog post on growth-driven design in your follow up.

- When sending a promotional email announcing new content, it may be necessary to tailor multiple emails with language speaking to your various audience personas. Don't make it seem like an impersonal form letter.

## DEFINE KEYWORD STRATEGY

- When establishing an online presence, be it for your general website, blog, etc., you first need to define your keywords.
- To do so, consider what your personas may search for on the internet, then figure out if your website and content align with those keywords. If they don't, change it and make sure to work these keywords into all aspects of your online presence to ensure your search engine optimization (SEO).

## BLOGGING AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

- Going back to defining your brand's content, blog posts are a great way to regularly put out relevant, useful and even educational content for your persona related to your product or services.
- By working your long-tail keywords into blog posts, you increase your relevant viewership, and by ending each post with a clear CTA, your chances of lead conversion increases as well. Because blogs are usually providing helpful tips and timely content, they're more likely to be shared by viewers across different social networks.
- The same idea is behind social media marketing, which is an instant, interactive way to share your content and connect with customers. On social media, it's easy to share and promote your blog posts, landing page and other facets of your inbound marketing campaign. It's also an easy way to build brand loyalty through your followers.
- Be sure you're active on social networks applicable to your personas and that you're posting frequently enough to not be forgotten, but not so often you're overwhelming your followers. As with all content, be sure you're sharing posts on a variety of topics that add value (not just a sales pitch!).



## STAY RELEVANT

- A great content marketer's job is never done. You've reeled your prospects in, but now you need to be sure they keep coming back for more.
- With your well-planned strategy in the works, be sure to consistently put out engaging, timely content.

The Center for Sales Strategy defines Inbound Marketing as the process of attracting the attention of prospects, via content creation, before they are even ready to buy; it's one of the best and most cost-effective ways to convert strangers into customers and promoters of your business.

(Cite: <http://leadg2.thecenterforsalesstrategy.com/what-is-inbound-marketing>) If you're not currently using an inbound marketing strategy, the only question left to ask is, "Why not?" And if you are, you should be asking, "How can our inbound marketing strategy be stronger?" Inbound marketing campaigns are an ongoing initiative in the same way as their ever-growing results. Wherever you are in your campaign planning process, Front Porch Solutions can step in and provide the guidance you need. From establishing your brand and start-up web development to monthly reports and analytics, Front Porch Solutions will guide you in building your company's blueprint for success, optimizing every aspect of your inbound marketing campaign and opportunities for growth.

## ABOUT FRONT PORCH SOLUTIONS:

From Columbus, Ohio, Front Porch Solutions provides nationwide website design, web application and e-commerce solutions, graphic and print design, SEO/SEM marketing, search engine optimization and web hosting services.

Our approach is not just the Front Porch Solutions process; it is a process we complete with you and for you. From idea-storming to implementation, we keep you in the loop on our progress and ask for your feedback regularly. An effective online solution begins with a thoughtful plan, and we employ a broad range of research tools and practices that are always custom-tailored to the project at hand.

You should be aware that our services are somewhat habit-forming. Well over half of our clients have come back to us for a second (or third or fourth or fifth) project.

To learn more or to receive a free inbound marketing or web development consultation, visit <http://www.frontporchsolutions.com> or call **614-602-4807**.

