

Inbound Marketing

FROM TRAFFIC TO SALES



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INTRODUCTION

If you're reading this, chances are pretty high that you typed "generating website traffic" or "visitors to leads" into a search engine and were bombarded with information, resources and success guides. So with a plethora of information available, how do you know where to begin?

Generating leads and earning clients for your business is no easy feat. If it were simple, then every business would be successful and marketing companies would essentially be non-existent. One of the best ways to attract leads is by increasing qualified traffic to your website, which can be achieved by implementing an inbound marketing strategy.

Traditional methods of "outbound marketing" are on the decline as businesses begin to focus their efforts on inbound marketing strategies. Instead of putting an advertisement out hoping anyone will see it and contact them, businesses are now using inbound marketing tools to attract the right type of customers.

Businesses are being found by utilising blogging, social media, search engine optimisation and many other inbound marketing tools. These are effective because as people are searching for an area of interest, these businesses are popping up because they wrote a blog on that person's interest or they optimised their site to be discoverable through those search terms. When the person views the site and sees the wealth of information it has on offer, they will have an inclination to return, thus building their interest in the brand itself.

Best of all, inbound marketing is much more cost effective. Outbound marketing could cost you a few thousand dollars for one ad. With inbound marketing, your costs will rarely have to reach quadruple digits.

The purpose of this eBook is to provide you with an understanding of the principles of inbound marketing in order to help you increase traffic to your website, convert visitors to leads, and ultimately earn new clients for your business.

OVERVIEW OF INBOUND MARKETING

What is Inbound Marketing?

Traditional forms of advertising - advertisements on billboards, bus stops, internet pop-ups, radio, newspapers and magazines - are forms of outbound marketing. These methods of advertising are on the decline, as we are now able to tune out and filter which ads we are exposed to. Telemarketing is essentially dead to anyone who is on the Do Not Call Register. Devices such as Foxtel IQ allow people to skip the ads that are breaking up their favourite shows. People can install ad-blocking applications on their browsers to stop the majority of ads that show on websites. Then there are print ads, which are also declining in success.

This is where inbound marketing comes into play. Inbound marketing is the alternative to these old, declining advertising strategies. Instead of advertising your service or product using traditional strategies and praying for leads, inbound marketing is about attracting the right people by providing quality content that draws them in. By aligning the content you create and publish with your customers' interests, you naturally attract inbound traffic that you can then convert, close, and continuously connect with.

Benefits of Inbound Marketing

Inbound marketing is a fantastic avenue that can benefit your business greatly. Firstly, it's cost effective. Because all inbound marketing efforts are carried out online, it means you can implement quite a lot of them at a notably cheaper

price than traditional marketing approaches. For example, your website could be entirely developed without any real costs via a freeware/open source CMS such as WordPress. Social media is another inbound marketing avenue that can be free of charge initially.

With inbound marketing you gain more specific details and can gauge your audience's age, gender, interests, relationship status, education etc. This is advantageous for the business because you can tailor your content to draw in that ideal target audience.

Another significant advantage that inbound marketing presents is that it inspires engagement. Unlike traditional methods, inbound marketing allows for the business to have a conversation with its audience. You can use your online presence to build a rapport and relationship with your audience, which gives your business a face and cultivates a sense of trust. The more human your business is and the more they can relate to you, the better. By establishing a social presence, you can also keep your business front-of-mind for longer among your audience, regardless of whether they're prospects, leads or current customers.

GENERATING TRAFFIC TO YOUR WEBSITE

Just like outbound marketing, the first thing you want is for people to find out about your business. This can be done by generating traffic to your website. In order to generate traffic, you'll need to create content that people care about, improving the chances of your content being found through Search Engine Optimisation.

a. SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION (SEO)

Search engine optimisation (SEO for short) involves ensuring a website can be found in search engines for words and phrases relevant to what the site is offering. This means writing pages and producing content that use rich keywords, account for how users may pose questions in search engines, and securing links from other pages to increase your site's authority.

SEO covers every possible approach of how you can make your site rank higher on Google and other search engines. So how exactly can you optimise your site's search engine rankings? Here is a quick rundown of things you should do:

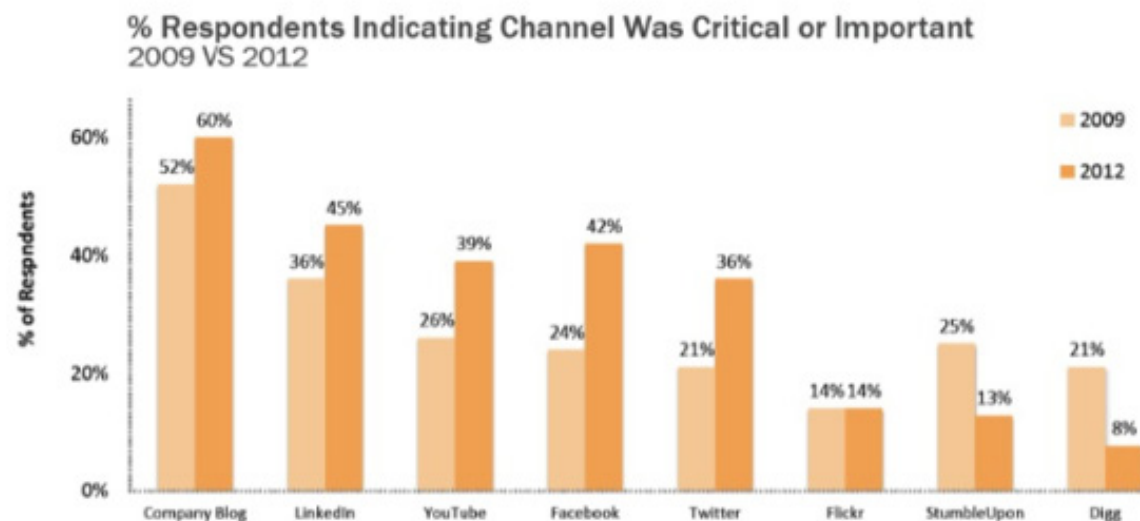
- Put together keyword phrases you'd like your site to be discoverable by and start placing them throughout your site's pages to increase its relevance. Just be careful not to overuse them to the point where they sound unnatural - that's considered a black hat SEO practice that can actually hurt your rankings
- Write blogs that utilise keywords relevant to your industry and relevant to how you think people would search for something (e.g. "how to make a chocolate cake"). When people share your blog articles on social media or link to

- them via other authoritative sites, this also helps to increase your search rankings.
- Get inbound links to your site. Create content that will inspire people to promote your brand. Make deals with other businesses to provide inbound links to each other in exchange for contributing content to one another.
 - Implement social media “promote” and “share” buttons. This will be covered more in the social media section.

b. BLOGGING

Blogging is one of the easiest and most effective ways to form a connection with existing and prospective customers and ultimately generate traffic to your website. According to HubSpot (2012), businesses are increasingly aware their blog is highly valuable, with 81% of businesses rating their company blogs as “useful”, “important” or “critical”.

Company Blogs are Increasingly Valued



**LinkedIn was not collected in 2009. Historical value provided is from the 2010 study.*

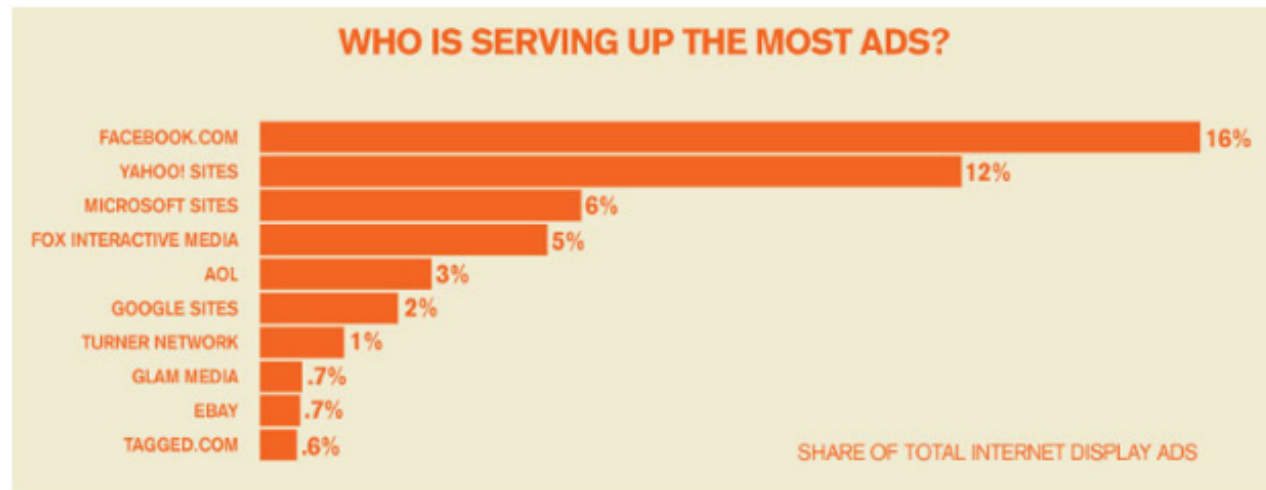
Blogging allows you to deliver a constant flow of fresh, engaging content to your website that helps attract new visitors and return visitors alike. The key to having a successful blog is to ensure that you create content that is of value to your reader. You can do this by focusing on specific industry topics that will interest and attract visitors. In doing so, you establish a connection with your readers as well as building up a reputation as a trusted source of information; both of which will make people more likely to promote your blogs.

The more your content is promoted, the more it will rise in search engine rankings. But Google also outright appreciates new content. So the more new blogs you submit, the more favourably Google will look on your site, as well.

Maintaining an active blog presence and creating educational and interesting content will not only keep your regular visitors engaged, but it will also attract new visitors to your website and promote awareness of your business.

c. PAY-PER-CLICK ADVERTISING

Search engine advertising or pay-per-click (PPC) advertising is a method of placing online advertisements on web pages that show results from search engine searches. Search engine advertisements are targeted to match key search terms (called keywords). Google AdWords, Yahoo! Search Marketing, and Bing Ads are the largest and most commonly used network operators. The PPC ads appear alongside and above the organic search results on the search engine results page. You pay the network operator a fee to have your website displayed on certain search engine pages. The fee you pay is based on either clicks on or views of these ads. If you're paying based on number of views an ad gets and not clicks, this is known as cost-per-impression (CPI).



There are many benefits to PPC ads and they can be a great option to maximise your inbound marketing efforts. Some of these benefits include:

- Online advertising has proven to be a targeted approach to reaching your customer base, and is a measurable method of obtaining new customers.
- It provides the ability to track what works and what doesn't work and, as a result, gets greater return on any investment made.
- Has a large reach: it has the ability to target customers from all over the world.
- It is a cost effective form of marketing.
- It brings in quality leads to your website, as the viewer has actively searched for keywords associated with your product, service or business.

d. CONTENT MARKETING

Content marketing includes “creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience” (Content Marketing Institute, 2013). According to Holger Schulze, the purpose of content marketing is “to engage buyers with compelling content to educate, inform, entertain and guide them along their buying journey” (Schulze, 2012).

Content marketing is a means of communicating with your target market without selling, therefore, can be referred to as non-intrusive marketing. Content marketing allows your business to deliver information to encourage buyer intelligence with the aim that they will reward you with business loyalty. Therefore, content marketing creates a willingness in people to be a part of the business due to its form of intrinsic motivation that drives them to donate or be involved without expecting any rewards in return.

However, an inbound marketing strategy will not be successful unless you offer your viewers and subscribers fresh, engaging, regular content. A static site may as well be no site at all. Because even if you have a brilliant SEO structure, it won't be enough to keep people coming back. SEO gets you discovered, but fresh content keeps you relevant.

So what is fresh content? Well, it's things such as new blog posts, a brand new competition, an announcement, etc. But this fresh content doesn't just apply to your website itself, it also applies to your social media pages and your email/lead nurturing campaigns. Regardless of what you're updating, make sure that it is interesting and enjoyable.

Post updates on a blog topic that got you a lot of traffic. Promote a competition or even send an email that links to such things and don't be afraid to share some jokes around. This will help your visitors feel more of a connection to your business because there is a personality behind it. Be sure that with all new content, you set it up for SEO so that people can easily discover it, whether return visitors or new.

e. REAL OFFERS

Every single person searching the internet is a potential client. The key to attracting them is making sure your business is exposed and offers the right incentives. Offering real, tangible products or services for free is one of the best ways to attract leads and earn clients.

We're not talking about sending out free gifts or offering to landscape someone's garden free of charge. What we mean when we say "real offers" are things like eBooks, webinars and product demonstrations. Providing users with the opportunity to learn more about a specific topic (for example, gardening maintenance tips) is advantageous for both the user and the business. The user gains knowledge about a topic that interests them without having to pay or feel obliged to pay in the future, whilst the business gains the user's contact details and a more definitive idea of what interests them.

Once the user has chosen to accept an offer, the business can send follow-up emails or articles relating to that specific topic. It's also helpful to get feedback wherever possible. After reading an ebook or watching a webinar, you can invite the user to participate in a quick survey to determine whether or not the information was useful or interesting and if they'd like to see more offers.

f. EMAIL MARKETING

Email marketing is an effective inbound marketing tool as it directly links the customer to your website, blog or social media pages, which creates interest. A weekly or fortnightly email to your subscribers is a great way to expose them to updates that have occurred and to keep them in the loop. Email marketing may include newsletters, a series of blogs or a brand new eBook that may interest them.

If it is an opt-in email approach, the company or individual has given you permission to contact them. Even if they are not in the market for your product at the time they receive the email, your company's brand or product is going to stay front-of-mind so that when they are in the market to buy, they will think of you first.

Email marketing presents such a benefit over other more traditional forms of marketing. For example, it involves reduced time and effort, messages are delivered in real-time, emails and messages can be personalised, it allows for more frequent communications and can result in word-of-mouth marketing as emails are often forwarded. One of the biggest

benefits is that it allows you to build a personal relationship with your customers, making them feel like they are a direct value to your business. Email newsletters, links to blogs, and downloadable eBooks will keep them engaged and aware of your business.

How effective your emails are depend on several factors, from the design of your emails to placing your different subscribers into lists based off expressed interests. It's also important to consider the subject of your emails, as this plays an integral part in determining whether someone opens your email or not. Consider what you think your recipients would be most interested in, then place that at the front of the subject to gain their immediate interest.

g. SOCIAL MEDIA

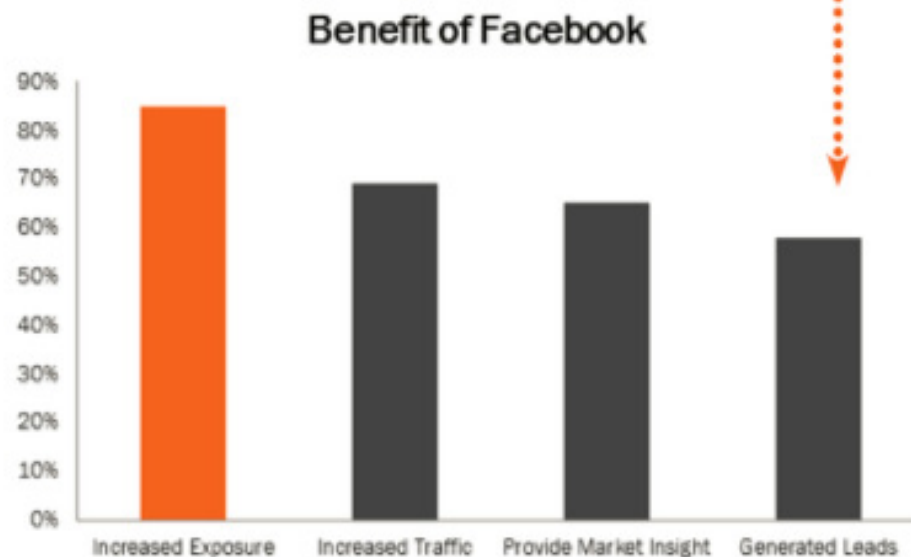
Over the last decade, social media has become an integral part of both our personal and professional lives. Many businesses are now understanding the need to integrate their social media efforts with their content strategies in order to see their businesses thrive. Facebook pages, Twitter brand pages and Google+ pages are just some of the platforms you can use to improve your site's SEO. Social media allows you to interact more effectively with your customers or fans and get them to discuss your business more.

In order to effectively make use of social media, make sure you're doing the following:

- Interacting with your fans on all social media platforms - this builds up a reputation among them and gives them more inclination to discuss your business with their friends.
- Include links on social media that lead to your website. This increases traffic and your search engine ranking.
- On your site (on your home page, blog, etc.) include social media promotion buttons such as Facebook "like", Twitter "retweet" and Google+'s "+1". If people click on these, it will promote those pages on their Facebook/Twitter/Google+ profiles, thus promoting it to all the friends.
- The more you inspire discussion, address issues, provide links and make interesting updates, the more people will share your business with their friends. This can help SEO.

Although social media can be an effective method for company branding, increasing brand awareness and exposure, and word-of-mouth advertising, it's important not to get caught up in the hype and to acknowledge that it doesn't always work for everyone. According to HubSpot, the least amount of benefit was seen from lead generation on Facebook. Your business should still definitely have a social media presence; just make sure you focus on the social networks that earn you the best engagement and true ROI.

Marketers struggle with lead generation on Facebook.



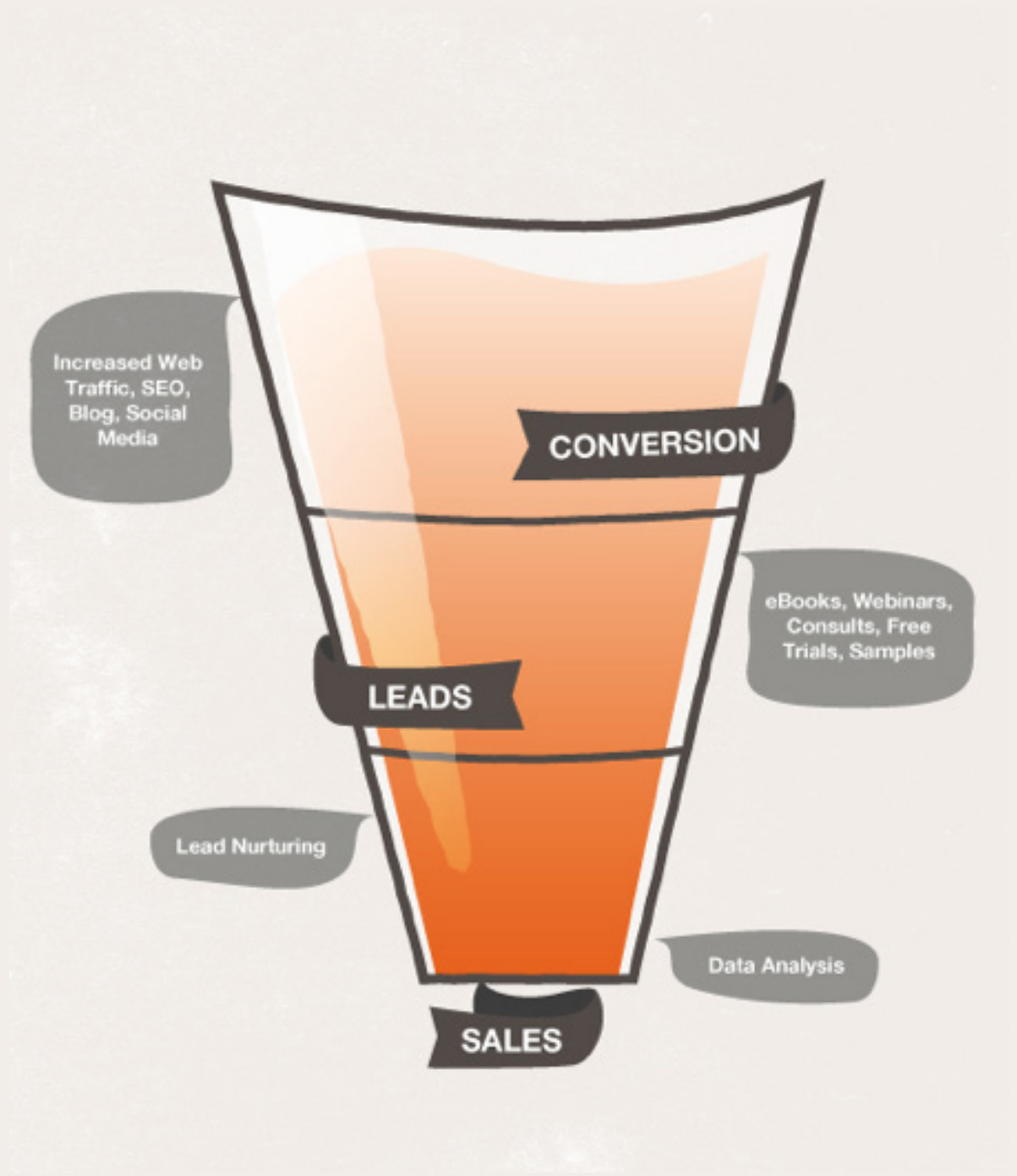
Source: SocialMediaExaminer

CONVERTING VISITORS TO LEADS

SEO is not superior to blogging, neither is blogging superior to social media. You should be combining several approaches to achieve a successful inbound marketing strategy. All of the strategies mentioned above lead to traffic increases and larger brand awareness.

Once you have begun generating more traffic to your website, the next step towards monetising this traffic is to convert visitors to leads. In regards to inbound marketing, there is a coined term “sales funnel” that discusses how each step of the process works. When a website visitor changes to a lead, they have officially entered the “top of the sales funnel”.

In order to get them to the top of the sales funnel (make them a lead), you have to offer your visitors something compelling enough that will make them want to provide you with their email address. To do this, you must have a call-to-action and effective, interesting content that sits on a landing page.



Call-to-Action

Simply put, the call-to-action (CTA) is the part of a marketing message that attempts to persuade a person to perform a desired action. CTAs may be buttons or links that encourage visitors to take action, such as “Download an Ebook” or “Attend a Webinar”. The key is to provide interesting and educational content that will draw your visitors in and make them want to know more.

The absence of a call-to-action may cause a visitor to forget about the ad and move on. Therefore, a call-to-action is a critical part of your content marketing strategy. It is the trigger that leads the visitor to engage in a meaningful step with your organisation, whether that step is engaging the audience in the comments, finding more content, or buying your product or service.

Landing Pages

In inbound marketing, landing pages are one of the most effective ways to convert a visitor into a lead, as they are designed for collecting contact information. When a website visitor clicks on a call-to-action, they should be directed to a landing page. The landing page is where the offer in the call-to action is fulfilled, and where the visitor submits information that your sales team can use to begin a conversation with them.

For example, if your business is a restaurant, maybe you have written an eBook on “7 Tips for Cooking the Perfect Lasagna”, or a white paper outlining the best types of cooking oils to use for different meals. You are offering quality content to them for free on a landing page, with the only requirement being that they fill out a quick form that includes an area where they **MUST** provide an email address. Having acquired their email address, you now have a lead and can begin working on the next step.

If you use a helpful Content Management System (such as Hubspot’s CMS), then landing pages will typically be an included feature. Take the time out to learn the ins and outs of landing pages and even jot down what kind of content you think would best be placed on them. By the time you start rolling out your inbound marketing strategy, you’ll then be ready to fully utilise landing pages.

Lead Nurturing

It's coined as "lead nurturing" and is essentially the process you use while your leads are both still at the top of the sales funnel and in the middle of the sales funnel. Once the prospect has visited your website and been converted to a lead, the lead nurturing process comes into play and is designed to convert your lead to a customer. When it comes to lead nurturing, it's important to maintain and build upon a relationship when an individual shows some level of interest in your business. Where they have expressed their interest, for example by downloading an eBook or signing up for a webinar, there's the potential for your business to turn them into a customer. In order to do this as effectively as possible, there are 3 steps you need to take.

1) Establish contact fast

For the most part, lead nurturing relies on a mostly automated structure for correspondence, for example with scheduled emails being sent out to subscribers. However, what happens if a lead emails you asking a very specific question? In that case, it is critical that you respond immediately, even if it is to say that you will get back to them shortly with the relevant information. The quicker you establish contact with the lead, the better.

2) Maintain contact and prove the value of your business

Maintaining a relationship with your lead is incredibly important. A Genius.com study found that 66% of buyers indicate that "consistent and relevant communication provided by both sales and marketing organisations" is a key influence in choosing a solution provider. So after making contact, you want to continue contact by providing them with information that they will find interesting and informative. Once you can prove to your lead that both you and your company are an expert in your field, then the lead gains a sense of trust and belief in you and your business.

3) Learn about your leads

Even more valuable than consistent contact is consistent contact that addresses your lead's needs, interests, concerns and problems. Identify what it is your lead is most interested in or concerned about and tailor your lead nurturing to that individual. You can send automatic emails on specific topics to particular leads who have shown an interest in those topics in the past. If you continue to cater to their needs and interests, they will reward you by staying on board.

CASE STUDY:

REGIONAL INSURANCE BROKERS

Regional Insurance Brokers (RIBPL) is an insurance company that was established in 1981 and now has offices all over Queensland. RIBPL is committed to providing personalised service and prompt response to its customers by utilising a pool of quality, professional advice, specialised knowledge, vast facilities and support.

Client Objectives

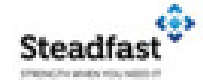
RIBPL came to Margin Media with several goals for their business, including:

- To increase brand awareness;
- To increase traffic to their website;
- Gain new leads and customers through their current client base.

Our Work

As part of RIBPL's inbound marketing strategy, we deliver:

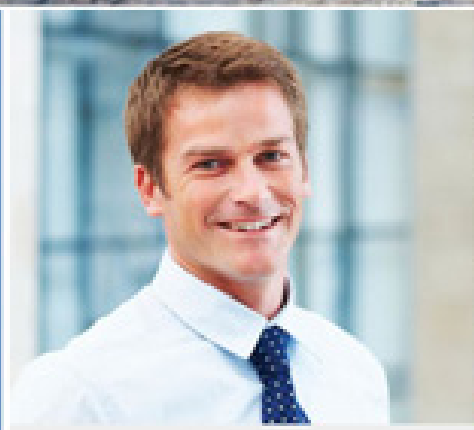
- A fortnightly e-newsletter sent out to their client database;
- Three blog posts per week uploaded onto their website;
- A quarterly campaign (i.e. competition);
- Continuous management of their social media profiles.

Mining Insurance Specialists

Profit from our protection

- [Make an Enquiry](#)
- [Get an Online Quote](#)
- [Make a Claim](#)
- [Make a Payment](#)
- [Client Portal](#)



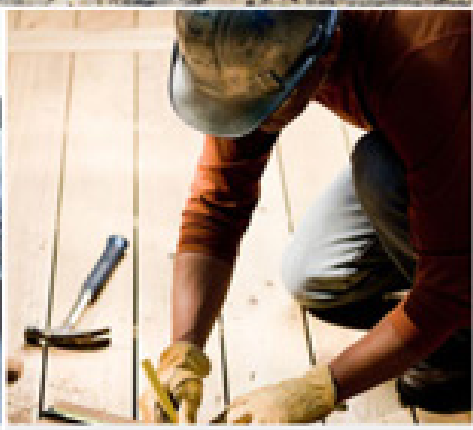
Commercial Insurance
Insurance to maintain a high level of risk management and loss control for businesses big and small

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Personal Insurance
Protect yourself from damage, loss or theft of your personal assets & valuables

[Learn More >](#)



Liability Insurance
Insure yourself against claims of negligence arising from injuries or damage to other people or property

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Email Marketing

RIBPL provided us with a database of over 8,000 past clients, current clients and prospects who they wanted to better engage with. With such a large client base, we decided to implement an email marketing campaign in order to reach their clients in the most efficient, cost effective way possible. Adding email marketing to their marketing activities was an inexpensive way of showing their current clients that they are still thinking of them and to ensure RIBPL's name stays in their clients' minds to encourage referrals.

Many businesses avoid advertising to their current clients because they don't want to annoy them or bombard them with information. However, the statistics prove that e-marketing has the opposite effect. The fortnightly email we send to their clients shares news about the insurance industry, tips and updates. The day this email goes out is RIBPL's biggest day for inbound leads every fortnight.



*Offer subject to change

Quarterly Campaign

As part of our commitment to deliver a quarterly campaign in order to generate more traffic to the RIBPL website and attract more leads, we created the 'Cover Your Mates' campaign. This was a competition that encouraged their customers to refer friends who they believed needed RIBPL's services. The incentive for the customer was the chance to win a \$500 voucher to spend at Dan Murphy's.

From our end it was technical with getting everything working online, but from the client's point of view it was a seamless process and resulted in several new leads. This campaign was rolled out via email marketing, social media marketing and via their website. Of the 9289 recipients reached via email, 1571 people opened the newsletter and 155 people clicked on the 'Cover Your Mates' link. This campaign received 28 entries, 71 referrals and 8 insurance review submissions.



CONCLUSION

Inbound marketing is the modern way to market your business and is the most cost effective way to do so. We know from experience that TV and radio commercials, billboards, yellow pages print and promotional materials are outdated methods and are simply no longer as effective in this digital age. While it is clear that businesses are gravitating towards inbound marketing, according to Hubspot (2012), those who move first and more aggressively are more likely to reap the fantastic business benefits of this new era of marketing.

Margin Media is an inbound marketing company based in Brisbane, Australia, established in 2006. We offer a range of digital marketing solutions to help your business increase its website traffic, qualified leads and customer base.

We know that by implementing digital marketing strategies such as blogging, social media, search engine optimisation and email marketing, businesses will generate more traffic, attract the right type of people to their website, and have a better chance of converting leads to customers.

If you'd like to know more about inbound marketing and how we can help you formulate the right strategy for your business, feel free to [Contact Us](#) online or call us on 1300 798 848.