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Working the Web

Ellie Becker and Bernadette Nelson | Dec-03-10, 07:00 PM |

Topics: Marketing, Media

Inbound Marketing Tool Kit Part 1: Services Emerge to Meet the Demand

If you – like many others – are intrigued by the Inbound Marketing concept but not sure exactly how to implement a program, this and next month's columns will detail some services that can help. We've sought and demo'ed tools that have the time and budget constraints of small-to-mid-sized companies in mind.

All-Inclusive Tools

Inbound Marketing has a lot of moving parts: Attracting prospects to your website with great content; engaging them in dialogue; creating designated landing pages for online marketing campaigns; nurturing and converting leads to customers through email campaigns and other interactions; analyzing it all - including the value of your total social media and online presence.

The most convenient way to implement Inbound Marketing is via a service that pulls it all together in one user-friendly package. There are two that stand out to us.

HubSpot has been a powerhouse. Not only has the Cambridge, Mass. firm developed, arguably, the first total Inbound Marketing tool, but it also built the market for its services through free educational programs and Grader.com tools that help companies evaluate and improve their online efforts. HubSpot pulls together all of the IM puzzle pieces - most effectively when they also host your website. It's technically a template-driven content management system that also enables SEO, contact management, email campaigns and analytics. The service comes in Small, Medium and Large feature packages. Pricing is \$250, \$750 and \$1500 per month respectively, plus set-up and site migration fees that vary with the service level.

Genoo is a HubSpot challenger, based in Golden Valley, Minn. It's aimed squarely at the SMSB market and is robust enough for larger enterprises. As far as we can tell, Genoo offers all of the features you'd require for a full Inbound Marketing program for \$199 per month with no set up or migration fees or annual contracts. All features are available at the flat rate, many of which don't kick in until the medium or large versions of HubSpot. In addition to your main site, the fee also includes a micro site. It's not necessary to host your site with Genoo to use all features.

SEO & Measurement

Measurement is an inseparable part of Inbound Marketing. Tools have arisen to help you monitor, analyze and improve the impact of your online efforts.

Radian6 provides an online listening station to tune in on what people want from your industry, how they perceive your brand, and how they're interacting with your social media communications. It integrates with Google Analytics, Salesforce. com and other tools to help you convert interest to sales and understand what's driving traffic to your website. Radian6, based in Canada, starts at \$600 per month (with a 50% discount for nonprofits).

<u>JungleTorch.com</u>, a brand newcomer, based in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, focuses on organic SEO improvement, provides competitive intelligence on key word rankings and provides good basic social media monitoring and consumer sentiment tools. Customers pay from \$100 per month (for a small website and light web traffic) to an average of just over \$400 per month for larger sites generating lots of social media buzz.

Next month we'll take a look at templated websites – like WordPress and Joomla – and back-end content management systems.

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