

4 ways to optimise your Inbound Marketing

An essential guide to turning your marketing data into actions and improving your inbound strategy



Inbound marketing channels - the ones that help customers find you, rather than the other way around - should form a large part of your bigger marketing strategy in 2016, if they don't already.

Your SEO, PPC, blogging, content marketing, social media and email nurturing campaigns, when functioning properly, should progress people through the buyer's journey, from visitors to leads to customers. The ultimate aim is to build a community of brand evangelists, who are just as excited about what you do as you are.

For the vast majority of businesses, there are no shortcuts to making this happen. Using intuition will only take you so far. The key to optimising your inbound marketing is data.

The most successful inbound marketers are the ones who use data to drive their strategy and improve their performance over time. Monitoring your results teaches you valuable lessons about your buyers; such as where they seek information, what resonates with them and what drives their decision to buy from you.

By tracking, analysing and optimising, you can ensure your channels are all working together in the most effective way to move your prospects through the buyer's journey.



This eBook will teach you how to turn your inbound marketing reports into actionable data and optimise your performance across your inbound channels.

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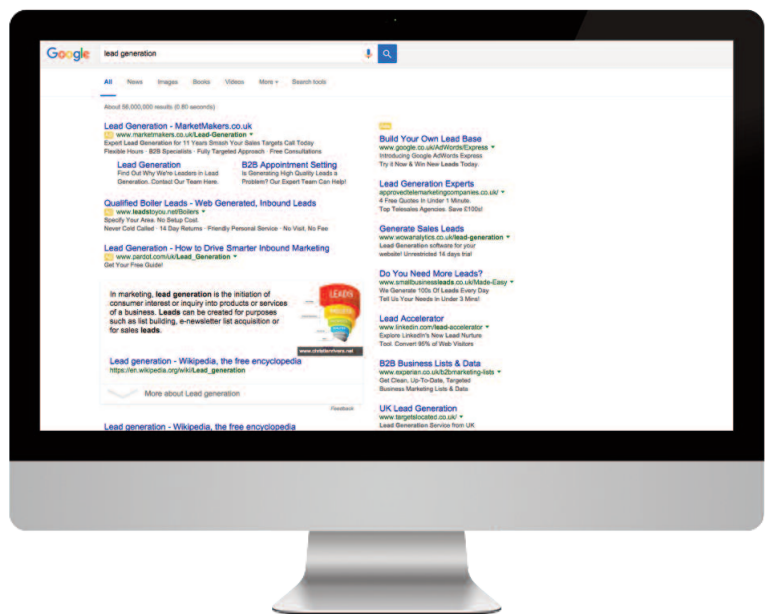
Fine-tune your SEO and PPC keywords



Most internet sessions begin with a search. Solid SEO and PPC keyword strategy is your ticket to increasing your website visits, at all stages of the sales funnel or buyer's journey.

Just as your blog posts and content should be geared around the awareness, consideration and decision stages, **so should your keywords.**

Tailoring your content to your buyer personas' questions, needs and objectives will put you on the right track. This is only half the battle, however. **The SEO and PPC keywords you choose to rank for are just as important as the content itself**, because it's those keywords that will decide whether or not your website gets found and read.



To choose your keywords, it is essential to understand what your potential buyers or target audience search for. Ask yourself these three questions:

- **What are their challenges or questions?**
- **What answers or solutions do they want?**
- **How can your keywords and content solve their problems?**

In order to fine-tune your keywords over time, it's vital to **experiment** and **test different possibilities**. PPC can provide valuable data in a much shorter space of time than SEO, which is more of a slow burner since it can take considerable time to rank organically for specific keywords.

Using the data you gather from your campaigns, you can decide which keywords perform best for you, and **target these keywords with your content, landing pages, SEO and PPC**. Analyse metrics such as website visits but also remember that quality trumps quantity; it's your bounce rates and conversion rates that will tell you how effective your keywords are in terms of attracting the right traffic and how good a job your website is doing in engaging your visitors.

Continually optimise your visitor-to-lead and visitor-to-customer conversion rates by **improving the relevancy of your website content and matching your output with the searcher's original intent**. For example, if someone is searching for reviews for a suitcase, it's unlikely they want to go directly to a sales page. Instead, they are looking for written or video testimonials, and probably won't appreciate anything less.

2 Tweak your persuasive website copy



Website copy matters. From your company's About page to product pages, the style, brand voice and accuracy affects the buying decisions of your potential customers. Review your language, tone and messaging regularly as you gauge what is effective and what isn't.

The copy that matters most for inbound marketers is **conversion copy**: landing page text and CTAs. This is the copy that will ultimately move people through the buyer's journey. The key to optimising your conversion copy is, once again, data.

Landing pages

In order to maximise the effectiveness of your landing page copy, **find out what resonates best with your prospective client base**. Calculate your landing page conversion rates by dividing the number of form fills by the number of visits.

$$\text{LANDING PAGE CONVERSION RATE (\%)} = \text{CONVERSIONS} \div \text{VISITS}$$

Effective landing pages usually empathise with your prospective buyers and their challenges, and then tell a story about how your content or offer can provide a solution. Headlines, images and clear, **compelling copy should allow your readers understand instantly what your offer is and why it's valuable**. There should be one strong CTA and one simple form to fill out per landing page.



← **HubSpot's landing pages are the some of the best examples out there. They describe the problem that their offer is looking to solve, then explain how the offer will help you.**

Try creating more landing pages so you have more data to learn from; keep the content offer the same, but change different elements of your page. When you find out which landing pages perform best, analyse the layout, copy and other elements. **Use your conclusions as best practices moving forward;** go back and make changes to existing landing pages if necessary.

Calls to Action (CTAs)

To optimise your CTAs for conversions, first identify which CTA types result in the highest engagement levels by comparing clickthrough rates.

CTA CLICKTHROUGH RATE (%) $\text{CLICKS} \div \text{IMPRESSIONS}$

Record your results in a reporting spreadsheet and look for patterns. Work out what your highest performing CTAs have in common in terms of copy. Are they short and snappy, or long and descriptive? As a general rule, it's the two to three word CTAs such as **'Try it now'** or **'Download for free'** which are usually the most persuasive.

HubSpot's CTA drops down from the top of the page, and highlights why users should care about their offer before calling on users to **'Get yours today'**.



Consider the possibility that certain landing pages or CTAs may be more effective due to the subject matter of your content, the layout of your landing page or the visuals in your CTA. **To test only the effectiveness of your conversion copy, A/B test your CTAs or landing page text using marketing software such as HubSpot.**

3

Segment and target for better emailing

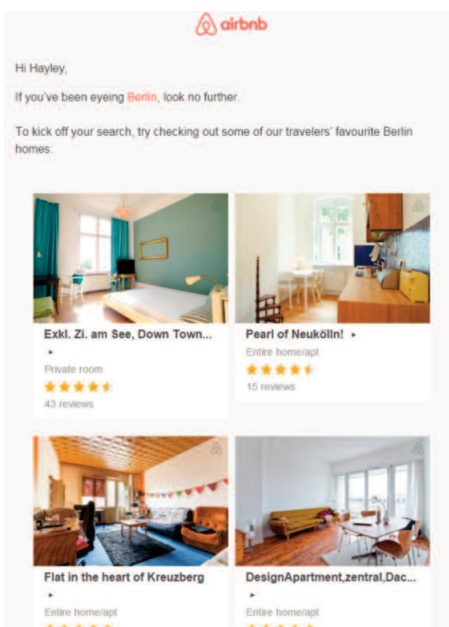


Marketing emails don't have to be pointless and forgettable. Inbound marketing email campaigns revolve around relevance and being on point, not cold correspondence and a 'hit and hope' approach.

Buying email lists won't cut it; it's your website content that should serve its purpose of engaging potential buyers and persuading them to sign up to receive your emails. **Your contacts will opt in** to be included on your email list, by subscribing or filling in a form somewhere on your site, **because they want to hear from you.**

That's how your visitors become leads. Following that, it's the job of your nurturing emails to target the right people with the right messages at the right time; **that's how those leads become your customers.**

To optimise your email send outs for relevancy, **segment your contacts using email software.** If you aren't doing so already, you should be looking to define prospects as visitors, leads and customers (based on their previous interactions and content downloads, for example) as well as sorting them by their buyer persona (using answers they provided on your website forms such as job title and industry).



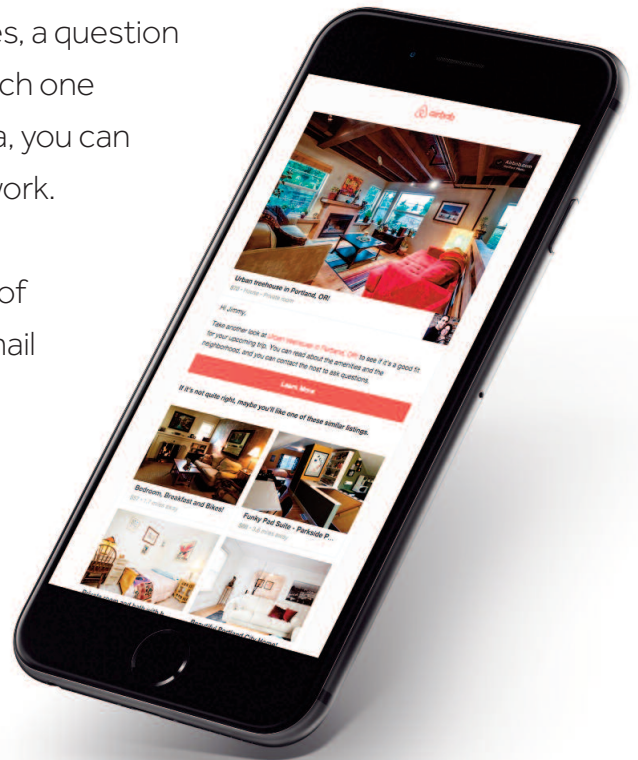
When deciding the content you'll send to each segment, **use your understanding of your recipients' needs and goals.** Adapting your subject line, tone, the purpose of your email (why you're sending it and what value it brings the recipient), and your CTA accordingly to maximise opens and conversions.

← **This remarketing email from Airbnb specifically targets a user that has been viewing accommodation in a particular locale, but is yet to convert. The content of the email consists of appealing options in the city of Berlin and aims to bring the user back to the website where they will hopefully convert.**

Continually improve your marketing emails as you go. As always in optimisation, data is your best weapon. Monitor your open rates and clickthrough rates until you can draw safe conclusions about best practices for crafting and sending emails.

A/B tests will be invaluable while you learn the ropes; try sending emails with two different subject lines, a question versus a statement for example, and see which one performs best. Once you start to gather data, you can learn more about which styles and formats work.

Different buyer personas at different stages of the buyer's journey will react differently to email content and copy. In order to increase your clickthrough rates, **play around with language, tone and CTAs until you find your sweet spot for optimum conversions.**



4

Create more
delightful content



Content is the lifeblood of inbound marketing. All of your other channels, like social media, SEO, PPC, email marketing and conversion copy, should all be pointing your buyers towards your content.

Producing pieces of content, such as eBooks, webinars, templates and case studies, involves a bigger investment of time than publishing a social media post or running an ad, and therefore it's not possible to test, experiment and optimise your content in the same way.

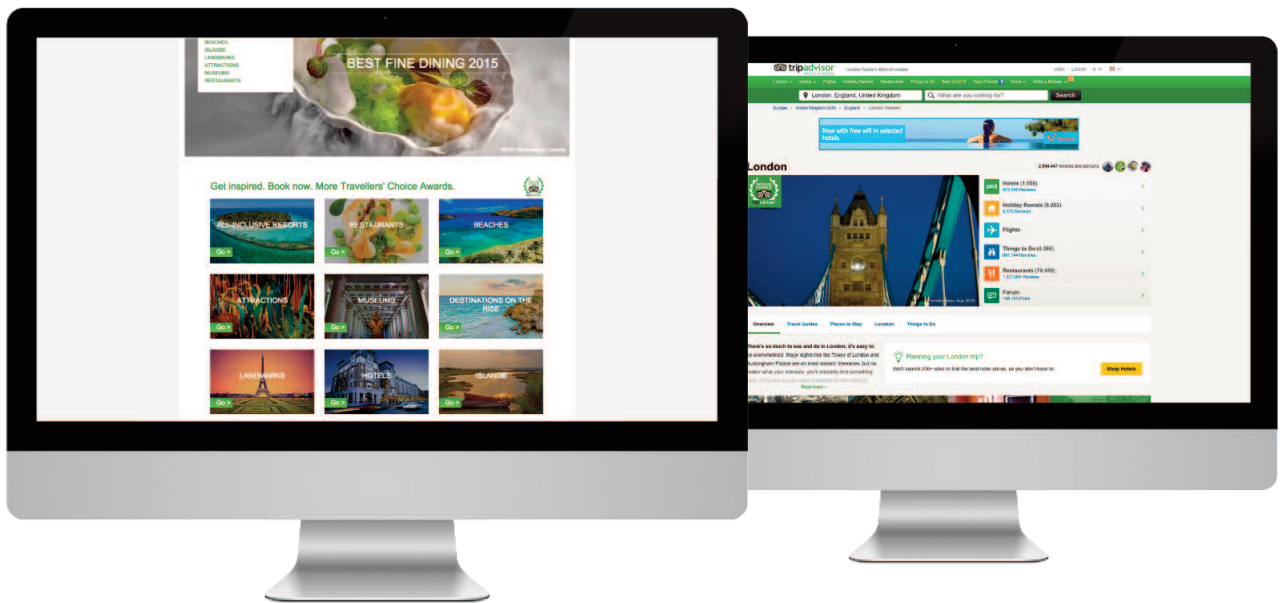
Instead, **create a content calendar for every quarter** and fill it up with three months' worth of content. Make sure you include different formats; plan a healthy mix of eBooks, white papers, one-page cheat sheets and so on. This way, you can quickly **test which formats get the most engagement and downloads.**

To come up with topics and subject matter, use what you understand about your buyer personas, as well as your keyword research and data. This will help you gear your content, landing pages and SEO/PPC keywords towards your target audience. If you're not yet sure exactly how to reach your buyer personas or how to speak with them, collect more data; create several blog posts and landing pages targeting different keywords to see which perform best.

Your content calendar should span all of your buyer personas at each stage of the buyer's journey. Create a matrix whereby you brainstorm their challenges and needs as they move down the sales funnel and generate your ideas for content that way. When your content is governed by what your buyer personas want and need, **it will do its job of turning visitors into leads, then into customers and ultimately into brand evangelists.**

Brand evangelists, or promoters, are the people who you continually wow with new content that helps and guides them to the point where they want to shout about your brand to their contacts. **Delightful content comes from understanding your buyers.**

For inspiration when it comes to **exemplary content marketing**, look to airlines and travel companies such as TripAdvisor. They compile lists of the top 25 beaches, landmarks and destinations, for example, and each list acts as a landing page from which customers can book hotels directly, or click on the list entry for reviews on restaurants and activities, forums, flight bookings and more.



Collecting data on the effectiveness of your content goes beyond the number of downloads or form fills. **Monitor what happens after the download** to see how well your content performs. Are the people who downloaded eBook X opening your subsequent emails, and are they coming back to your site for more content? Are you getting positive feedback or social shares about blog post Y or report Z?

When your content inspires readers to reengage and buy in to your company, it's working. Create more of the same. When it doesn't, ask yourself whether you're really giving your potential buyers what they need, and if not, how you can get there.

In conclusion...

By following the best practices in this eBook, we hope you will be successful in optimising your inbound marketing campaigns. First and foremost, use your own data as a guide to which messaging and content performs best with your ideal buyers.

Looking to the examples provided and more from across the web for inspiration, you can craft your own marketing strategy – across all of your channels – designed to attract more customers to you and move them seamlessly through the buyer's journey.

Hands Up!

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