



Inbound Marketing

DIGITAL



Introducing Inbound Marketing

You've probably heard the term, but you might not be familiar with all of the ins and outs of how it actually differs from traditional digital marketing.

To put it simply, inbound marketing is a way of gaining the trust of would-be customers by giving them helpful advice and insights for free. When they're ready to purchase, they're more likely to already trust your business.

Unlike with traditional, outbound marketing, inbound content addresses people's problems and helps them solve pain points they're going through. So, by helping people in their research, you'll Attract qualified prospects that trust your business.

Ever since the term was first coined by HubSpot back in 2006, inbound marketing has only grown in popularity. And results. It helps to take marketing efforts to that next level, generating leads by focusing on creating quality content that pulls people towards your company.

By giving out helpful information, you naturally Attract inbound traffic that you can eventually Convert, Close and Delight over time.

Inbound is a better way to market, a better way to sell and a much better way to serve customers - all to help your company grow in the long-term. Continue reading to find out more useful information on all things inbound marketing.

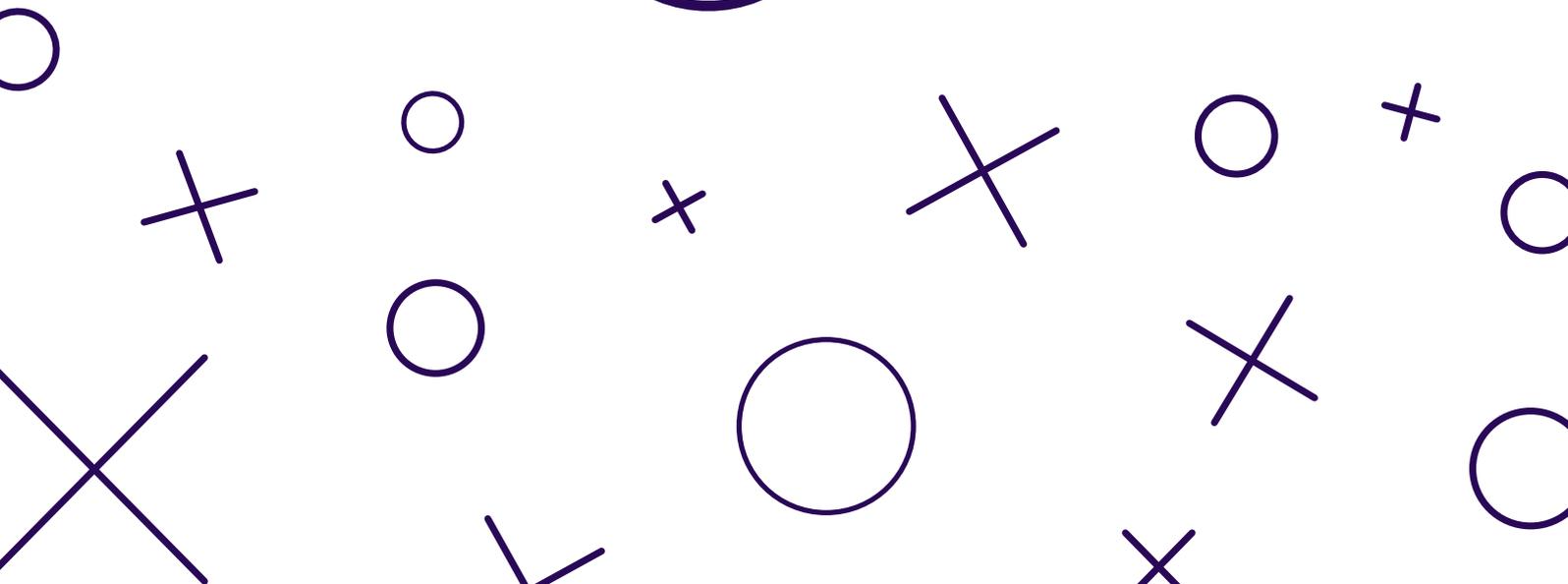
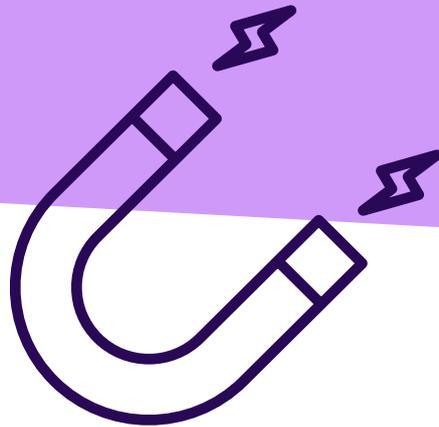
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1.

What is Inbound Marketing?



Inbound Marketing - In More Depth

Inbound marketing involves producing and sharing quality content (blogs, videos, eBooks, infographics and more), for free, to Attract future customers to your business when they search the internet.

You continue to market your business by earning a lead's trust. When the time comes to make a purchase, they already have a relationship with you so are more likely to choose your company.

Instead of wasting valuable time and money on outbound techniques (billboards, interruptive advertising, directory ads), inbound marketing Attracts visitors at the right time by providing content aimed at solving problems they're facing in that particular moment. This includes: How-To guides, advice blogs, case studies... internet users search for content which helps them at their own particular stage of the Buyer's Journey.

Over time, when using inbound methods, your company will have provided content for all scenarios and earned enough trust to win their business.

Jargon explained

The Buyer's Journey is the strategic compass inbound marketing uses to ensure that we, as marketers, reach out to prospects in the right way and at the right time. Why should you care about the Buyer's Journey? Well, because our customers have changed. They aren't responding to marketing strategies of 20 years ago and this means they move through three distinct phases.

The Buyer's Journey

The buyer's behaviour has changed - they hold all of the power. Not the seller. Thanks to everybody having a world of information at their fingertips via their smartphone, buyers are now more educated than salespeople.

Think about when you last upgraded your smartphone, bought a car or chose which new restaurant to try... you'll have done varying amounts of research online. You know reviews, technical info, menus and whatever else is all available on the internet. You also know that a salesperson for each of your options is likely to recommend themselves.

In a nutshell, that's how the buyer's journey has evolved thanks to the power of a quick Google search.

There are four segments of the Buyer's Journey and we've briefly highlighted the type of content you should be producing at each stage.

Awareness

The individual is first aware of their problem.

- Thought leadership eBooks
- Educational blogs
- Industry reports and analysis
- Downloadable guides
- Troubleshooting tips
- Infographics

Decision

The prospect has clearly educated themselves and defined their problem. They are aware of solutions and now need to decide on one. They are far more likely to trust you if you satisfied them in the previous two stages.

- Free trials
- Demos
- Competitor comparisons
- Client case studies
- Product data sheets
- Price guides
- Service Level Agreements

Consideration

The individual is well aware of their problem and they have suitably defined it. Now, they want to understand what can help them solve their pain points.

- Podcasts
- Webinars
- How-to videos
- Online Q&A's
- Technical blogs
- Expert eBooks with actionable steps
- Downloadable tools

Delight

This is where you exceed a customer's expectations to create a positive experience with your brand. It shows you've gone above and beyond to create a memorable experience through things like gifts, promotions, discounts or even spontaneous outreach so they become raving promoters about your brand. By fostering this emotional connection, customers are more likely to be loyal to you in the long-term.

- Follow-up emails
- SMART content
- Surveys

We've actually gone into much greater depth on the Buyer's Journey, as well as what to look out for at each stage. [Check out this blog to understand what the buyer's journey is.](#)

What is a Buyer's Persona?

A Buyer Persona is a semi-fictional representation of your best customers. By using information you have about your customers and target market, you can create detailed profiles of what types of customers you will be dealing with. If you understand their ambitions, attitudes and priorities, you can create content that will engage with them.

Creating Buyer Personas has many benefits. The most significant ones include:

- Improves understanding of your market.
- Helps to focus your content marketing to the right audience.
- Increases your conversion rates.

To learn more about [how a buyer persona helps in all of the areas we highlighted above, click here.](#) It's a great place for you to get started on creating your own.



Age: 35 - 50 **Income:** £50k+

Education: Bachelor degree to self taught

Location: Suburban area

Explaining the 'Delight' Phase of the Inbound Methodology

The inbound methodology includes three core stages: Attract, Engage and Delight. This methodology is used to build trust, credibility and momentum so that you can add value at every stage in your customer's journey.

For your business, this methodology is all about helping you grow. It's not just for your marketers either - this is a methodology your entire team should be invested in from your designers right through to your sales team.

Happy customers are what fuel your growth and the only way they can be happy is if you're solving their pain points. On the flip side, giving either poor content or selling to people who are bad fits for you can slow your overall growth.

As an inbound marketer, your primary goal is to Attract new prospects to your company that are the right fit.

Inbound vs. Outbound

Outbound marketing involves getting your marketing message to the largest amount of people. It's done through letters, direct emails, advertising and cold calling.

All of these are quite aggressive techniques which involve interrupting people's daily lives. That's the key difference that we highlighted at the very top of this page. Inbound doesn't fight for people's attention, they come searching for content that you've created so you can solve their problems.

As you can imagine, outbound marketing requires plenty of marketing messages to be pushed out through various channels in the hope that the right message makes it to the right person, regardless of whether they want to hear it or not.

These techniques could lead to annoyance or intrusion. Inbound marketing puts your message in front of your target market and if you utilise the right content marketing strategy, they could be compelled by curiosity to see what's on offer. In short, think of inbound marketing as a magnet Attracting the right customer.

To learn more about the key differences between both types of marketing, [click here to read our Inbound vs Outbound Marketing blog post.](#)

The Myths and Misconceptions Surrounding Inbound Marketing

Let's not beat around the bush - despite so many benefits, there are still some myths and misconceptions out there that just aren't true. Check out some of the most popular ones we've heard over the years.

"Inbound Consumes More Time Than it's Worth."

This myth comes from the fact that inbound marketing targets would-be customers before they know they even need to buy something. It's estimated that this is up to 97 percent of people browsing the internet.

The truth is that sales conversations are shorter and easier when a lead has been nurtured along the inbound-way.

"You Can't Measure The ROI of an Inbound Strategy."

While it might sound impossible to effectively track people's activity on your website and counting how many people are converting into customers, it can be quite easy to measure your ROI on your inbound strategy.

That's if you have an intelligent CRM. With a CRM like HubSpot, you can easily observe your strategy to see which tactics do and don't work.

"Inbound is Just About Blogging."

It's true, inbound marketing does rely on content. Although, by no means does it mean that you only need to set up a blog and that will start pouring in the customers.

The presence of inbound can be found on your web pages in other forms of content, like downloadable templates, eBooks and even your social media content. The strategies and tools to capture data and nurture individuals beyond their first touch is where inbound really starts to shine, but you have to implement it in all areas of your marketing plan for it to really work.

“There’s No Strategy When it Comes to Inbound.”

Every single inbound strategy is carefully thought out beforehand. As inbound marketers, we have targets we want to achieve and we regularly analyse to see which methods do and don’t work.

It’s all about understanding what customers are engaging with and what encourages them along the buyer’s journey.

“Inbound is Just About Writing Broad Content for the Masses.”

Yes, the inbound methodology does rely on creating high quality content, but that doesn’t mean that content will be ready for every single type of customer. Each form of inbound content that’s created has to have an ideal customer in mind.

As inbound marketers, we need to work to understand the psychology of different types of customers coming to your business we can create varied kinds of content that will engage the best with your different buyer personas.

“Inbound is Just for Small Business Because They Can’t Afford Outbound.”

We know that adverts might be expensive to produce and air on television, but that doesn’t mean inbound is popular because it’s the cheaper option. Although, it does say a lot that more and more large businesses are now adopting inbound techniques themselves. That’s because outbound techniques aren’t that effective anymore.

The inbound methodology works to capture people’s attention and engage with their needs rather than cold advertising and pushing your products to them. You’ll now see more large businesses investing in their blogs, engaging on social media to stand out and creating downloadable content to get visitors to their websites instead.

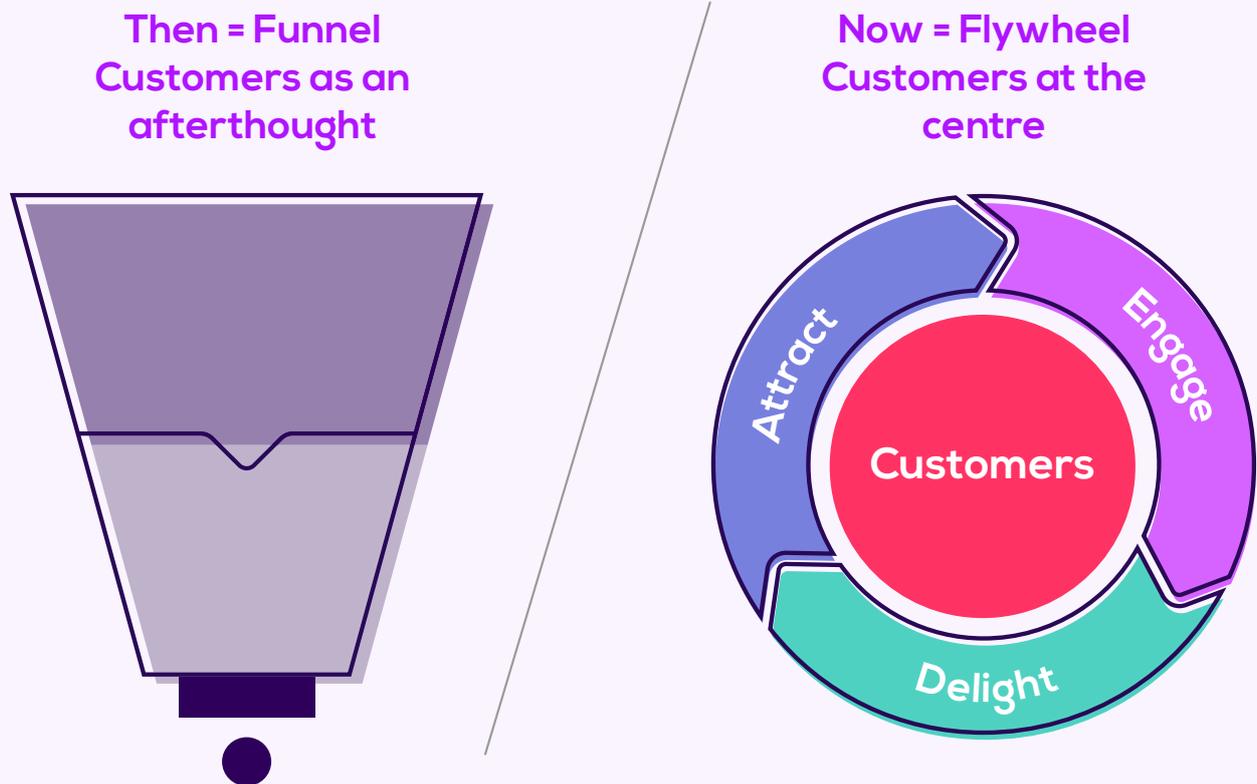
“We Don’t Need to Change From Traditional Marketing Methods Which Work Just Fine.”

We’ve heard what the bosses say. “Traditional, outbound advertising hasn’t done any harm since, well, forever. So why should we change?” Well, not everybody likes intrusive advertising now as the people like to have control.

Think about it, when they have a query, they’re going to Google to get their answers because they have that power. In the end, they’re more likely to head to the place where they’re getting the information they need for free as opposed to the place asking for money in return. When it’s time to make a purchase, where do you think they will head?

Sadly, we’ve heard all of these myths and misconceptions all too often. Although, that doesn’t mean they’re true otherwise inbound wouldn’t be thriving like it is today. To read more about why all of these are simply myths and nothing more, [check out this blog](#), while [this blog](#) will clear up any other misconceptions you might have.

Say Hello to the Flywheel



Like how the 2000s saw buyers become more educated than salespeople and the inbound methodology was developed, things are currently evolving further. Thanks to customer reviews and company reputations being ever-more connected to each other, and the data being ever-more readily available to would-be customers, existing customers are the biggest marketing tool and threat at your disposal.

Hence, the Delight phase of the Buyer's Journey is so important. [Check out how Brian Halligan explained it at INBOUND 18.](#)

Delighting customers is an integral part of the inbound methodology and the most crucial part of sustainable business growth in the 2020s.

Happier clients and customers stay with you longer, they're a joy to work with and they shout about your company to their network. This then keeps the Attract part of your prospect pool well-topped up and they already partly trust you thanks to your being referred by existing customers.

How does the Flywheel work?

So, how does it work? Well, we Attract people to our business with inbound marketing content and this gets the Flywheel spinning. If the friction during the journey from marketing content to sales conversions is minimal, there is plenty of energy being put into the Flywheel. The Flywheel picks up pace.

Once a sale has happened, we shouldn't forget to continue Delighting these customers. Annoying your customers causes friction and friction slows down Flywheels.

If your customers are Delighted, they're more likely to shout about you to their network or continue to purchase from you again. This puts more energy into the Flywheel via more leads (customers telling their network about you) and more sales happen as a result (their network become customers or they themselves become repeat buyers).

This was just a brief look at what the Flywheel is all about. Why not take a more in-depth look at it by [clicking here](#)? Or, if you want an even simpler way to digest the Flywheel, then [have a listen to to our podcast](#) where we interviewed Jon Dick, the Vice President of Marketing at HubSpot - he made it even easier to understand.

Marketing Automation is Key

For that Flywheel to continue turning, though, marketing automation is key. Marketing automation is central to any successful inbound marketing strategy because it allows you to capitalise on marketing conversions without any repeated manual input.

Without automation in place, you'd be sending out downloads and follow-up emails manually to each and every lead, no matter the time of day.

Once you have your leads, a marketing CRM like HubSpot can automatically add them into a workflow email. Don't worry if you're new to workflow emails either, we've dedicated an entire section to that as well as a 'how-to' guide.

Automated marketing is perfect for inbound strategies because it:

- Engages with your buyers in a timely manner.
- Nurtures your prospects on your behalf.
- Guides them along the Buyer's Journey.

Here's how you can create your own automated marketing strategy. It's important to take the following points into account, as nurturing your potential customers following the inbound methodology offers much higher results compared to outbound methods.

- It's crucial you understand your potential customers. Understand their pain points and what will be most engaging for them.
- Learn more about inbound marketing so you understand your target market inside-out.
- Use a marketing CRM like HubSpot. By finding one most suitable for your business, you can create automated emails and workflows that will nurture leads into customers.

To learn more about marketing automation and receive a more in-depth explanation at how marketing automation can help your inbound marketing efforts, [check out this blog](#).

Where to Start if You're New to Inbound

Inbound marketing isn't really *that* new, but that doesn't mean you, your team or any other marketer won't be new to the method. So, to make life much easier for you, we're going to give you everything you need to get started with inbound if you're new.

Inbound Tactics for Beginners

Certifications: If you're using HubSpot, you'll have an entire Academy of tools available for you to use. Inbound certifications, social media, [Growth Driven Design \(GDD\)](#), there's plenty to get through.

Soak up plenty of inbound knowledge and once you've completed the courses, take your exams to become certified which shows you fully understand inbound. Not only will they help you further understand strategies and best practices, but they'll also show you how to use HubSpot's marketing and CRM software - which is essential for newbies and helpful for veterans looking to find shortcuts and alternative methods.

Understand and Use Your Sales CRM: Sales CRM software helps keep all of your data in one place so you can easily use it to optimise your future interactions with your potential and current customers. Because your CRM has helpfully stored all of your data in one place, you can easily access it to make sense of every interaction you've had with your contacts and use that knowledge to successfully Attract, Convert, Close and Delight even more customers in the future.

Again, you can take courses through HubSpot to make it much easier to navigate, user and understand.

Spend Plenty of Time on Your Personas: You already know by now that personas are important. So, give them the time and attention they deserve because it'll pay off in the long run. Having them is one thing, but actually knowing and understanding them is an entirely different ball game.

That's why you and your internal team should spend time really getting to know your customers and crafting personas that capture their precise essence. This will help you curate content that tickles your audience's taste buds and satisfies their pain point related needs. It might even help spawn multiple content ideas for the future.

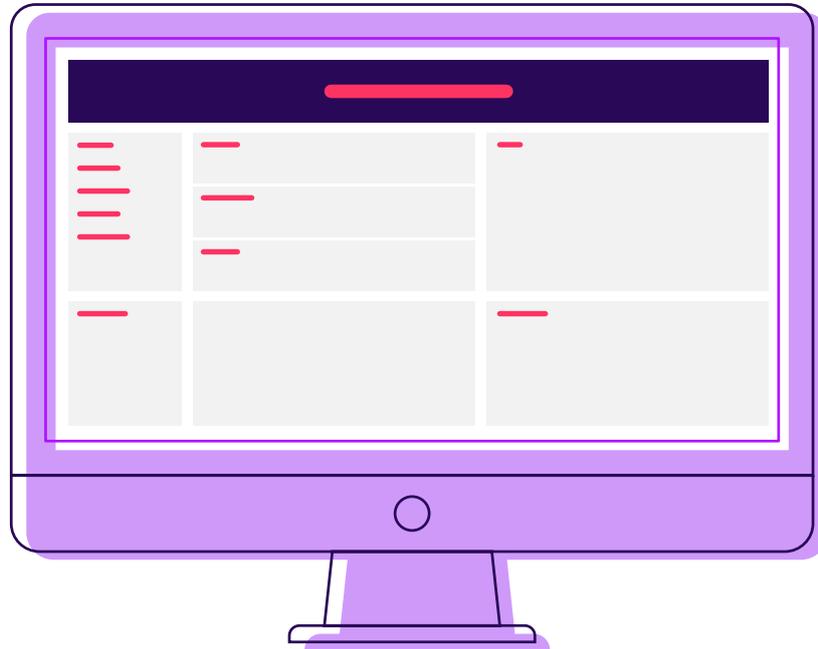
This was just a brief overview on how to get started with inbound. We recommend that you [read this blog](#) for a much deeper explanation on each point to put you in a better position to get started.

Where You Should Allocate Your Budget

Allocating a marketing budget is one of a marketer's most important and often most daunting responsibilities. The money in your budget isn't infinite and how much goes into each element of your strategy can make all the difference in a marketing plan that succeeds and thrives, or one that fails. Here's our breakdown on which marketing channels are the most effective and worth investing in.

- [Google AdWords](#)
- [Facebook Social Ads](#)
- [Sales and Marketing CRM](#)
- [Marketing Automation](#)
- [Creating Quality Content](#)
- [Inbound Video](#)

Obviously, you need to know the benefits and the drawbacks of splashing your money on each of these channels. Rather than trying to cram all of that info here, head over to this blog for an easy-to-read breakdown on why each channel is beneficial and what might stop you from investing in a particular marketing channel.



Always Conduct Content Audits

Make sure you never forget to conduct content audits. It's important that your content is always relevant, interesting and valuable to your customers - otherwise, they'll stop engaging with your brand. The main aim of a content audit, however, is to make sure you are providing content for the entire buyer's journey.

To save you some time creating your own worksheet, we have created a content audit template as a part of our free downloadable inbound starter pack.

[Start Your Content Audit Now](#)

Recalibrate Your Approach to Keywords

Every company wants to get onto the first page of the SERP but these days, it's not just about keyword stuffing and hoping for the best (not that you ever tried this, hopefully!). As well as getting those keywords you want to target onto your page, you should also be focusing on various best practices, such as tactical use of headers, bullets and lists, bolding, anchor links and making the most of internal links.

Other Useful Resources

They're not the only good starting points for diving into inbound. To ease your worries about this approach and to help you start your inbound journey, check out all of the content we've created below.

Convincing Your Boss

If you need a hand convincing your boss to ditch the aggressive approach and invest in inbound, then we've got you covered. [This blog](#) is packed full of useful information that will convince your boss that inbound marketing is the profitable way forward.

Our Best Inbound Marketing Resources

To save you time searching the web after finishing this page, we've put together a list of resources and downloads for you to check out. It's your one-stop shop for our best inbound marketing resources and it's all free. [Check them all out here.](#)

Six of the Best Inbound Marketing Books

Considering there's so much to learn about in regards to inbound marketing, don't just limit yourself to the web. There are some brilliant physical books out there - which you can [check out and learn more about here.](#)

Time-Saving Apps

Rather than having hundreds of pounds of technology sitting in your pocket at work, we've collated [12 of the best time-saving apps](#) for marketing professionals like you. The apps range from personal assistant apps right through to managing your expenses.

Why Inbound is Important in 2019, 2020 and Beyond

Inbound is always important - but there are a handful of aspects that need to be given extra importance as we move forwards. As we've mentioned, inbound requires you to adapt and utilise newer methods to match human behaviour. This helps to draw in new customers but equally as importantly keep the ones you already have. So, focus on these three aspects heading into the New Year.

Google, SEO and the Algorithm Changes

When we're talking about an algorithm change, no marketer can be blamed for thinking of Facebook right away. While that's important to keep in mind, Google has also implemented many algorithm changes which should alter your approach. Most pressing: a move towards topic clusters rather than keywords.

Google now looks at how well you've been writing about a certain topic. The quality around the topic takes precedence over everything else so you'll receive a huge boost if your focus turns to content quality.

To read more about Google, SEO and algorithm changes - [click here](#).

Customer Success

Although 63 percent of marketers claim that generating traffic and leads is their main priority right now, inbound success in 2019 relies on shifting focus towards the customer. This means giving priority to customer success, customer service, keeping them engaged, happy and providing them with useful resources to empower them.

To read more about how you can focus on customer success better in 2019, [click here](#).

Video Marketing

We've dedicated an entire section to inbound video here on this page, but we're throwing it in here too to show how important video marketing is and will continue to be. It's simple - there needs to be a massive focus on quality video content. It's important because inbound marketing is versatile for content creation as it's all based around challenges that personas are facing. Not every user is going to want to read a blog or will have the time to do so.

For more information on inbound video as well as the stats to back up the rise in popularity, [read more about it here](#).

How Long Should an Inbound Campaign Last?

There's no right or wrong answer when it comes to how long your inbound campaigns should last. However, we've tried and tested several durations and results show that 90-day campaigns are the way to go.

Shorter campaigns can bring problems, such as seasonality and marketers being on holiday. You'll need to change your topics every month and you'll have inefficient topic research time - so you can't make meaningful changes. Even with longer campaigns you can face problems, such as fatigue halfway through and the inability to change topics.

90-day campaigns, however, allow you to see exactly where you are each month. Data is 100 percent accurate and 90-day cycles give you opportunities to change things in the final month of the campaign. That's not all - you retain the entire focus of your team, you can see meaningful things happening in manageable chunks and there's more valuable weight to the analytics.

To read more about why 90-day campaigns are a good amount of time, as well as what exactly goes down during that time period, [click here](#).

Why You Should be Doing Inbound Marketing Reports Monthly and How to Make Them More Interesting

It's not to increase your workload, but monthly marketing reports are more beneficial in the long run. They can streamline your entire team's processes as everyone will have access to regular inbound marketing reports. You need to give content time to bed in and for SEO to take effect. That's why growth takes as long as it does - and that's where monthly reports can be beneficial:

- Analyse your goals.
- Spot and fix errors quickly.
- Communicate with stakeholders with regular reports.
- They provide a bigger contribution to the overall impact.

To really impress your boss, you can't throw an ordinary monthly report on their desk. Avoid vanity metrics like traffic, retweets and likes, and instead focus on the following metrics to take your reports to the next level:

- Top-level traffic metrics (such as how many people clicked on CTAs).
- Lead generation (break down MQLs and SQLs).
- Social media metrics (CTR, post reach and sessions).
- Email metrics (open, bounce and churn rates).

Don't worry if any of the above didn't make sense the first time. We've made both of these points much easier to understand with more in-depth explanations. If you want to learn more about why you should create monthly inbound reports, [click here](#). Alternatively, for more useful tips on how to make those reports interesting, [check out this blog](#) or [even this one](#) for more KPIs you should care about.

Other Useful Resources

Getting Started With Inbound

If you think you're ready to dive into inbound marketing, [click here](#) to see five ways you can get started yourself - or even [find out how you can get started for free](#) with a starter pack. [Our Best Inbound Marketing Resources](#)

Tools to Become a Better Inbound Marketer

If you're kinda-new to inbound marketing or just want to become a better one, then we've collated [eight brilliant tools for you to use](#) so you can reach the next level. Or, [check out these six alternative apps for inbound marketers](#).

Things to Know Before Creating a Campaign

If you're looking for some useful tips on what to know before creating an inbound marketing campaign, then [check out these five points](#).

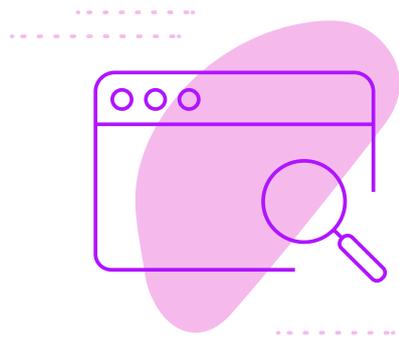
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Attracting Traffic and Turning Them into Contacts



How You Get Traffic

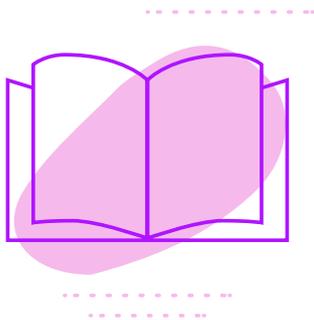
Three Methods You Can Use



SEO

Organic SEO is the biggest thing when it comes to increasing traffic to your website. Search engine optimisation means your website needs to be properly optimised to increase its search ranking so you can Attract more eventual-customers. Check out the following techniques you'll need to consider:

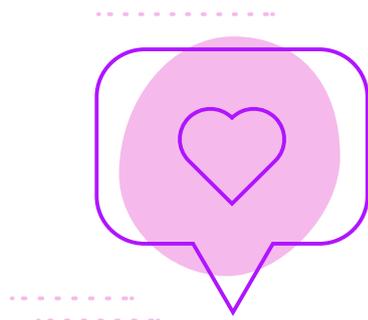
- Keyword research.
- Link building.
- On-page optimisation.



Educational Content

Always prioritise quality over quantity with your content. The more valuable the content you're getting out there, the more readers will trust you which can eventually help you become an industry leader. Make your content compelling and hit those pain points each time.

A handy by-product is that Google will monitor and realise this, then push you up the rankings as a result.

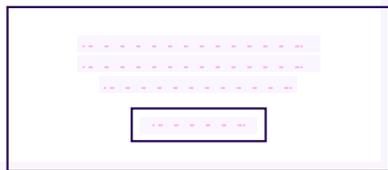


Social Media

Remain active on social media as well. Billions of people use various platforms so it's the perfect place to see what's being talked about and take advantage. This can be through sharing content you've written about or any conversation starters to gather engagement.

How You Convert Traffic

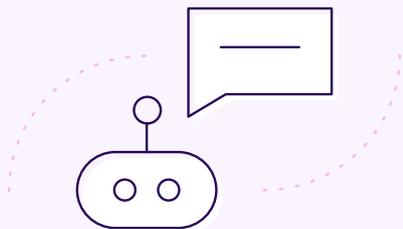
Three Methods You Can Use



Implement CTAs

Place your call-to-action buttons in prominent and easy-to-find positions on your website. By keeping readers engaged, you have the chance to nudge them towards making a decision and seeing this button. The best part is they don't even need to leave the page which makes it much easier for them to reach out.

A top tip for better success is to choose your CTAs to best match the user's Buyer's Journey stage and context as much as possible. For example, don't put a price guide CTA (Decision Stage content) on an inspirational, Awareness Stage blog post. Instead, offer them something which transcends the Awareness-into-Consideration Stage gap.



Improve Online Support and Implement Chatbots

Personalisation is great, and having a system in place online can help your team get traffic and turn them into contacts. They can be in place to give additional information a better overview of what you do, while a chatbot can give even more information when you're not even in the office.

For more information on chatbots, [check out this blog](#) to see how they can help.



Landing Pages

Landing pages are a great mechanism to capture visitors' information. These are website pages targeted to a highly-specific audience and context to drive better conversion rates. By creating these as opposed to directing visitors to your homepage or a more generic webpage, you increase the likelihood that your visitors will provide the contact information you want. Just make it clear what it is you want the visitor to do.

For inspiration, [check out these amazing](#) (and some of the worst) examples of landing pages.

Other Useful Resources

We've actually created plenty of content that can help you with improving conversions. To make it easier, we've collated them all below so you can learn more about each relevant topic by clicking on the link.

Service Page Conversion

If your service page needs some attention and you want to boost conversion on it, [check out our seven quick wins](#) to achieve that goal.

Homepage Conversion

Just like your service page, your homepage might be due some much-needed love. So, here are seven more quick wins on how you can boost homepage conversion.

Using Humour

Believe it or not, using humour can actually help boost conversion rates. Obviously, you have to be smart about it and not go overboard so [head over here to check out five ways humour can help](#).

Form Fields

Although this is something we're discussing later on in this page, [check out this blog](#) to know which form fields you should be using to help boost conversion rates.

How to Nurture Contacts

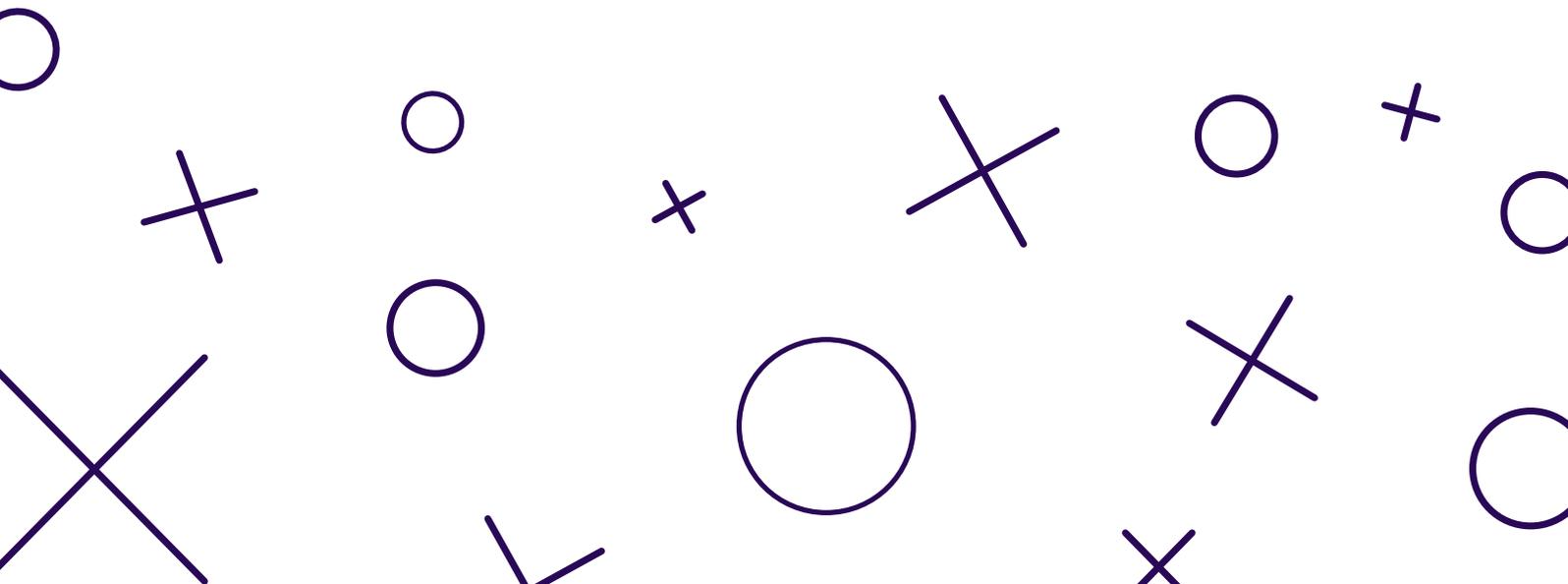
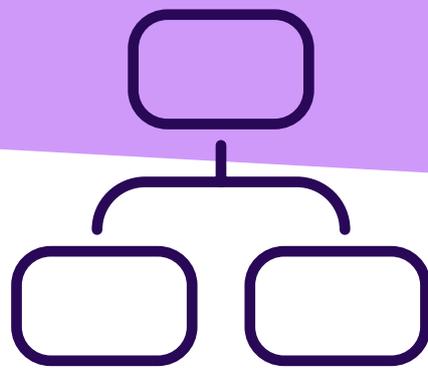
To nurture your contacts, you can utilise several methods. Email marketing is one which also fits in at this stage, but as we mentioned earlier in the post, marketing automation can help massively. This is because you're able to deliver the right information via email to the right people at the right time.

If you use HubSpot, you can use the conversations inbox to align with your sales team to create contextual conversions with the people you do business with. Content creation shouldn't stop here. Continuing to create memorable content in methods they might prefer, such as video, can help them become promoters down the line.

They're not the only ways to nurture contact either. Look into drip campaigns, setting up event tracking, [giving your contacts lead scores](#) and use smart content that's personalised.

3.

Workflows and Leads



What You Need to Know About Email Workflows

A Big Email Contact Database Isn't Always The Best Thing

Believe it or not, deleting contacts from your email database can be a lot more beneficial. Although the old school approach has always been to continue growing your database more and more, having better contacts not more contacts can help results best. So, don't even think about buying a list of emails again as it's no good having a huge database that is flooded with unresponsive contacts.

Here's why you need better contacts over more contacts:

- Better open rates.
- A more responsive database.
- You learn about them quicker.
- Better sales conversions.
- Warmer leads + better sales conversions = your team looks good.

If you want to read about how to manage an effective email marketing strategy, then [check out our dedicated blog post on the topic](#). It's packed full of benefits and useful tips to keep your contact database clean.

How to Plan and Write an Inbound Marketing Email Workflow

At this point, you're probably wondering what goes in an inbound marketing email workflow. Your workflow emails are sent once your content offering, such as an eBook or pillar page, has been downloaded. To help make the planning and writing process simpler, we've broken it down into three sections. Check them out below including what you should include at each stage.

Education: The very first time you contact a lead and you need to provide value.

What to include: Examples include a webinar and your top five blogs on a particular topic.

Education and Empathy: Don't mention your company here but you can mention your service or product.

What to include: Target their pain points further with broader content, middle of the funnel download and make readers understand that you empathise with them.

Empathy and Action: You can finally introduce yourself and explain you have the solution to their problem.

What to include: Company information, contact details, testimonials, prestigious awards etc.

We've also got an entire blog post dedicated to how you can create workflow emails. It includes the overview of each email stage, what you need to include and the aim of each email. [Click here to learn more.](#)

So, How Do I Increase Email Click-Throughs?

As we've highlighted, leads simply opening your emails isn't good enough. At the end of the day, you want them to click through so here are some useful tips on how you can significantly increase email click-through rates.

- Be consistent with email designs.
- Make your email design mobile responsive.
- Understand your persona.
- Incorporate personalisation.
- Don't overkill with an overload of content.
- Choose your images wisely.
- Make your CTAs clear.
- Segment your contacts.
- Don't spam your contacts with too many emails.

If you want to know about each point in more depth, [read our blog post "How to Increase Email Click Through Rates"](#) to find out more.

What Are The Benefits of Having Email Automation Workflows?

As you can imagine, email automation workflows are pretty important when it comes to inbound marketing. So, if you are searching for one successful inbound strategy after, you should be using them, here's why:

- They're automatic, so they lighten the long-term workload.
- They're perfectly designed to nurture your leads.
- They can benefit your sales team.
- They're relevant to your email recipients.
- They can help increase brand awareness.
- You're able to personalise emails.
- You can ensure email email is relevant and has a purpose.
- They can help to reduce errors.
- They're time-saving.
- They're cost-saving.

If you need selling even more on the importance of email automation workflows, then [head here to read more](#) about the benefits and how they can help.

Other Useful Resources

Best Practice

Best practice for email workflows takes constant management and tweaking. To stay on top of it all, [read and bookmark this blog](#).

Quick Wins and Tips

We're not going to send you away without dishing out some free and proven tips and tricks. [Read this blog](#) for eight easy-to-implement tips to squeeze the most out of your email database. If you want some quick wins for boosting your email conversion rates then check out [10 we've compiled here](#), or even [save these 10 tips to massively increase your email open rates](#).

Workflow Ideas

If you're stuck creatively and need some workflow inspiration, then [read this blog](#) for three brilliant workflow ideas that you can implement right away.

Improve Lead Generation and Quality

As we mentioned in the email section, it's no good having plenty of leads when only a handful of them are the perfect fit for your business. Quite frankly, bad leads are a waste of time for your marketing team and your sales team. That's why it's important to have a focused inbound marketing strategy that will help to improve lead quality. Here's how a good strategy can improve quality.

Attracts Your Ideal Customer

The main benefit of a focused marketing strategy is that you will Attract your ideal buyer persona. An ideal buyer persona is a profile of your ideal customer. It dives into the needs, ambitions and pain points of your target customer. Understand what drives them as people will help you create a strategy that engages with their values. This is why a focused plan will help you Attract better quality leads. The people you want to Attract will be more engaged with your marketing efforts.

Reduces the Number of Non-Ideal Customers

Even if you've created detailed buyer personas and used it as a core inspiration for your marketing strategies, you'll always Attract a percentage of leads who aren't your ideal persona. When you're setting up adverts to target your contacts, you're spending to have adverts appear in front of contacts who don't have the same interest in your company that your ideal buyer persona would. It's a waste of money. Creating a focused strategy will greatly reduce the number of leads who aren't part of your target audience.

Focuses Your Spend on Relevant Marketing

Having a focused plan will help you determine which is the best marketing direction for your business. Your ideal customer's buying habits will dictate your marketing strategy. Do they react better to social advertising? Do they shop more via Google? Understanding your buyer persona will help you spend only on relevant marketing and Attract a higher quality of leads.

Your Business Becomes More Relatable

A better focused strategy helps you create a brand that will engage with the personality of your customers, and in turn, will Attract better leads. When you look at some of the most successful brands in the world, (like McDonald's, Coca Cola, H&M, Nike etc), they all have something in common: they're relatable. Their adverts and promotions engage with customers. Focusing your marketing will help you be more relatable to your target audience.

How to Increase the Quality of Your Leads

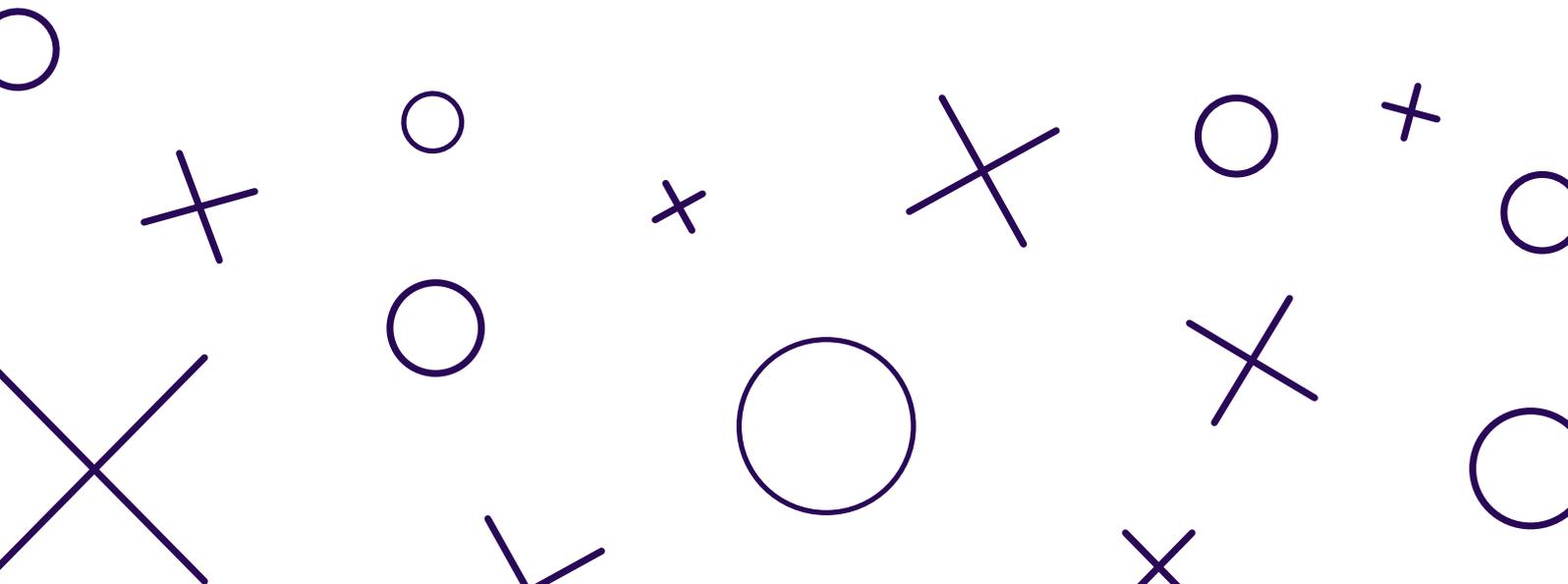
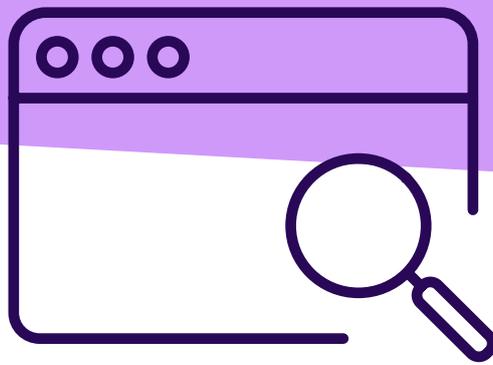
Considering we specialise in setting up and running inbound strategies, we know a thing or two about what it takes to produce high quality leads. So, check out seven of the simplest steps you should incorporate in your own strategy which should help to improve the quality of your leads.

1. Make form fields a requirement.
2. Ask for your leads' work email addresses.
3. Always focus on your ideal buyer persona.
4. Keep your CTAs content specific.
5. Remove time wasters from your database.
6. Always follow the Buyer's Journey.
7. Lead score your leads on certain factors.

If you want to know more about what you can do during each step in a lot more depth, [check out this blog](#) which breaks it down much simpler. Or, if you want to read more information on how inbound marketing weaponises lead generation, [then we have a dedicated blog post on that topic too](#).

4.

SEO and Inbound



What is SEO and Why is it Important for Inbound?

Although we've mentioned SEO a few times already on this page, we're breaking it down further and explaining why it's important.

SEO stands for search engine optimisation and it's the process of increasing your website's visibility in search engine results. When you use a search engine, you will, broadly speaking, see two types of results. Organic and paid. Paid results are usually found across the top and right hand side of the screen. Organic results are usually found in the center left column of the screen.

SEO is the process which helps you to rank in the organic section. Despite the myths and conspiracies, there is no relation between the paid and organic search results. This means no matter how much you spend on paid search listings, you will not get an organic increase.

So, why is SEO important? SEO is one of the most effective marketing methods today. This is because over the last decade buyers have changed drastically. They are tuning out distributive marketing, and that's not just my opinion, that's fact.

For example; 86 percent of people skip TV ads and 44 percent of direct mail isn't even opened, never mind responded to. The internet has empowered people so they no longer have to rely on sales reps for information, they can (and do) research solutions for themselves.

By utilising SEO:

You can put your business in front of your audience, not by interrupting them but by showing up when they are looking for a solution.

You can take advantage of a cost effective marketing channel which, unlike interruptive marketing where costs are going up and the effectiveness is going down, provides amazing ROI.

The final point: it works. We have dozens of case studies of clients growing rapidly from SEO and this isn't going to slow down. The amount of people turning to search engines as a place to buy products and services just keeps getting bigger.

How to Get Started

If you've built a new website, it's worth checking that the SEO basics are in place in order to improve its search engine visibility. It will also be worth looking into software called MOZ for more detailed SEO metrics. While each website is unique and may have different areas to optimise, there are a few common updates to put into place as soon as possible, to give the website the best possible start for improving its visibility in the search engine listings from the outset.

We've gone ahead and put these together for you in an SEO checklist below.

1. Ensure analytics tracking is in place.
2. Make sure there aren't multiple versions of the same website
3. Make sure the URLs are search engine friendly.
4. The website should include a robots.txt file.
5. An XML sitemap should also be uploaded to the root folder.
6. Page title tags are one of the most important areas to focus on.
7. The meta description titles should be optimised to include keywords.
8. Keywords should be used within a series of headings and subheadings.
9. Each header should be supported by quality content.
10. Include alt tags when adding images to the website.
11. Keywords should be used as anchor text when linking internally.
12. Consider the page loading times.

The checklist above is just scratching the surface when it comes to the steps you should follow. To gain a much more thorough understanding of each point, head over to the main checklist by [clicking here](#).

How SEO Connects With Inbound

SEO is now an integral part of inbound and should be continually helping your inbound marketing team do better in the following ways:

- Analysing keyword data and trends. Tracking traffic and link per content piece to help the content manager create compelling, keyword-focused and link-worthy content.
- Working with the design and development team to keep the website fast, crawlable, error-free and trackable.
- Building relationships with influencers and leveraging those relationships for links and shares.
- Doing keyword research so the content team knows what to target the written content around.
- Communicating with management to create solid and consistent brand strategy and make sure the strategies are delivered with impact.
- Focusing on analytics to support conversion rates and sharing analytics data to aid retention of search-driven customers.
- Collaborate with the design and development team to make sure the website not only looks good and is a good experience, but is also a useful experience for search engines.

Taking Your SEO to The Next Level

Most companies who want to succeed online already do a basic level of SEO. In fact, most have taken the intermediate steps too, either through an in-house team or agency. But the vast majority of companies still haven't taken their SEO efforts as far as they could which may well be holding them back from competing with the big players in their industry.

Take the below tips into account which can help you take your SEO to the next level.

Content for link building

Research and visualisation, create tools and write valuable resources or guides.

Content for internal content

Differences between brands, highlight the different options available, price comparisons and aftercare instructions.

Social media and social content

Webinars, how-to guides, games, competitions, events, endorsements, reviews, demos and FAQ's.

PR

Overview of the company, proof that you're experts, contact details and resources.

This was only a brief look at the type of content you should be creating that will take your SEO to the next level. [By reading this blog](#), you'll get more information about everything we've highlighted in this section, along with more valuable insight on analytics, mark-up and other useful tactics.

Dispelling the Silliest SEO Myths We've Ever Heard

Nearly every blog in the digital marketing sphere has a post about SEO myths. Whether it's "10 SEO myths I hate", "5 SEO Myths in 2018" or "15 SEO myths from the experts," these blog posts are popular and for good reason. There's a lot of rubbish on the web about SEO and even major publishers provide terrible SEO advice.

Therefore, people want to be educated on what is great advice and what is going to land them in a world of pain. With this in mind, here's a quick look at some of the most popular SEO myths we've come across - think of it as a one-stop resource for all of those pesky SEO myths, misconceptions and lies.

"SEO is Dead!"

The most common of all SEO myths and the most incorrect. No matter how many people declare that it is dead, SEO will never die. It simply evolves. It's certainly true that SEO has moved on from 'tricks' utilised to get a website to rank but rather than dying, it has evolved into a more encompassing role which suits modern search engine algorithms.

"Search Engines do all of the Work"

How often do people flippantly say: "Make great content and people will find it"? Well the sad truth is that in 99.9 percent of cases, they won't. Like anything in life, if you don't tell someone it's there, no one will find it. Search engines do a great job of indexing content and understanding what it's about but most industries are now competitive in search engines so getting your content indexed is not enough to be found.

“SEO is a Scam”

With all of the spam emails, cold calls, guaranteed #1 spots, \$99 a month gold level packages and disappointing results, it must be hard for business owners to remain optimistic about SEO. It usually requires people to have a positive experience themselves before they really believe in it. The truth is, SEO is a proven marketing method with some of the best ROIs possible in marketing, but like any major investment, you need to fully assess and research the company you are going to give that money to. Don't be scared to ask for a reference or two.

“Anyone Can Learn SEO in a Week”

Sure, you could get the basics of SEO in a training session or week self taught, However, the job doesn't end there. Google updates their algorithm over 500 times per year so you need to keep on top of things and continually learn. Today, there are so many aspects to SEO that it's tough for any one person to become a true expert in them all.

“You'll Need a Full Website Rebuild”

We hear this a lot, usually as a sales tactic from a web design agency, and it's really unfortunate that it's untrue the vast majority of the time. Most SEO issues can be fixed without the need to completely change your website.

We could genuinely sit here all day and shoot down the false claims surrounding SEO. But we won't. Instead, we have another blog post dedicated to SEO myths - and there are over 70 of them to check out. To find out more information, [click here](#). Or, if you want to only focus on the biggest misconceptions about SEO, then [we've got you covered in this blog too](#).

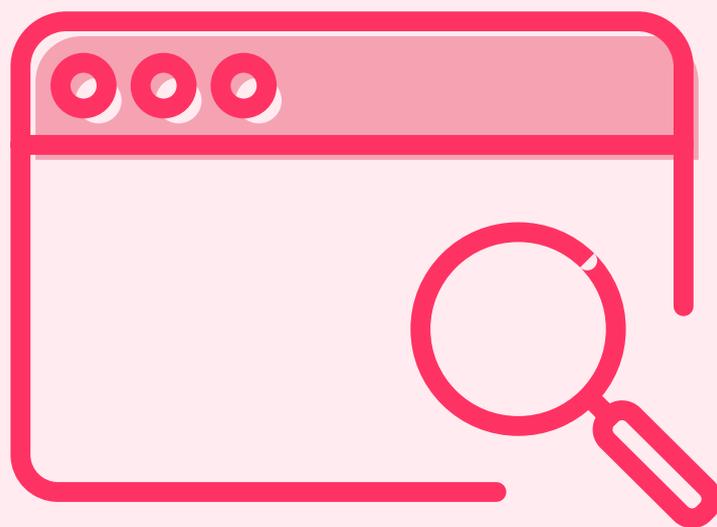
Putting SEO Skills Into Action

Domain authority, backlinks, anchor links, rich snippets - there's clearly a lot to get through when it comes to SEO. That's how important it is to inbound marketing and the success that comes with it.

Rather than sending you on your way to get to grips with SEO, this section of the page is packed full of useful resources that will all link to relevant blogs regarding that particular topic.

Improving Domain Authority

The authority of your website domain is a strong signaling factor that shows how successfully your website is performing. The higher the authority, the better. For seven super effortless ways you can improve your own website domain authority, [check out the useful tips in this blog](#) and [here are seven different things that will damage your domain authority](#) and what you can do to avoid them.



Aiming for Featured and Rich Snippets

Given the ever more visual presentation of Google's top results, it's more vital than ever that you are targeting rich snippets and rich cards. Rich card and rich snippet results on Google's first page are the responses to a search query which feature thumbnail images, summary answers to the query within the expanded card.

To find out how to target rich snippets, [read this blog](#) while [this blog outlines why you need to aim for featured snippets](#).

Why Anchor Text Matters

Anchor texts are important for the SEO of your site. They have multiple functions but they are extremely beneficial in the eyes of Google (as long as you use them correctly). While there are many reasons you can use a text hyperlink in your content, they are also helpful for search engines. The content you use in your text anchor helps search engines, like Google, understand the subject of the website link.

To find out more about anchor links and why it matters to search engines, [head over to this anchor text specific blog post](#). Alternatively, if you're looking for natural ways to boost the number of links to your website, then [we've outlined five ways you can do that here](#).

Second Tier Links

During our visit to BrightonSEO, some of the speakers claimed that link building wasn't important. They said it wasn't a significant ranking factor and that our attention should be focused elsewhere. However, other speakers (and we agree too), now believe that link building continues to play a crucial part in SEO. To learn more about why second tier links are important, as well as some examples and how you can get more secondary links to improve your rankings and traffic, [read this blog](#).

SEO Backlinks

Backlinks is another term you'll come across often when talking about SEO. With a little dedicated time and effort, this method will really boost your SEO strategy by building backlinks easily and methodically. These add up and compound into boosting the success of your wider inbound strategy. To read more about why this is done and how to actually do it, [check out this blog post](#).

More SEO Tips

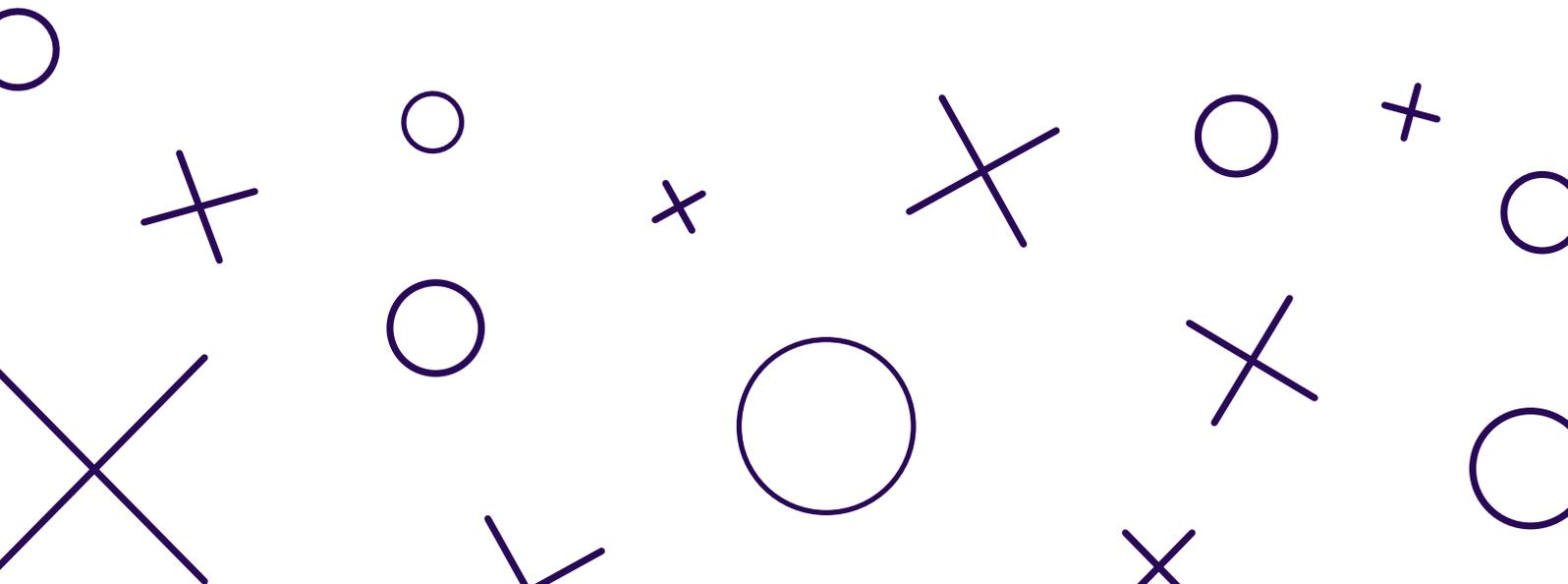
If you find that the crawl errors for your site are so numerous that you aren't sure where to start with fixing them, choose your battles wisely. If you fancy checking out some useful SEO tips when it comes to choosing your battles when fixing crawl errors, [head over to this blog](#).

You often hear about Google's 200+ ever changing ranking factors and the challenges these present to SEOs, business owners and marketing professionals. Personally we think talking about all 200+ factors is overkill [so check out this blog post](#) highlighting the 22 factors you should focus on instead.

Today's online searchers are impatient. We can't blame them - faster internet connection and mobile technology has spoiled them. This means your site load speed can't be lazy, it needs to be fast, otherwise you're going to lose sales to your competitors. So, [here are eight valuable tips to speed up your website](#).

5.

PPC and Inbound



What is PPC?

Another key component of inbound marketing is pay-per-click (PPC) and it's certainly something worth investing your budget in moving forward. PPC is an internet advertising model used to direct traffic to websites, in which advertisers pay the publisher when the ad is clicked. It is defined simply as paying for targeted traffic. Using PPC with a search engine, such as Google via Adwords, advertisers choose keyword phrases relevant to their products, services or target market.

When someone searches for those keywords, their adverts appear, usually across the top or the side of the search results. There are more advanced PPC models such as display advertising (which can be used to show your text, image or video ads around the web and not just search engines) and remarketing (targeting users who have visited your website previously).

PPC has become an established part of online marketing for many companies. Some people say that PPC is optional but we say that it is recommended for most businesses. We feel PPC is an integral part of online marketing as it offers options that you simply can't achieve from any other method of online marketing such as instant results, location/geo-targeting and remarketing.

At its most basic, PPC - through a system such as Google Adwords - is fairly easy to get up and running. Having said that, PPC campaigns are not self-sustaining. By turning on a PPC campaign and leaving it alone does not guarantee that the campaign in question will be successful. After all, it's the publisher's job (e.g. Google) to get you to spend the maximum amount of money.

Companies need to look at how their campaigns are performing and make changes usually on a daily basis. However, as exciting as it can sound, don't just dive into the deep end right away. Instead, make sure you visit this blog first which tells you everything you need to know about PPC before you begin, ranging from trial budgets to conversion rates.

PPC for Beginners - Five Myths You NEED to Know About

Got a PPC account and not sure what advice to listen to? Well, below are five myths which we would NOT recommend you action and here's why.

- **“You can set up and forget about PPC”** - Like most things in life, PPC is no different, the more effort you put in the more you will get out, hopefully in increased traffic, leads and conversions. Some businesses make the mistake of loading keywords, ads and set a budget and then move onto other tasks. The truth is the initial setup isn't the be all and end all.
- **“Nobody is searching or buying at night”** - No longer are customers restricted by the opening hours of traditional shops. Online shopping can literally be 24/7 and depending on your industry, peak times could be between 7pm-2am. If you're switching your account off at night before undertaking research, you could be wasting qualified traffic.
- **“Copy the competition”** - With limited characters available in your ad copy, you need to ensure you are selling your product or service to its best. By copying competitors, you will not be informing potential customers of your USPs and therefore you are not giving them any reason to pick your offering over another.
- **“Only focus on Google”** - Although the figures don't lie and Google is definitely the market leader (with circa 88 percent of UK searches taking place on Google), there is definitely a case to not ignore Yahoo and Bing altogether. Although the amount of searches is a smaller percentage, this is not small in actual numbers and to ignore this altogether would seem foolish.
- **“PPC isn't needed if you rank organically”** - Organic traffic is imperative and should be a key focus of any digital marketing strategy. However, the benefits and uses of PPC can be much different to SEO. PPC enables you to target a wider range of short tail keywords than it may be possible to rank for organically, therefore this will increase your potential target market.

If you want to read more in-depth explanations about each myth, [then head over to this blog](#) to know what not to do when it comes to PPC.

PPC Tips and Tricks

Understanding Your Quality Score

Your quality score is the grade Google AdWords gives your paid ad. This score will determine the ranking position of your ad in search results and the cost-per-click (CPC). Getting a better understanding of what goes into your PPC quality score is important because it increases your chances of getting a higher score, gets you ahead of other competing advertisers and can decrease the costs of your CPC.

Google AdWords has its own ranking factors to determine the quality of your ad. Previously Google has said they want to get the most relevant search results for their users and this relates to organic and paid search. Having a high score for the quality of your paid ads means your ad will appear higher than other ads who have a lower score.

This helps to stop spam ads taking the higher positions and irritating searchers. When you're part of a competitive market, it's crucial your score is higher to ensure your competitors aren't getting more clicks than you.

To find out how you can increase your quality score, [head over to this blog](#) to read the important steps.

PPC and SEO: Does it Help?

A common question people brand new to digital marketing ask is: "If we start an AdWords PPC campaign through Google, will it aid our SEO?" A common misconception is that if you pay Google, it will help you out organically. Thankfully that isn't the case, Google doesn't give any preference to websites that run PPC campaigns when it comes to organic listings.

PPC and SEO each have strengths and weaknesses. SEO is the cornerstone of every successful online business because the ROI is much greater than any other digital marketing type. For a new website, it's recommended to do both but once you have a strong SEO base, you can chose to use PPC for seasonal or more niche needs. To read more about how PPC and SEO are aligned, [head over to his blog post](#).

PPC Optimisation Techniques

Creating a new paid ad is only one step, optimising them is another. Many businesses create online ads because they know they can be very effective for Attracting customers but many of those businesses fail to optimise their ads. Failure to do this means you can be Attracting the wrong type of customers and wasting your budget.

Here are three PPC optimisation techniques you can use right away.

- **Use inbound-y adverts:** Unlike a normal paid ad, inbound-y adverts are designed to move searchers along the buyer's journey and not always to make a purchase. Inboundy ads offer a direct solution to a search query and their helpful nature turns visitors into leads and/or customers further down the line.
- **Alter location targeting:** Optimising the location focus of your paid ads will make them as focused as possible and prevent them from appearing in front of people who aren't interested.
- **Remarketing lists targeted to your buyer persona:** Remarketing is an excellent way of retargeting previous customers or catching the attention of shoppers who did not originally reach checkout. By looking at your buyer personas, you can get all the details and facts about your ideal customers to make your remarketing lists as focused as possible.

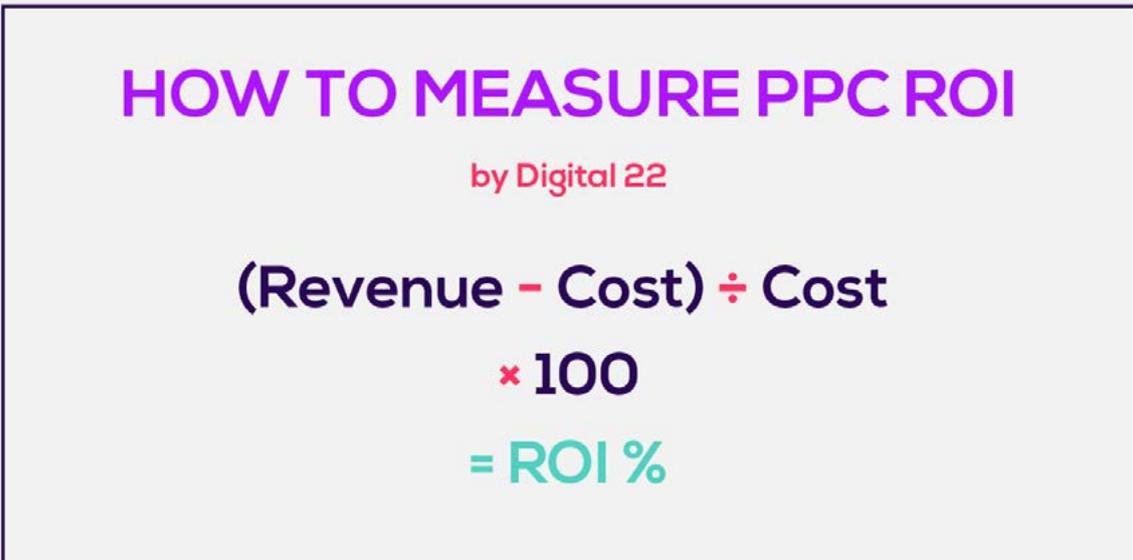
For a more in-depth look at the optimisation techniques above, [read the dedicated blog post.](#)

Useful PPC Resources

Just like SEO and pretty much everything else tied into inbound marketing, there are plenty more layers to dive into. Luckily for you, we've done our best throughout the years to make sure every important bit of PPC information has been covered - and the useful resources you'll need are highlighted below.

The need for social and PPC advertising: We believe both search and social PPC are integral parts of formulating an online marketing campaign. By creating an integrated strategy, you can ensure your business is targeting all potential leads, as with traditional search PPC you target your audience through keywords. However with social media PPC, you are targeting personas. The methods in which you target using these two techniques are therefore very different. To read more about why you need to invest in those, [read this blog](#).

How would I go about measuring PPC ROI?: The simplest way of showing how you measure and report your PPC ROI is by following the image we've created below.



HOW TO MEASURE PPC ROI
by Digital 22

$$\begin{aligned} & (\text{Revenue} - \text{Cost}) \div \text{Cost} \\ & \times 100 \\ & = \text{ROI \%} \end{aligned}$$

If you want a text version along with a full explanation to go with it, [read the blog post we've created](#) concerning PPC ROI.

Tracking your PPC advert performance: There's no denying that PPC works. We use it to drive consistent, qualified traffic to client sites and continually provide an impressive ROI. But getting to this stage isn't as simple as setting up an ad and hoping it makes an impact. You must measure performance effectively to get the most out of your ad.

[Read this blog](#) to find out how you can track the performance of your PPC ads (and they're pretty straightforward).

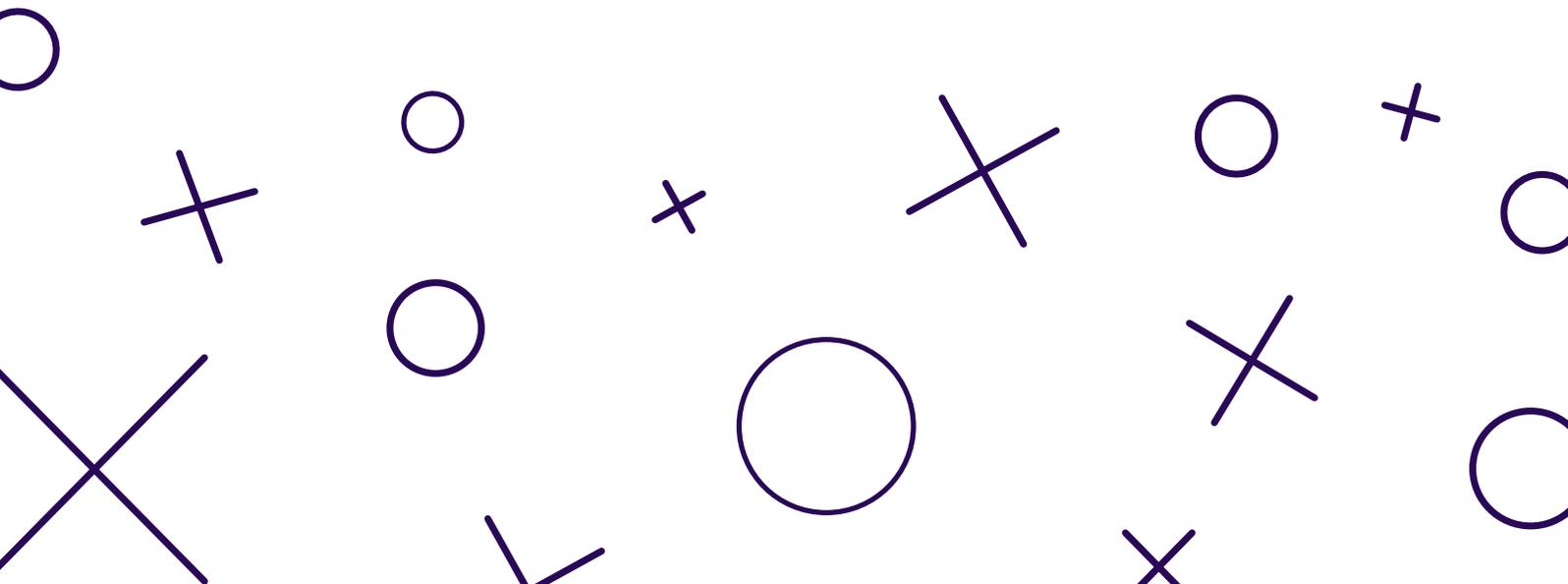
Aligning AdWords with inbound marketing (and how much does AdWords cost?): PPC, like it or loathe it, is necessary for, at least, accelerated inbound marketing success. The biggest signal perhaps being HubSpot's release of their PPC Add-On, allowing users to create and analyse PPC without the inbound marketing platform. There has always been a logical connection between inbound marketing and PPC, which when used together brings amazing results.

While social media ads have the most natural connection, [read this blog](#) to find out how to align Google AdWords with inbound marketing - and why you should.

The UK average cost-per-click of Google AdWords, on the Search Network, is between £0.66 and £1.32. But how much your actual campaign costs depends on several factors - [which you can find here.](#)

6.

Social Media



Social Media and Inbound Marketing

The Role Social Media Plays in Inbound Marketing

Social media is a vital way of getting your informative inbound content out in front of a new audience. This is crucial for Attracting visitors to your site who are in the awareness stage of their own personal Buyer's Journey.

Helping visitors at this early stage of the Buyer's Journey is important because they are fresh to the problem and they can be nurtured into becoming a customer/conversion. Using social media is a cost-effective means of potentially reaching billions of prospective customers. It's how you share your content and offers and put it in front of users in a non-intrusive way.

Remember, they will either be choosing to let you into their feeds or your posts will be shared in front of them by people who they are already following/connected with. This immediately gives your voice more authority than an unsolicited advert or commercial.

You can also use promoted posts on social media to quickly extend the reach of your content. This is great for getting your brand in front of highly targeted and segmented contacts. You can pay to appear in front of specific demographics and behaviours which are in line with your target persona. But the content you pay to promote will still follow the inbound methodology and help them with their pain points. In fact, you can learn more about crafting your very own inbound campaign directly from our founder and Co-Director, Rikki, [by clicking here](#).

As you help users and visitors along their Journey, you are building a relationship with them which is established on trust and helpfulness. And this is a recipe for turning them into a promoter once they have paid for your services. There is, however, another huge reason why your social media content matters to your inbound marketing efforts.

The majority of your visitors, over time, will be finding your informative and helpful content via search engines. When users are in the awareness stage and looking for information around their pain point, they will likely head to search engines, along with social media. And the most used search engines are pulling social media content into the SERP so that users can get a feel for that particular result's style. This means that you need to be always aware of what image your social media is showing.

If you want to learn more about why social media is so important for inbound marketing, then you can [check out this blog](#). Here, you'll find a much more detailed breakdown of everything we've mentioned about social media so far, as well as some proven examples ranging from Lidl to Google.

Tips on How to Make Social Media a Part of Your Inbound Marketing Strategy

Just like anything in inbound marketing, embedding social media into your marketing strategy is going to take some pre-planning to get the most out of your efforts. So, before you get started, take these 10 tips on board so you have the best chance of having a top notch social media strategy.

- 1. Content Promotion:** Share content on the day of publishing and again in the future.
- 2. Content Research:** Use social media to gain an insight into what your industry or community is interested in.
- 3. Improve Audience Awareness:** By doing the above, you'll be aware of the wider audience on each particular social platform. But, also make sure you continue to report the interaction of your followers with the content and that you're adapting your output in response to what they actually enjoy.
- 4. Can Target Ideal Customers More Directly:** Help people out with free advice and offer them a link to your blog post on the topic. And once they're a follower, you'll be 'speaking' to them whenever you post.
- 5. Great ROI:** Considering the ever increasing amount of users on social media, it's pretty crazy to think that you can put your business in contact with them all for free. Obviously, the billions of people who use Facebook aren't going to Like your page, but the principle is valid; technically they could.
- 6. Helps SEO:** As you continue to learn about your audience, you can make sure your SEO practice is in line with your growing knowledge.
- 7. Build Links More Often:** Another big SEO-Social win is the ability to build links more often. Engaging with accounts which feed into your niche (or vice versa) means that you can build a trusting relationship with more and more contacts.

8. **Incorporate Paid Ads:** An effective inbound marketing campaign also incorporates an element of PPC and social advertising. Paying to put your content in the feeds of your targeted personas is a great way to reach more potential conversions and Attract highly qualified traffic.
9. **Become Part of the Conversation:** Rather than constantly (and autonomously) shouting about your latest amazing eBook, become part of the conversation within your industry on social media.
10. **Brand and Authority Building:** Offer advice, share appropriate helpful content (both your own and produced by others) will make your accounts well worth following.

For a more detailed look at each of the 10 points we've highlighted, [head over to this dedicated blog post](#) to find out how you can make social media a part of your inbound marketing strategy.

The Direct and Indirect Benefits of Social Media on SEO

These are both really simple but true benefits of social media on SEO. The more people that can see your content the higher chance you have of generating natural links which brings SEO growth.

For example, if your page is shared 200 times and seen by 5,000 people, it will be seen by a percentage of people who have the power to link to your page from their website. That's 50 people who have seen your webpage who could potentially link to it. So the more people that share, follow and interact socially with your content, the more chance of influencers seeing it and linking to you.

The web is an almost infinite public library packed with content and no filing system. Google gathers pages during crawl processes and then creates an index, so we can discover pages quicker. This process can prove to be rather tedious with the amount of content production 24/7.

Content indexation is imperative for SEO as the quicker you can get content indexed, the quicker you'll get rewarded via your site's organic traffic. With the aid of social media, particularly Twitter, you can cut the time it takes Google to find and index your content.

If you also want to find out why SEO needs social media and what you need to be looking into before you get started, [read this blog](#).

The Algorithm Change

Perhaps the biggest (and slightly annoying) news to come in the world of social media in the past couple of years is Facebook announcing its algorithm change. With [Facebook now boasting over 2 billion monthly active users](#) to remain the most-used social media site, it comes as no surprise that it's seen as the perfect go-to platform for marketers and businesses looking to extend their reach. That's until Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg stepped in and threw a spanner in the works with the algorithm change announcement and understandably, everyone was and is worried.

How to Optimise Your Posts Despite the Algorithm Change

The Facebook algorithm determines what any one of those 2 billion plus users see in their News Feed at any given time. To say it has a big impact on the whole Facebook experience would be an understatement.

While nobody quite knows exactly what the implications of this algorithm change will be - other than the likely scenario that you're probably going to see a significant decrease in organic reach - there are some steps you can take to work with the new algorithm and continue reaching your customers through meaningful interactions. These are:

- [Invest more time in Facebook Groups.](#)
- [Increase your ad budget.](#)
- [Encourage customers to follow your Facebook page.](#)
- [Consider making Facebook Live videos.](#)
- [Don't goad customers into commenting.](#)
- [Continue posting quality content.](#)

It all really revolves around 'meaningful interactions,' a term marketers all over the world might be sick of hearing now. As you can see in the bullet points above, they're all hyperlinked. To find out more about each point, click on the point you want to learn more about - but it's beneficial to check out all six so you're in the best position to optimise your posts. Or, [just check out the full blog here.](#)

Why You Should be Advertising on Facebook and How You Can Stand Out

So many businesses are on Facebook now. Considering there are over two billion active users on the platform, it's an obvious move to make sure you're on there so you can attract new customers and engage with your current ones. However, Facebook is a busy place and it's hard to be heard (especially by the right people). So, here's how to make your business stand out on Facebook.

- 1. Complete Your Account Information:** Fill in all the basic details such as email, phone number, website and more.
- 2. Profile and Cover Images:** Make sure you're adding high-quality profile and cover images that meet Facebook's requirements.
- 3. Be Sociable:** By being sociable with other businesses and people, you can help make your business stand out. Your conversations can invite others to get involved in discussions and inform people about your business.
- 4. Share Helpful Information:** We've seen how businesses can attract visitors just by being helpful. While it may be your natural instinct to use your business' page to promote your business, use it instead to share helpful information like your blogs, free guides etc.
- 5. Be Active and Respond to Questions:** To help your business stand out on Facebook, it's important you reply to any messages. On your business page, it reveals how long it takes you to respond to people.
- 6. Ask Customers to Write Reviews:** After your customer has bought a product (or service) send them an email a couple of days later, asking them (kindly) to leave a review on Facebook. Make sure you leave a link to your profile so the customer just has to click to reach your page.
- 7. Paid Adverts:** One of the best features of Facebook ads is you have lots of control when it comes to how much you want to spend, so there's no dangers of overspending.

To read more-in depth explanation of how you can make your business stand out on Facebook, [read this blog](#) for all of the free tips we highlighted above. If you're wondering why you should advertise on Facebook in the first place, check out the following points.

- Connect with your target market.
- Facebook ads are affordable.
- Use at every stage of the buyer's journey.
- Demographic targeting.
- Remarket to your current customers.
- It's easy to do once you understand the tools.

Again, for more detailed explanations on all of the points mentioned above, [check out our dedicated blog post](#) where we've expanded on each one for easier reading.

Were Marketers Right to Get P*ssed Off at the Algorithm Change? And What We Did to Combat This

In short, no. We believe there's no real reason why marketers like you should be frustrated at the algorithm change. The worry is understandable. The reality, however, is that although there is likely to be a drop in reach, not much is changing. So marketers shouldn't really be getting too angry at the way Facebook has altered things. Still, there are ways around this change to combat any reach issues you might face - as we mentioned earlier in this section.

The way Facebook reports organic reach will change. This means you should expect to see the numbers drop but the actual number of people who see and engage with your content shouldn't change. Obviously, you also need to be putting out regular high-quality content while you're at it as the two work hand in hand.

But the fact is, a lot of marketers are obsessive about this particular metric, especially when it's time to note things down in your inbound marketing report. However, that metric doesn't really mean much if you're not getting those conversions and leads. That's why you need to tailor content which puts you in a great position to continue having big reach numbers so users can engage with your brand.

Facebook's algorithm change doesn't spell the end for marketers succeeding on the massive social media platform. Sure, you'll notice dips in reach which can be worrying, but it just means you need to be smarter and adopt different approaches. To see one of our own examples in action and why it's not really the end of the world, [read our blog post on the topic](#).

To combat the algorithm change and to put an emphasis on 'meaningful interactions,' we decided to create a private Facebook group, Inbound After Hours. The reason we decided to make this move was so that our news, updates and information are always directly received by the right marketers, all the time. Reasons why this is a beneficial step to take include:

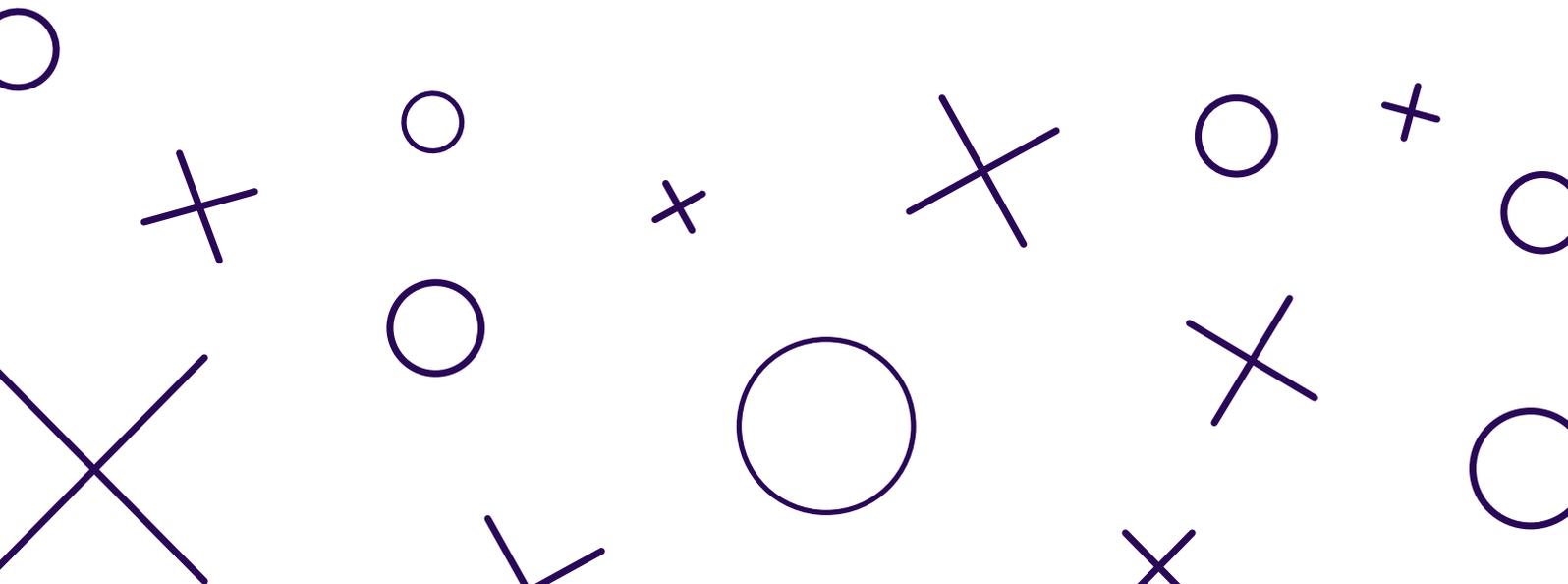
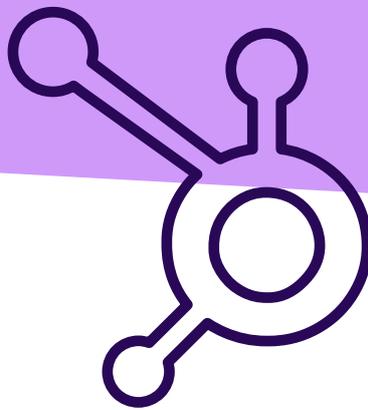
- It's the best place for us to engage with customers.
- It's the best place to connect with like-minded people, and learn and grow together.

To read more about our decision, more detailed explanations on the benefits as well as free tips on how to create your own private Facebook group, ranging from what to call it and what to include, [click here to read the blog](#). Or, click the button below to join Inbound After Hours.

[Get Access Here](#)

7.

Using HubSpot for Inbound Marketing



What is HubSpot?

HubSpot is an all inclusive CMS software used all around the world. It's the leading voice in inbound marketing, having originally coined the term and going a long way to growing the practice across America and beyond since starting in 2006. The software allows management of website content and every other aspect of inbound marketing: email, SEO, automation and email nurturing, landing pages, social media, blogging and - of course - full analytics.

Why is it a Market Leader?

This is due to the all encompassing features previously mentioned and the industry leading back-end support that allows users to get on with planning and creating great campaigns, whilst HubSpot provides the platform to put it into practice.

The UI saves time and allows integrated sharing and analysis of content across the major social platforms, all working in harmony with a straightforward, 'Closed loop' CRM to help you manage leads autonomously. All aspects work together to form manageable and data producing campaigns.

The HubSpot Academy

Anybody can gain certain levels of HubSpot certification and learn more about the methodology of inbound marketing. Companies, like Digital 22, can also take this further and work through the [HubSpot Academy](#) and become experts in both the CMS itself and the different aspects of inbound marketing. This is what has led to our achievement of Diamond tier partner status.

Being involved with HubSpot at this level opens up a range of networks and services such as training conferences and opportunities to liaise with other agencies and experts from around the world at HubSpot events.

Why You Should Use It

The seamless integration with third party software and social accounts make marketers' lives easier. More importantly, so does the thorough tracking which allows great reporting and automated CRM. The ease of automation and depth available when creating workflows means that nurturing contact via email is wholly automated.

This means marketers can instead spend their time planning, creating and analysing their campaigns instead of re-organising contacts into different workflows and managing which contacts need to be placed where.

It doesn't end there either. HubSpot is great for sales, tech businesses and so much more. To read about how HubSpot is beneficial in those areas, [click here to read more](#). Alternatively, if you're short on time and want some quick reasons to know whether or not you should use HubSpot, [check out this blog we created](#) listing 23 reasons why you should and [this blog covers](#) why marketers should be using HubSpot sales everyday.

If you're already familiar with HubSpot - to a certain extent - and you're struggling to decide which tier is right for you, then don't worry. [By clicking here](#), you'll be taken to a blog which will help you to decide whether or not HubSpot Marketing Starter is right for you, or if you need a different package entirely.

We don't want you thinking that you have no choice but to use HubSpot. That's not the case. To keep things fair and if you're questioning whether or not you actually need HubSpot, [we created another blog](#) highlighting six reasons why you don't need to invest in the platform. For further clarity, we've also put our preference of using HubSpot to one side by giving our own honest review on HubSpot, which you can [check out by clicking here](#).

HubSpot Have Been Busy With Plenty of New Product Launches

Each year, [HubSpot invites the inbound world to Boston](#) for the annual [INBOUND](#) event. One of the most exciting parts of this event is that the company reveals the newest products they've been working on - products that make our lives as marketers much easier. 2018 was no different as a plethora of new products were launched, all of which you can check out below.

- **Sales Hub Enterprise:** HubSpot's new Sales Hub features a set of robust tools to help sales teams reach that next level and become more sophisticated. Sales Hub Enterprise has been designed to help sales teams improve their overall team communication, give them training on best practices, processes as well as visibility. To read more about Sales Hub Enterprise and its features, [read the full product announcement here](#).
- **Enterprise Growth Suite:** HubSpot's newest tier gives advanced marketing teams greater control, greater flexibility and deeper integrations with all of its latest features - all without making life complicated for you or your team. The Enterprise Growth Suite features a new line-up of Enterprise tools that gives you sophisticated versions of Marketing Hub, Sales Hub, Service Hub and the top-rated CRM. To read more about the Enterprise Growth Suite and its features, [read the full product announcement here](#).
- **Marketing Hub Enterprise:** HubSpot has crafted the features to help accelerate growth, that's the basic gist of it. The Marketing Hub Enterprise features give marketers and businesses plenty of powerful tools to take advantage of so that you're able to get more out of your content and grow better as a result. To read more about Marketing Hub Enterprise and its features, [read the full product announcement here](#).
- **HubSpot Video:** HubSpot Video helps businesses execute a video strategy that matches how people consume video today. The more authentic, relevant and personal these videos are, the more attention your business gets. It's focusing on video marketing, video selling and video service. To read more about HubSpot Video and its features, [read the full product announcement here](#).
- **Standalone CMS:** The main benefit of this new feature is that it still ties into the free (brilliant) CRM. This alone opens up many more engaging possibilities such as personalisation and important design benefits all in one impressive tool - even for those who don't want the marketing suite. But your website data still directly informs your CRM. To read more about HubSpot's Standalone CMS, [read the full product announcement here](#).

HubSpot How-To Guides

If you've clicked on the links we've recommended above, then you should already know just how sophisticated the HubSpot platform really is. Obviously, we can't cram in every single feature of HubSpot here. Instead, we've created some detailed blog posts about the most important features you'll need to know when it comes to your inbound marketing efforts.

To read more about each one and get visual guides rather than just text, click on the headings to be taken to the relevant blog.

Lead Nurturing Strategies Need Proper Lead Scoring: The best way sales teams can focus on the best leads possible is by lead scoring and it's something every lead nurturing strategy needs. It's simple. Lead scoring helps your team focus on high quality leads and saves a lot of valuable time which would be lost in chasing low quality leads. Click on the heading to read how to set up lead scoring in HubSpot, the benefits of lead scoring and some other useful tips.

Form Fields for Improved Website Conversion Rates: Form fields are one of the most essential lead generation tools any marketer can use as they allow your company to find out more information about those visiting your website. The same form fields shouldn't be used at each stage of the Buyer's Journey. You won't be gaining any actionable or insightful data to analyse if you aren't switching up your tactics. Click on the heading to read more on which form fields you should use at each stage of the buyer's journey, as well as some other useful tips.

How to Set Up an Automatic Monthly Blog Email in HubSpot: You could well be creating the greatest blogs possible for your business on a regular basis. However, even your most loyal users won't instantly head over to your website to soak in all of that great content. They'll probably be busy and in some cases, they won't even be aware that you've published a blog and they could miss it. That's why it's important to set up an automatic blog email so they never miss a thing. To find out how to do that in an easy-to-follow step-by-step guide, click on the heading.

How to Set Up a Tracking URL in HubSpot: You should be using tracking URLs when you're directing traffic to a page with the HubSpot tracking code from somewhere other than the CTAs you've created. These can include things like emails or even a PPC campaign. Think of it as a normal URL but with added parameters. So when visitors are heading to your website from a tracking URL, HubSpot is able to separate that traffic in the sources report so you can see exactly how it performed. To see our step-by-step guide on how you can create tracking URLs in HubSpot, click on the heading.

How to Organise HubSpot Forms for Inbound Success: Forms are a great tool to use in inbound marketing. Whether it's to improve website conversion rates or to help you gather new contacts for your company and obtain additional information from your existing contacts - they're easy and important to implement. Thanks to HubSpot, we're able to build powerful forms really quickly with the drag-and-drop form builder. To see a detailed look at how you can achieve this in our blog, click on the heading.

How to Set Up an A/B Test in HubSpot to Help Data-Driven Design: Data-Driven Design is essential when it comes to knowing which impactful changes you need to make for your website. Without data to analyse, you're not in a great position when it comes to deciding what you'll need to change next - it's all guesswork. A good way to test what is and isn't working is to conduct an A/B test and testing your CTAs is a great place to start. For a detailed look at how to do this, click on the heading to see a visual guide.

How to Schedule and Share a Blog with HubSpot: HubSpot has a couple of different ways in which you can write, schedule and share any blog post that you write. For a quick guide on how you can do this - including images for easier guidance - click on the heading.

HubSpot vs. The Competition

We're not going to sit here and be ignorant that HubSpot is the only solution or platform out there for marketers. That's just not fair. Instead, we've put HubSpot to the test over the last few years and pitted it against some of the other big-name platforms out there.

HubSpot vs. InfusionSoft

In this blog, we had HubSpot and InfusionSoft go up against each other to determine which all-in-one platform was the best for inbound marketing. It can be difficult to choose which one is best for your company and each come with their own pros and cons. We found that InfusionSoft is best suited for eCommerce businesses in particular, while HubSpot is great for a variety of industries.

To read a full breakdown of the comparison, [head over to this blog post](#).

HubSpot vs. Marketo

Another popular battle we've seen come up time and time again is HubSpot vs. Marketo. Truthfully, there are many reasons why you should use HubSpot and there are many reasons why you should use Marketo. Both come with their own sets of remarkable features, some which overlap and some which are clearly distinctive. They are designed to automate and optimise your online content so you can carry out your inbound marketing strategies more efficiently and effectively. Ultimately, your choice will boil down to the size of your business.

To read a full breakdown full of pros and cons ranging from versatility to the prices and more, [head over to this blog post](#).

HubSpot vs. WordPress

When it comes to content optimisation, HubSpot and WordPress are the big dogs in the industry. WordPress is perhaps the most popular and most commonly used content management system in the world. Its open sourcing means that designers and developers can make back-end website alterations behind the scenes. On the other hand, HubSpot is an all-in-one platform where you can create web pages, blogs, and emails, and analyse it all in one system.

For a full breakdown of the two, [check out this blog](#). We've also written a blog which highlights which one is easier to use - [which you can find here](#) - as well as a separate piece on their prices, [which you can read by clicking here](#).

Other Useful Resources

How Much it Would Cost to do Inbound Marketing Without HubSpot? As we've said already, HubSpot isn't the be all and end all when it comes to inbound marketing. We love to use it as it does everything and more than that we need. If you want to explore your options and find out how much it would cost to do inbound marketing without investing in HubSpot, then [read our blog post](#) about that topic.

Is Inbound Marketing Even Possible Without HubSpot? By now, you'll know the answer is yes, you don't *need* HubSpot to do inbound marketing. [By reading this blog](#), though, it should explain why it's a platform worth considering when you take everything into account.

What HubSpot Integrates With: HubSpot Connect is an integration program with a simple purpose - to connect all of the tools you use and keep them in one place so you no longer need to constantly log in and out of different platforms. To read more about all of the different integrations ([including Shopify](#)), [click here](#).

Campaign Management: HubSpot Projects allows you to plan and organise all of your team's work in one place via structured lists of tasks making it simple and easy to use and follow. Here's how else it can help simplify campaign management. [Check out this blog](#) to see how else it can simplify your campaign management.

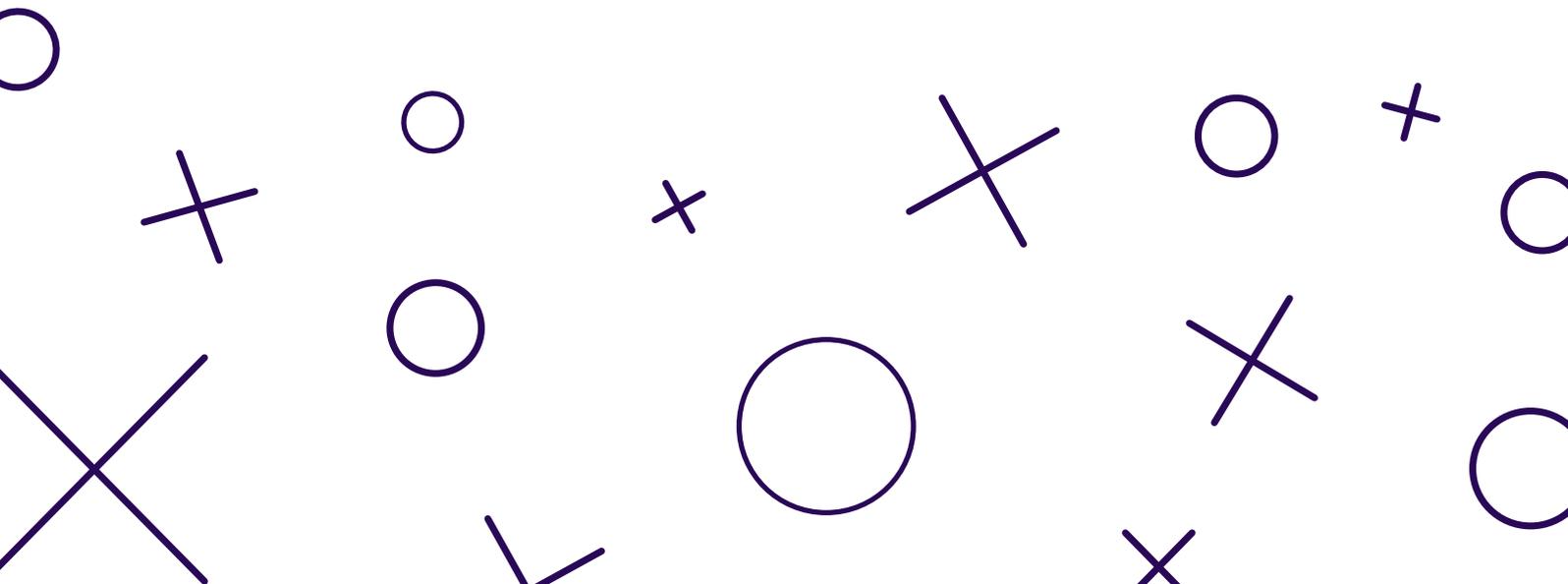
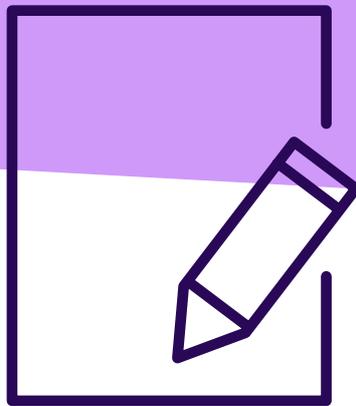
Using HubSpot Properly: To see if you're getting the most out of HubSpot, [click here to read the blog](#). Here, you'll be faced with seven questions that you need to answer to determine whether or not your portal is healthy - and some useful tips to help.

Personalisation with HubSpot: It's impossible to remember all of your prospects and customers' unique information and behaviour, which is why using personalisation in your brand's digital marketing is the next best thing. [By reading this blog](#), you'll know what, why, where and when website personalisation should be used in your marketing efforts.

Bringing Unengaged Contacts Back to Life with HubSpot: Does this story sound familiar? A contact has been advancing through the sales and marketing funnel. Everything is looking good and you're certain that this deal is in the bag. Then, out of the blue, the contact disappears. They're no longer downloading your offers or opening your emails. That's an unengaged contact, [and this blog will show](#) how you can bring them back to life in HubSpot.

8.

The Importance of Content Marketing



Content and Inbound: How it all Connects

Content. That's what inbound marketing primarily revolves around, so it's clear that you need to consistently be churning out the best quality content possible. The Content Marketing Institute defines content marketing as a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to Attract and retain a clearly-defined audience and ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.

Inbound marketing needs content for it to work - they work together as components. Inbound marketing can't be executed without a content strategy and without content in several types, such as blogs, eBooks, social media content and more. So, content is always in the limelight. You can break it down every further, as content is needed to drive inbound results and inbound produces those results by using content to turn visitors into leads.

If you think doing one or the other - and not both - then you're really only doing half the job. It's like taking your car to the garage and the mechanic only tells you what's wrong, without providing an actual fix. So, they both need each other and all of their tactics need to be implemented to help deliver those all-important results.

Why You Need to Blog

On almost every business website you visit, you'll see a blog. Some businesses like to share their company news in their blog whilst others use it to help potential customers with common problems. One of the biggest benefits of using a blog means you have an effective way of Attracting traffic to your website. What's great about this traffic is that most of the people will be your ideal customer - so here are other reasons why you *need* to blog.

- Drives traffic.
- Drives **relevant** traffic.
- Converts visitors into leads.
- Blogs educate your readers and help them solve problems.
- Shows you're an authority in your industry.
- Provides long-term opportunities.

For more in-depth explanations on all of the points mentioned above, [head over to the blog we've published.](#)

How Often Should I Blog for Boosting Business?

Opinion is divided as to whether blogging everyday is a good thing or not - [a scan of the top Google results on the topic shows this](#) - so we decided to try it out for a month and see what effect it had on our numbers. It's a popular experiment that has been conducted by lots of big companies and sites, but isn't necessarily something every agency can do. Sometimes, your own work becomes secondary when you are working to produce content that brings results for your clients.

We blogged everyday for one month, and here's what we found:

- Views increased by over 51 percent compared to the three-month average.
- Website views increased by over 36 percent.
- Twice as many contacts were gained compared to the previous month.
- 22 more posts resulted in almost 200 percent more views.

The basic gist of this section is to show that the more you blog, the better. Although, you need to make sure the topics are relevant to your industry and audience. For a more detailed breakdown of this experiment, [take some time out to read the blog](#).

Tone of Voice

Tone of voice is often considered as one of the highest priorities when starting marketing a new business. The tone of your business can help customers engage with you and is very beneficial for businesses using inbound marketing. When producing content, you need to make sure you're always in line with the tone that has been set and not going off track with the words and tone you use.



A tone of voice is how your business communicates with potential customers. A company who uses colloquial language and informal phrases in their marketing will come across very differently to a company using serious terminology and hard facts. Before you can establish the correct tone you need to research your audience. What content do they engage with? What types of marketing do they prefer? When creating your company's voice, make sure you take these factors into account.

- Clarity
- Reassurance
- Efficiency
- Engagement
- Outvoice your competitors

To read more about tone of voice and for more in-depth explanations, [check out this blog](#). If you need a starting point and some assistance when it comes to defining your company's tone of voice, then we have you covered. [This blog outlines](#) the five-step process to defining your brand's tone of voice.

Tips, Tricks and Tools You'll Need to Create Inbound Content

How to Plan Blog Titles: While on-boarding new clients, many have wanted to produce blogs. A recurring question has been, "What should we write about and how do we plan blog titles?" With that in mind, we had our topic to talk about at the August [Manchester HUG](#) event, which we host. Paul, Content Manager at Digital 22, delivered a talk which features plenty of useful tips on how you can create some killer blog titles in just five easy steps. [By clicking here](#), you can read what Paul had to say as well as watching a video of his presentation.

How to Make a Blog Go Viral: This is obviously not something that can happen with every single blog, but it can certainly happen when you least expect it. Back in 2016, Rikki, our Director, wrote a blog titled ['Nobody gives a s#*t how many cups of coffee your agency drinks!'](#) It took off and nearly reached 10,000 views. [By reading this blog](#), it'll give you an explanation of why we think it managed to do really well, and some steps you can take to hopefully achieve the same.

How Often You Should Update Your Blog for Inbound Marketing Success: Your blog is the focal point of your marketing campaigns, or at least it should be. Attracting more traffic, building your brand reputation, securing conversions - they're all achievable if you have a good blog strategy and a routine in place. If you're a 'one-and-done' type of marketer and you revisit your blog whenever you feel like it, you're not exactly going to get the results you want to see. We feel three blogs per week is the optimal amount - [and this blog outlines why we've come to that conclusion.](#)

A Handy Inbound Blog Checklist That's Yours to Keep: If you're new to inbound content but it's definitely something you want to get involved in, [then this post is a good starting point for you.](#) By now, you know how beneficial blogging is, but not everyone knows how to do it effectively. [By clicking on the link above](#), you can read and keep the blog checklist with you at all times so you're always creating and optimising the best blogs possible in just 10 easy steps.

How You Can Create Better Stories in Your Content: Journalists and content marketing teams can often face similar issues when it's time to produce content. In the world of Inbound Marketing, it's about solving the pain points of your Buyer Personas through that content. Still, there are certain processes used in the journalistic world that can be easily translated to your content team that allows your business to tell better stories in your content. [At INBOUND 18](#), one of the talks we attended was [Storyfuel](#) Founder Melanie Deziel's talk on how content teams can think like journalists to create better brand stories. To find out the five elements she highlighted which you can use right away, check out this blog.

How You Can Prove Content Marketing ROI: We all need to know how the pounds and effort we're throwing into our marketing campaigns are affecting our bottom line. Sadly, proving ROI is tricky business, especially when you're looking at it from a content perspective as it's not easy to track. That's opposed to PPC ROI which is fully trackable. [In this blog](#), you'll be able to see some brilliant tips on how you can prove content marketing ROI to your boss and the tools you need to actually do it.

As important as human proofreaders are when writing content, make sure you're using useful tools to make sure your content is spot on. [Grammarly](#) is a free writing app to make your messaging clear and mistake free. [The Hemingway App](#) is another free useful tool to take advantage of as it highlights complex sentences and common errors. It also gives advice on where you can shorten and split your sentence so it makes for easier reading.

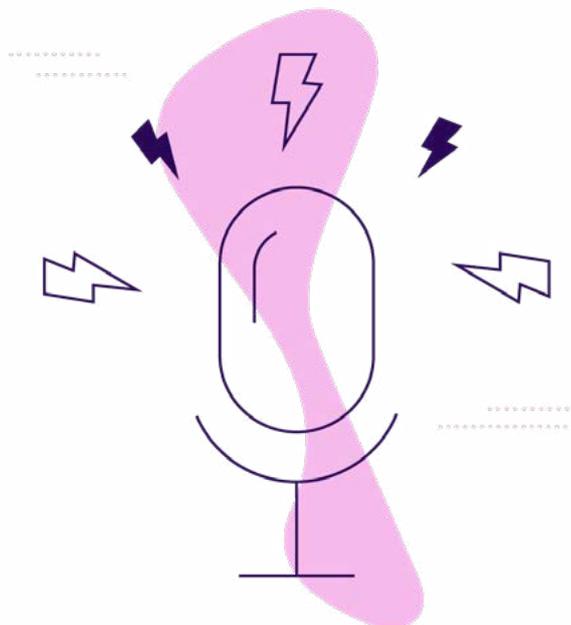
Getting Started With Podcasts

Although it's not written content, podcasts are still a part of your content marketing strategy and they're both great fun and easy to get involved in. The popularity of podcasts has boomed very quickly in a short space of time. So, why aren't more inbound marketers taking advantage and creating podcasts themselves?

If you fall into this group, it may be the fear of being recorded that's putting you off. Don't let it! Podcasts are a great way of delivering content given how popular they are. Paul spoke at a [Manchester HUG event](#), a good while ago, on how to get started with podcasts. So, what exactly is a podcast? Well, it's defined as - An episodic series of digital audio or video files which a user can download and listen to. In simple terms: on-demand radio.

- There are already 22.3 million weekly digital audio listeners in the UK.
- Podcasts have had a 40 percent growth since 2013.
- The number of weekly listeners is set to rise to 30 million by 2020.

Podcasts are part of a wider on-demand culture. People are in charge of what they watch or listen to. Take [Spotify](#) for instance, more and more people are turning off their radios and listening to Spotify as they are then in control of what they listen to.



Tools and Tips

Microphone: You don't need to be a video expert to film a podcast, all you really need is your smartphone and a good mic. Audio is essential so if you are going to spend any money on equipment we recommend a good mic. We use the [Blue Yeti](#). It's always worth filming your podcast too, by the way. Mark Byrne, our Director, has all the information you need of how to create an amazing video on a budget [here](#).

Planning and Setting Up: We advice not to use a script as it can sound unauthentic. Instead, note down the topics you'll cover, jot down notes on what you'll say in the introduction, the questions you want to cover and the outro.

Sound Quality: An echo can break a podcast and deter listeners or viewers from turning in again. We suggest putting some plants into the room, invest in acoustic soundproofing and bring in anything that will absorb some of the noise.

Post-Edit: After you've finished your recording session, make sure you edit and share your podcast to it looks more natural and sounds better. Listeners will be more engaged with a natural conversion and we also recommend keeping the length to around 30 minutes.

For more tips and tricks when it comes to podcasting, as well as what we've found since we started the Inbound After Hours podcast, [click here to read more in this blog](#).

Just like our blogging experiment, [we also tried an experiment for our podcast](#). We actually stopped podcasting for almost six months and in this blog, you can see what exactly changed during that time. The data includes our blog views, email open rates and much more.

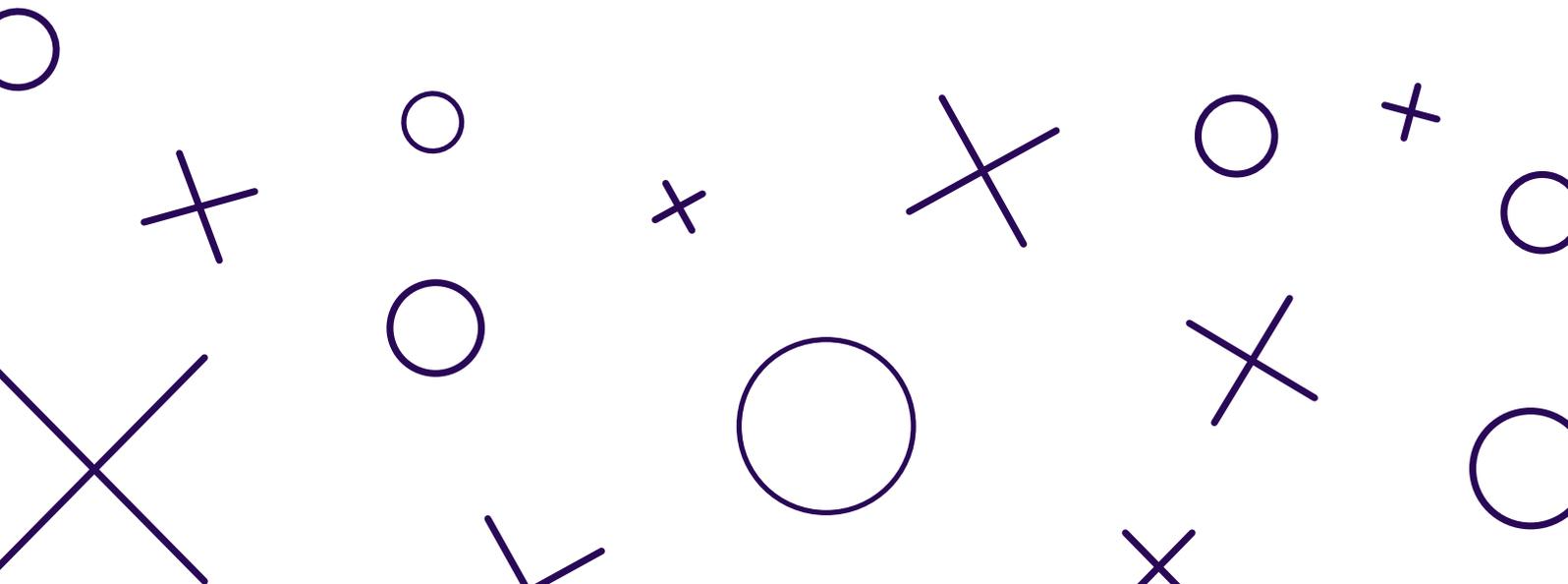
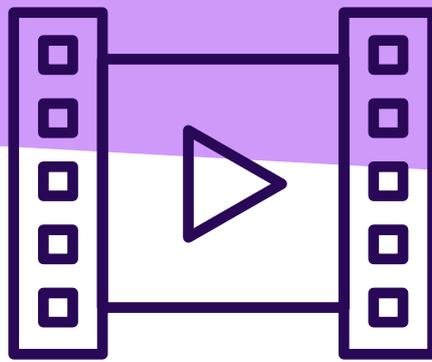
Where to Upload Your Podcasts: Your podcasts obviously need a home so people can find them. While the goal might be for giants like Spotify to pick up your audio podcasts in the long run, there are plenty of hosts we've found are great for uploading your audio and video podcasts.

- [Soundcloud](#)
- [Libsyn](#)
- [Podbean](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [Buzzsprout](#)
- [Podbean](#)
- [Blubrry](#)
- [Podomatic](#)
- [Spreaker](#)
- [Audioboom](#)
- [iTunes](#)
- [ZenCastr](#)

Make sure you research each option. While some are free, others feature paid options which might suit your needs more because of storage space.

9.

Inbound Video: The Rise of Video Marketing



What is Inbound Video?

If there's one aspect of inbound marketing you need to focus on as we approach the New Year, it's inbound video. In the HubSpot section, we already highlighted that a new feature that's been released is HubSpot Video, so it's the perfect time to capitalise on it.

You won't be able to head to Google and type in the question above to find the definition of inbound video. The simplest way of explaining what inbound video actually is by comparing it to written content such as blogs.

Blogs and other content downloads are written and designed to give plenty of value to readers and connect with every single pain point. Think of inbound video as the same, just without the words. Your writing plans are replaced by storyboards, and the written content is replaced by audio and visuals.

There needs to be a relevant topic, a topic that the persona actually cares about, has an interest in and wants answers. An inbound video will need to focus around a key topic and in that video, the solutions to the challenges a persona is facing need to be answered.

Without that, it's not really an inbound video as a persona might not be receiving too much value from the video, compared to reading a blog that's packed full of content that's hitting each pain point out of the park.

The advantage of inbound video is that this can be achieved in a matter of minutes. Obviously, the planning, filming and editing time is an entirely different process but you're able to put out an inbound video that answers questions and solves challenges in a few minutes compared to a lengthy blog post.

For some personas, an inbound video is more beneficial. They're not all going to have time to sit down and read a blog post so instead, a short, straight to the point inbound video is something that will appeal a lot more to them. To read more about inbound video, [head over to this blog](#).

Why You Need to do It

The stats speak for themselves - if you're not considering investing time and effort into inbound video, then you're already falling behind.

According to HubSpot Research, video has dominated social media so it should be embedded into your inbound marketing strategy. The report found that four of the top six channels on which global consumers watch video are social channels. Not only that, but a Facebook executive has also predicted that the platform will be all video in less than five years.

One of the primary reasons behind this is that a study from HubSpot Research has shown that over 50 percent of consumers want to see videos from brands. This also means these same consumers want to see video more than any other type of content. More than emails, newsletters, social images or even content in a PDF form to download and read later.

It's not just for entertainment purposes either and that's where the inbound focus comes in.

- 90 percent of customers say videos help them make buying decisions.
- Videos on landing pages are capable of increasing conversion rates by 80 percent.
- Mentioning the term 'video' in email subject lines increases open rates by 19 percent.
- Four times more buyers prefer to watch a video about a product than those that prefer to just read about it.
- 64 percent of clients often buy a product online after watching a video about it.

Source: [DepositPhotos.com](https://depositphotos.com)

The same source has also suggested that in 2019, 80 percent of internet traffic will come from video while 13 percent of all internet traffic will consist of live video in 2021. When you consider that 500 million people are watching Facebook videos every day - according to Tubular Insights - it shows that inbound video needs to be at the top of your marketing agenda and not just an afterthought.

To read more about the importance of inbound video and how to actually do it, [head over to this blog](#).

Equipment Needed

It's pretty easy to get started with inbound video, as you don't necessarily need the most high-end equipment as possible. If anything, that can come later. To make your search for equipment much easier, we've collated some of the most popular and trustworthy equipment and software below for you to do some additional research.

Basic Cameras: Smartphones, [Nikon D3300](#) and [Sony Alpha a5100](#).

Advanced Cameras: [Sony PMW-300 One XDCAM](#) and [Sony FS7 Mk II](#).

Basic Microphones: [Blue Yeti](#), [CAD U37](#) and [Samson Meteor](#).

Advanced Microphones: [Heil PR40](#), [Shure SM7b](#) and [Rode Procaster](#).

Basic Video Editing Software: [Apple iMovie](#), [Corel VideoStudio](#) and [CyberLink PowerDirector](#).

Advanced Video Editing Software: [Adobe Premiere Pro](#), [Apple Final Cut Pro X](#) and [Sony Vegas Pro 15](#).

Basic Screen Recording Software: [Nimbus](#), [Loom](#) and [Fireshot Pro](#).

Advanced Screen Recording Software: [FlashBack](#), [Camtasia Studio](#) and [MadCap Mimic](#).

Other Equipment: Batteries, [SD cards](#), [lighting](#) and [tripods](#).

A Host Site: [Twentythree.net](#), [YouTube](#) and [Vimeo](#).

[By clicking here](#), you'll be taken to a blog which is packed full of tips on how you can actually film your inbound videos. Clearly, every project is different and has different needs, so there's not one unified rule on how you should film your inbound videos. However, this blog does outline the basics of what you should know, ranging from how to plan your videos, the type of footage to film and what to do during the shoot.

How to Add Inbound Video Content to Your Inbound Marketing Strategy Plan

When you're talking about inbound video fitting into the wider inbound marketing picture, taking a quick look at the methodology shows exactly why it fits in perfectly. The inbound methodology is a marketing approach focused on Attracting customers through content and interactions that are both helpful and relevant.

Clearly, written content isn't the only way to achieve that.

Every video you create should acknowledge the pain points of your audience and make sure that all inbound video content provides a solution. When you look at the bigger picture, the inbound video content guides people through the journey of becoming aware of, evaluating and purchasing the product or service - which is the end goal. So, inbound video can help accelerate that process.

Attract:

- Social videos to show off your personality.
- Thought leadership videos to establish yourself as an industry leader.
- Brand films that share your values.
- Explainer and how-to videos that provide relevant topics for solving pain points.

Convert:

- Webinars packed with useful advice.
- Sending product or software demos through email.
- Landing page promotional videos.
- Case studies.
- More in-depth explainer and how-to videos.

Close:

- Testimonials of customers with stories that are relatable to your leads.
- More in-depth product or software demos.
- Culture videos to sell the quality of service to viewers.
- Personalised videos which explain exactly how you can help them.

Delight:

- Thank you videos after the purchase to welcome them.
- Onboarding videos to get them rolling with their purchase.
- Build out a library of training videos and educational courses to help users expand their expertise further.

To educate yourself more on how to add inbound video content to your inbound marketing strategy plan, [click here to read the blog](#) which also gives a more in-depth explanation to everything we've highlighted above.

The Benefits and Advantages of Using Inbound Video on Your Website

For growing businesses, video marketing is a beneficial means of interacting with your target market and growing your brand. So, it comes as no surprise that there are endless benefits when it comes to utilising inbound video, some of which we've listed below.

- More customers are watching video.
- Use alongside your current content strategy.
- Videos can easily be found through Google.
- Share an inside view into your business.
- Shows your business is modern.
- Videos can persuade people to buy.
- More engaging via live videos.
- It gives you a competitive advantage.
- Videos improve engagement.
- Builds more trust.

The benefits highlighted above are perfect if you're a growing business. If you fit the criteria, then [click on this link to read the blog](#) about each benefit in more detail. Not only that, but [there are some more benefits packed into this blog](#).

As you can tell, we already take video seriously here and we're going to continue to do so moving forward. That's why Mark took out the time to create a long list of the advantages and benefits of using inbound video on your website - 50 of them! [Click here to check them all out.](#)

Inbound video should be a part of your content strategy, either now or moving forward. Along with blogging, you can use online video marketing to benefit your content strategy. Here's how it can help your content strategy.

- Inbound video helps to get more relevant traffic.
- Inbound video is an effective method of communicating with your ideal buyer persona.
- Inbound video helps to improve conversion rate.
- Inbound video increases engagement with millennials.

To read more about each point and to develop a better understanding, [check out this blog](#) on how online inbound video marketing can benefit your content strategy.

Video Ideas You Need to Implement ASAP

You can get started with creating inbound videos straight through your laptops right through to your phones to create high-quality videos. The great thing about it is that your current team is able to dive straight in without the need of buying the best equipment right away.

Here are some [quick and easy videos](#) you need on your website right away.

About Us

It's a great way to introduce your company. It's an opportunity to give an overview of your company, what you do, your mission, your services and more. But it's also the best way of helping prospective clients "put a face to a name" and get to know your people, even before they work with you.

Meet The Team

Visitors that are thinking about working with you will obviously take up the option to see who is doing all of the hard work behind the scenes. While text is still an option to read more about each individual team member, a video where they're able to virtually meet your team is a lot more engaging.

What We Do/Demo Videos

Don't just limit your videos to talking about your company and introducing your team. They're great, but actually showing your services or product and how they work can help turn a visitor into a contact.

Event Videos

If you're regularly attending or hosting events, then it would be a shame if you didn't record them. They're a great resource to have by placing them on your website which can be packed full of knowledge for first time or repeat visitors.

How-To Videos

This is a big one and it's a type of educational video that your entire team can dive into and create. These how-to videos can be used to teach your audience something new, such as showing them software. Marketers can use it to show how to build workflows, for example.

Video Interviews/Podcasts

If you've had the chance to interview industry leaders or you podcast regularly, then it's no good hiding the content where nobody can find it. Although podcasts are usually audio-based, it's still great to give visitors the option to view them rather than just listen.

Explainer Videos

This can include creating an explainer video to send your audience on a fictional journey of your main buyer persona and highlighting all of the big pain points that you have a solution for.

Case Studies and Testimonials

Short videos can be created to highlight your case studies by showing data and the success you've had. Along with this, having real people and businesses you've worked with create short videos singing your praises shows visitors that it's all genuine.

Live Videos

Live videos of something worthwhile are great to shoot. These types of videos give a more natural and raw feeling with no full post-edit. It acts as sort of a 'behind the scenes' video which can give an insight into your day-to-day running as a business, setting up events, what goes into podcasting etc.

To learn more about why these videos are needed on your website right away, [check out the blog post we've created about this topic.](#)

Tips and Tricks for Creating Video Content

Saving Money on Video Marketing

A video can be as expensive or as cheap as you would like. You can shoot your own video on your smartphone and upload it to YouTube or you could spend millions of pounds hiring a Hollywood production company along with their sparkling sets.

However, most business videos are looking for the middle ground. Business owners know they need to speculate to accumulate and there is no better way of doing this than presenting your information, product or service through multimedia.

It's possible to adapt the price. Depending on your overall vision, you can add or remove factors that increase the costs. Regardless of your budget, a good video production team will still produce an excellent product and if they think the quality may suffer, they will advise of alternative ways to get the results you want.

To find out how you can save money on inbound video production, [check out our blog on the topic here](#).

What Affects the Cost?

As we have years of experience working on many types of videos, clients often ask us quite a lot of questions. Many are keen to learn the process that is adopted when creating a corporate video from scratch whilst some wonder how the cost is allocated. There are many factors that affect the cost of video production but as long as you find a reputable company to shoot your video, you will be pleased with the results.

[By reading this blog](#), you'll learn more about the factors that affect inbound video production, ranging from editing to the people involved.

Using Inbound Video Marketing Services to Increase Customers

It's no secret that a picture or photo can speak a thousand words. Likewise, a short one-minute video can speak what a hundred pictures cannot.

According to several market analysts and research firms, video marketing is more effective than other forms. Videos are able to entice a person more than what a photo and text can do collectively. Businesses are using video marketing for various purposes.

To find out some ways on how you can benefit by using inbound video marketing - such as branding and promotions - [check out this blog](#).

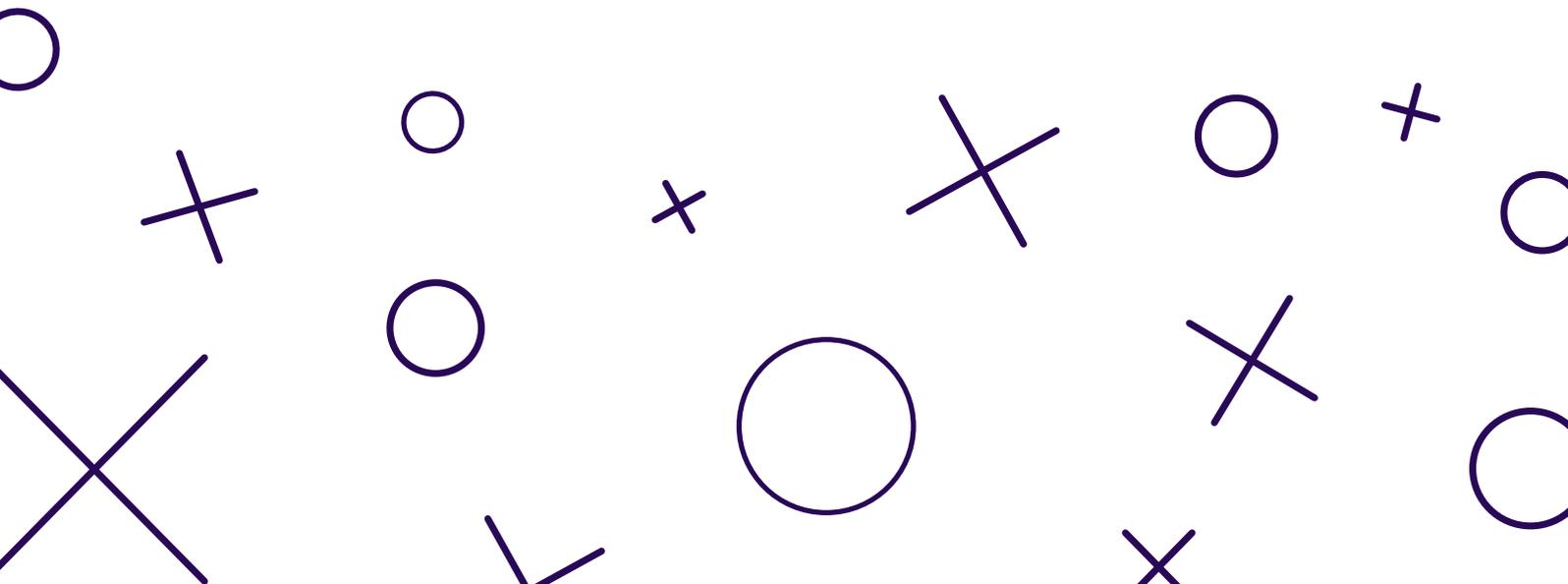
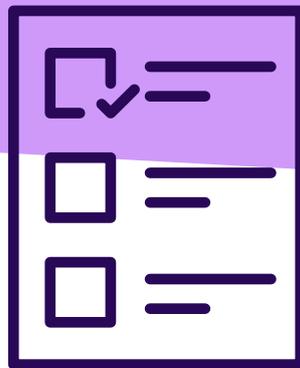
Creating an Inbound Video Storyboard

Storyboarding is putting your ideas and visuals into a video script. In simple terms, it's being able to write a book of the video and it can save you plenty of time. If you have a well worked out storyboard, it can save you time in editing later. If you know exactly how many shots and what the shots are meant to look like, you don't have to add anything last minute.

For a step-by-step guide on how to create your own storyboard, [read our blog by clicking here](#).

10.

**How to Get it Done
and Who You Need**



Inbound: Agency or In-House?

With the growth of inbound marketing as a response to failing outbound techniques, more and more companies are adopting inbound methods as the key means of marketing. Given that a large part of the philosophy relies on being an authority on one's particular niche or industry and you need to produce swathes of content to Attract and nurture leads, it's tempting for many to conduct their own inbound campaigns - but is it really better than hiring an agency?

We've broken down the advantages and disadvantages from both sides, and although an in-house team can edge the aspect of content knowledge, we've found four reasons why an agency is the better option. [You can see the full breakdown by clicking here.](#)

How Many People do In-House Teams Need to do Inbound Marketing Effectively?

To drive optimal results for every one of your inbound marketing campaigns, you need an effective team in place, all specialising in different areas. It's just not possible to do it all alone. We're talking along the lines of The Avengers - the best in the business all committed to using their unique skill sets to make sure each campaign is a home run.

To give a rough overview, you'll need:

- [Content team](#)
- [Video Production team](#)
- [Design and development team](#)
- [PPC and social media team](#)
- [SEO team](#)
- [Inbound strategists and marketers](#)
- [Project managers](#)

To find out more about each team in more detail and how many bodies you'll need, click on the relevant heading above. Or, [click here to read the full overview](#) and [read this blog to find out how an agency is able to write about your niche - despite the misconceptions.](#)

Why You Should Hire an Agency

Now it's time to decide between setting up your own in-house team or hiring an agency. While you might be drawn towards getting an in-house team, first have a look at these reasons why you should hire an inbound marketing agency instead.

- They have years of experience.
- You have immediate access to many specialists.
- You hit the ground running much faster.
- You save money in the long run.
- You save valuable office space.
- They help you set up realistic and achievable targets.
- Inbound marketing agencies can help provide objective feedback.
- They help you get the best out of your software.
- They already have the relevant tools and resources.
- To have an effective strategy, you need a full-time inbound marketing team.

To read more about all of the points we've mentioned above in more depth, [check out this blog](#) to make your final decision much easier.

We're Digital 22: Here's How We Can Help

We're Digital 22, a team packed full of inbound marketing experts with years of experience working with a fantastic range of business. We also happen to be the largest HubSpot agency in the UK and the #1 rated HubSpot agency in Europe. Our rapid growth has seen us work with the biggest companies in the UK, Europe and the US.

We're a creative bunch of individuals and we've worked with both brand new businesses and those that have been around for years but are searching for a new and modern approach to marketing (i.e. inbound marketing). Unlike some agencies that have a habit of subcontracting work to other agencies, we don't. All of our work is done in-house, whether it's content writing, SEO, PPC, Growth-Driven Design, inbound video, social media or graphic design.

With all of our clients, we invite them to access our project management system so they can see everything we do. We understand you might be wary of an agency because you can't see what they're working on. But with our way, you can easily keep up-to-date with what we're doing.

As inbound marketers, we're very passionate about what we do. We've seen new businesses take on inbound marketing as their primary strategy and we've witnessed them grow in size and revenue. We want to work with companies that are looking to grow and are willing to incorporate inbound marketing into their strategies.

For more information, get in touch with us today for a free 30-minute call.

[Contact Us](#)