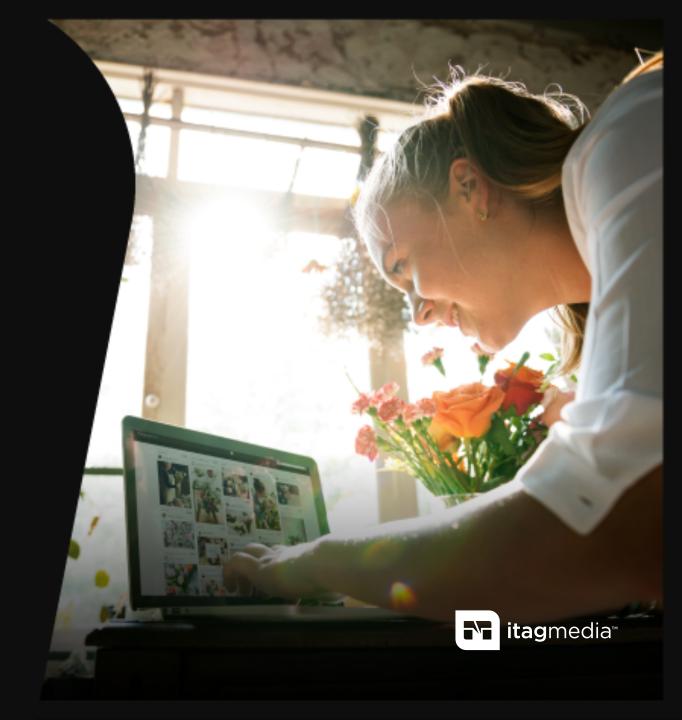
The Lead Generation Black Book

Your swipe file of 30 proven tactics & examples to generate quality leads.





The Lead Generation Black Book

30 proven tactics & examples to generate quality leads.

Hi there,

Leads - or should I say quality leads - are the lifeblood of any business, and generating them consistently online can make a business thrive.

So no matter if you are a business owner or marketing manager, it's my hope that this free resource helps you generate substantial results for your lead generation efforts.

Need some help? I'd love to chat. You can reach me via LinkedIn or book an online meeting with me.

Here's to your online success!

David Ligtenberg

BMm(Dist), CPM, AMAMI
CEO | Inbound Marketing & Digital Growth Strategist



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Introduction

"Leads are the metric that, as marketers, we rely on. **Because leads mean money**." *Kipp Bodnar, HubSpot*

Generating leads - both high in quantity and quality - is a marketers most important objective. A successful lead generation engine is what keeps the funnel full of sales prospects while you sleep. Surprisingly, only 1 in 10 marketers feel their lead generation campaigns are effective. What gives?

There can be a lot of moving parts in any lead generation campaign and often times it's difficult to know which parts need fine tuning. In this guide, we will expose the top 30 techniques marketers should utilise to increase leads and revenue. These tactics have been tested over the past decade by Itag Media and HubSpot, and have been used by our customers and readers to generate millions of leads.

So what goes into a best-of-class lead generation engine? First, lets take a look into the mechanics of high performing lead generation campaigns....



The Mechanics of Lead Generation

Before we dive into the 30 tactics and examples in this swipe file resource, we should first cover the mechanics of lead generation. The best lead generation campaigns contain most, if not all of these components. From a tactical perspective, a marketer needs four crucial elements to make inbound lead generation happen. These include:

Offer

An offer is a piece of content that is perceived high in value. Offers include eBooks, whitepapers, free consultations, coupons and product demonstrations.

Call-to-action

A call-to-action (CTA) is either text, an image or a button that links directly to a landing page so people can find and download your offer.

Landing page

A landing page, unlike normal website pages, is a specialised page that contains information about one particular offer, and a form to download that offer.

Form

You can't capture leads without forms. Forms will collect contact information from a visitor in exchange for an offer.

The tips in this swipe file will cover each of these elements so that each component is fully optimised to help you generate the most leads for your business. Now then, let's get started.





Chapter 1 Creating Irresistible Offers

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Yes. It's one of the most powerful words in the human language. And if you think about all the things we do as marketers, it's ultimately to get people to say "yes" to our offers.

When an offer is exclusive, scarce, or in high demand, it becomes more desirable. Whether they are whitepapers, free trials, memberships, sales promotions or downloads, these irresistible elements can overcome a leads typical friction, doubt, or concern.

Why do these elements work? Because they trigger a physiological reaction that makes an offer more valuable. People need to perceive the value of your offer to be greater than what you're asking for in return. The higher the perception of value, the more irresistible the offer. So how do you create irresistible offers? Glad you asked....

Use the element of scarcity

If you look at the principle of supply and demand, you'll notice that when supply is limited, demand goes up. Scarcity has a psychological influence on us, making us want something even more if there isn't enough to go around. Scarcity is great because it creates a fear of shortage, and thus a sense of urgency.

Limited Time Offers

Limited time offers are among the most popular in the scarcity category. Just think about your average car dealership. Practically every commercial is a limited time deal. "Get 0% financing before it's gone!"



Use the element of scarcity (cont.)

Limited Quantity Offers

When something is of limited quantity, it suddenly becomes more unique or exclusive. In some studies, limited quantity or supply offers have outperformed limited-time offers. Why? Because it's hard to tell when an offer of limited quantity will suddenly become unavailable, while a time-based offer has a known end time. Limited quantity offers are great for not only getting people to say "yes" to your offer, but to avoid procrastination completely.

Limited Time and Limited Quantity

Groupon is the perfect example of using both tactics. All Groupon deals end within a certain time frame, and they limit the number of people who can buy a Groupon. That's a powerful combination. The site also packages these scarcity tactics with discounting, which is another great value-add, especially for ecommerce businesses.



The bandwagon effect

It's a natural tendency for humans to copy one another, even without realising it -- we like to be a part of tribes and social communities. So when we notice our social circle is doing one thing, we tend to follow suit. One great way to make an offer more valuable is to show that other people are participating in that offer.

Proof in Numbers

When possible, a great way to indicate how awesome an offer is to mention the number of people who have purchased, downloaded, signed up, or donated.



The bandwagon effect (cont.)

Some examples include:

- Webinars: On a page promoting your webinar, state that more than X number of people have signed up.
- Blog Subscription: Similarly, under your "subscribe" option on your blog, indicate over X number of people have subscribed.
 This is proof that it's a highly trustworthy and popular blog people should follow.
- Conferences: Events like SXSW and INBOUND are some of the hottest events because tons of people flock to them every year.

Just make sure your claims are not only true, but believable.

Join over **170,000** people who get fresh content from Copyblogger!



Leverage newsjacking

After Prince William and Kate Middleton got married in 2011, everyone was talking about Kate's wedding dress. Within hours after the wedding, vendors began making near-identical copies or similar styles of the Stella McCartney-designed dress. Even vendors such as David's Bridal now have a "Royal" category so you can dress "just like Kate."

When something is buzz-worthy, it creates high demand. In situations like this, you can align offers with "what's hot." Companies will often leverage newsjacking for this type of technique and it works very well for offers, too.



Leverage newsjacking (cont.)

As an example, back in 2013 people couldn't stop talking about Pinterest. HubSpot capitalised on this craze by creating the first Pinterest ebook for business owners and marketers, 'How To Use Pinterest for Business'.

It quickly became one of HubSpot's most successful ebooks with more than 125,000 downloads to date. Because it was the first and only ebook available on Pinterest (and they made sure people knew that), and learning how to use Pinterest for marketing was in high demand, it made the offer more unique and thus more irresistible -- that's the power of leveraging both timing and popularity!



Focus on creating an amazing title

Brian Halligan, HubSpot CEO and co-founder, once said that "you can have a great offer with a bad title and no one will download it. But if you have an amazing title, suddenly everyone wants it."

Yes - people do judge a book by it's cover. If your offer is a piece of content, such as a whitepaper, ebook, or presentation, put effort into creating an amazing title.

For an experiment, HubSpot changed the title of an ebook and ran an A/B test to see which one would perform better. They took the original title "The Productivity Handbook for Busy Marketers" and changed it to "7 Apps That Will Change the Way You Do Marketing."



Focus on creating an amazing title (cont.)

Name	Views	Conversion Rate	Submissions	First Time Submissions	Customers
7 Apps That Will Change the Way You Do Marketing	37,636	51.7%	19,465	2,716	8
The Productivity Handbook for Busy Marketers	7,233	32.3%	2,333	310	0

As you can see, the revised version outperformed the original by 776% at generating leads (first time submissions).

Not only that, but it resulted in more customers as well. If you're struggling to come up with the perfect headline, try using the <u>Headline Analyser Tool by Advanced Marketing Institute</u> or read about the 7 Proven Headlines that Convert.



Create offers for different buying stages

The most common offer I see on most websites is "Contact Us." Sure, you want all your prospects to talk to sales, but not everyone is ready to.

As you know, buyers are likely to do their own research before engaging with a sales rep, and every prospect is at a different stage of the buying journey. That's why it's important to develop different offers for the different buying stages.

Tip: Understanding your buyer personas is essential to creating amazing offers.

Someone at the top of the buying cycle may be more interested in an informational piece like a guide or ebook, whereas someone more committed at the bottom of the cycle might be more interested in a free trial or demo.

You don't need to pick and choose; create offers for each phase, and include a primary and secondary CTA to these offers on various pages throughout your site.



Avoid corporate gobbledygook

A professional image is necessary but you still want to avoid the dreaded corporate gobbledygook. What is gobbledygook you ask? Great question.

These are jargon terms and phrases that have been over-used and abused, rendering them meaningless (you'll find them mostly in the high-tech industry, but everyone is an offender at one point or another). These words are meant to add more emphasis on a particular subject but instead they make your eyes roll.

Avoid these words when describing your offers:

- Next Generation
- Flexible
- Robust
- Scalable
- Easy to use

- Cutting edge
- Ground breaking
- Best of breed
- Mission critical

To learn more, download <u>The Gobbledygook</u>

<u>Manifesto ebook by David Meerman Scott</u>



Use high-value offer formats

Not all offers are created equal. Some "formats" of offers perform better than others at converting leads. For example, what's more valuable, a whitepaper or an ebook?

Below are the type of offers, in order of performance, that generate the most leads.

- Ebooks or guides
- Templates or presentations
- Research & reports
- Whitepapers
- Kits (multiple offers packaged together)

- Live webinars
- On-demand videos
- Blog (including offers in the nav or sidebar)
- Blog posts (if there is a CTA in the post)
- Middle-of-the-funnel offers: Demo requests, contact sales, RFP, etc (more sales-ready offers)

It's important to test different types of offers with your audience to determine what works for you. While ebooks score high on our list, you may find that reports, videos or other formats do better.







Chapter 2 Calls-To-Action **That Rock**

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Chapter 2 **Introduction**

Calls-to-action (CTA) are the secret sauce to drive people to your offers.

If your CTA's aren't effective at capturing attention and persuading people to click on them (for digital marketing), then it makes the offer useless.

CTA's can be used on most website pages (nonlanding pages), in display ads, email, social media, direct mail and pretty much anywhere you can market your offer. But not all CTA's are created equal.

In a world where every brand is fighting for consumer's attention, it's critical that prospects choose your offer over your competitors.

In this guide, we'll uncover tips to creating CTA's that rock.



Place your CTA where the eye can see

Website calls-to-action do best "above the fold" - the area of your web page that is viewable to the user without having to scroll down.

According to heat map analysis (cool tech that visually shows site users clicks, taps and scrolling behaviour), anything "below the fold" will only be viewed by 50% of people who visit your page.

Notice the placement of the primary CTA on the Freshbooks homepage. Two buttons for "Try it Free for 30 Days" stand out above the fold



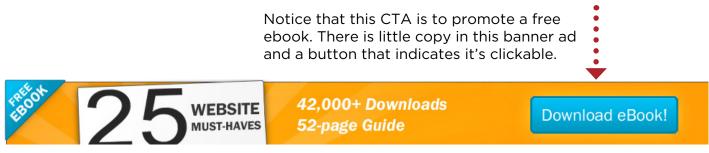


Clarity trumps persuasion

This is one of my favorite phrases from the folks at MarketingExperiments. Often times, marketers will put more focus on being clever than clear.

Make sure your CTA offer is crystal clear. And be specific.

If you're giving away a free guide, say "Download our FREE guide to X." If you're hosting a free webinar, say "Register for our FREE webinar on X." X should clearly convey a compelling benefit of receiving the offer. This is much more effective than "Download Now" or "Get a Free Article." These simply aren't specific enough.





Use contrast to make CTA's stand out

A call-to-action is meant to stand out, so if your CTA blends in too much with your site design, no one will notice it. You want as many eyeballs to land on that call-to-action as possible.

Use contrasting colors to make the CTA stand out, and more importantly, use design to make it clear it is a clickable call-to-action.



Shows what Evernote's website used to look like. The primary call-to-action for their free trial is buried because the button blends in with the background.







Shows the Evernote site now with a more eyeball-catching, white call-to-action button.

Link your CTA to a dedicated landing page





The CTA for our ebook sends visitors directly to the landing page for the ebook.



This tip might seem minor, but it's incredible how often businesses miss this opportunity. Calls-to-action are meant to send visitors to a dedicated landing page where they receive a specific offer.

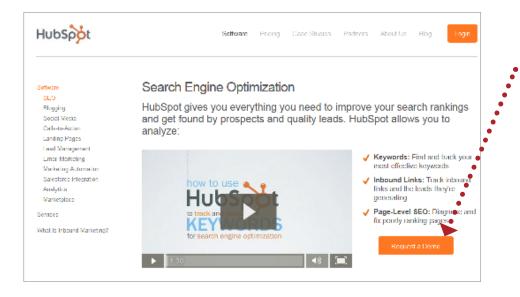
Don't use CTA's to drive people to your homepage. Even if your CTA is about your brand or product (and perhaps not an offer like a download), still send them to a targeted landing page that is relevant to what they are looking for.

If you have the opportunity to use a CTA, send them to a page that will convert them into a lead.

Promote offers on product pages

CTA's shouldn't be one-size-fits-all.

If your company offers various products or services, consider creating a different offer for each. Then place CTA's linking to each offer on the website pages that are most relevant to that offer.



In this example, a CTA for "Request a Demo" is placed on a product page.

Thank you pages are great CTA real estate

Even if someone completes a form on your website (thus they've converted as a lead), don't stop there!

Increasing engagement is also a top priority for marketers so that prospects turn into loyal fans.

Here's a secondary call-to-action on a thank-you page.



Once someone reaches a "thank you" page (the page that a visitor arrives on after completing a form), use the space on your thank you page as another opportunity to promote more offers and content.

For example, when a visitor on hubspot.com downloads a 'how-to' guide on email marketing, they are then given another offer for a demo of their email marketing software.







Chapter 3 Landing Pages That Convert

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Chapter 3 Introduction

Landing pages are one of the most important elements of lead generation. In fact, according to MarketingSherpa's research, landing pages are effective for 94% of B2B and B2C businesses.

The use of landing pages enables marketers to direct website visitors to targeted pages and capture leads at a much higher rate.

What's great about landing pages is that they direct your visitors to one particular offer without the distractions of everything else on your website.

Visitors are on a landing page for one and only purpose: to complete the lead capture form.



Elements of an effective landing page

Landing pages, sometimes called a "Lead Capture Page", are used to convert visitors into leads by completing a transaction or by collecting contact information from them. Landing pages consist of:



Remove the main navigation

Once a visitor arrives on a landing page, it's your job to keep them there. If there are links on the page to move about your website, it will distract the visitor and decrease the chance of them converting on the page.

One of the best ways to increase your landing page conversion rates is to simply remove the main navigation from the page. That's it! Main navigation has been removed from this landing page



Match the headline of the landing page to the corresponding CTA

Keep your messaging consistent on both your CTA and the headline of the landing page.

If people click on a link for a free offer and then find out there's a catch on the landing page, you'll instantly lose their trust.

Similarly, if the headline reads differently than the CTA, it might lead to confusion, and the visitor might wonder if the CTA is linked to the wrong page.





Less is more

Know the saying "keep it simple, stupid"?

The same applies to landing pages. A cluttered page means a distracted visitor.

Be brief and to the point; it's in the offer itself where you give more information.

In addition to your headline, include a brief paragraph explaining what the offer is, followed by a few bullet points outlining the benefits of the offer.

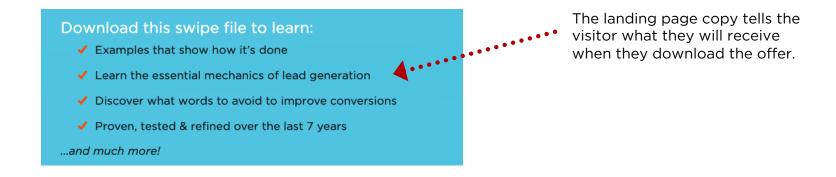


Emphasise the benefits of the offer

Make it clear in your brief paragraph and/or bullet points what the benefits of the offer are.

It's more than just listing what the offer is comprised of; it takes a bit of spin. Instead of "Includes specifications of product X," say something like "Find out how X can increase productivity by 50%."

In other words, convey the value of your offer clearly and effectively.





Encourage social sharing

On your landing page, don't forget to include buttons to enable your prospects to share content and offers.

Include multiple social media channels as well as email, since people have different sharing preferences. When your offer is shared more, more people land on the page, and therefore more people fill out your form and become leads!



More landing pages = more leads

According to a marketing benchmarks report, companies see a 55% increase in leads by increasing landing pages from 10 to 15.

The more content, offers, and landing pages you create, the more opportunities to generate more leads for your business you get.









Chapter 4 Optimised Forms

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Chapter 4 Introduction

Forms are key to a landing page.

Without them, there is no way to "convert" a visitor into a lead. Forms come in handy when it's time for people to sign-up, subscribe, or download an offer.

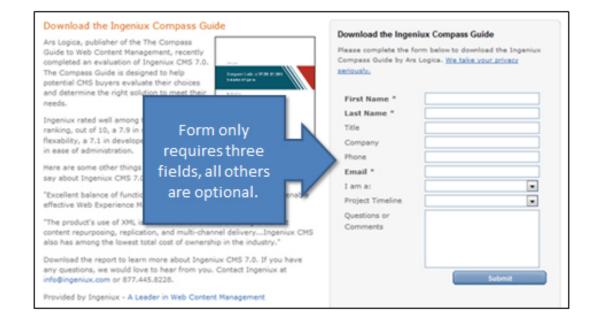
The following tactics and examples will uncover how to build great landing page forms.



The right form length

You might be wondering how much or how little information on a form you should ask for, or require (ie must be completed for the form to submit).

There is no magic answer when it comes to how many fields your form should contain, or how many are 'required' to be filled, but as a rule of thumb, only ask information that you really need.



The right form length (cont.)

The fewer fields you have on a form, the more likely you are to receive more form submissions.

This is because with each new field you add to a form creates friction (more work for the visitor).

A longer form looks like more work and sometimes will be avoided all together. But on the other hand, the more fields you require, the better quality those leads might be.

The best way to determine what works best is to test it.

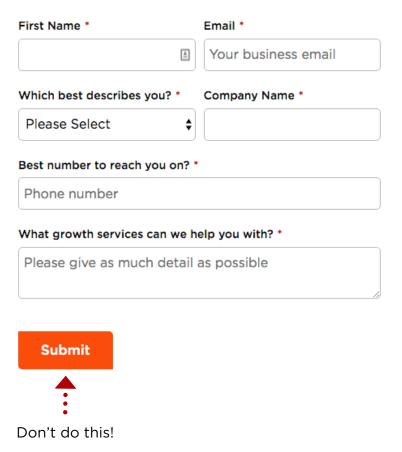


To submit or not to submit

That is the question most of your visitors are asking.

One of the best ways to increase form conversion rates is to simply NOT use the default word on your button: "SUBMIT."

Instead, turn the statement into a benefit that relates to what they are getting in return.



To submit or not to submit (cont.)

For example, if the form is to download a brochure kit, the submit button should say, "Get Your Brochure Kit." Other examples include:

- Download whitepaper
- Get your free ebook
- Join our Newsletter

TIP: Make the button big, bold and colorful. Make sure it looks like a button and appears "clickable".



Reduce anxiety with proof-elements

People are more reluctant to give up their information these days, especially because of the increase in spam. There are a few different elements you can add to the form or landing page to help relieve form-submission-anxiety:

- Add a privacy message (or link to your privacy policy) that indicates their email will not be shared or sold.
- If your form requires sensitive information, include security seals or certifications so that visitors know their information is safe and secure.

Adding testimonials or customer logos is another great way to indicate social-proof.

For example, if your offer was for a free trial, you may want to include a few customer testimonials about your product or service.

Reduce anxiety with proof-elements

Sometimes people won't fill out a form just because it "looks" long and time-consuming.

If your form requires a lot of fields, try making the form look shorter by adjusting the styling.

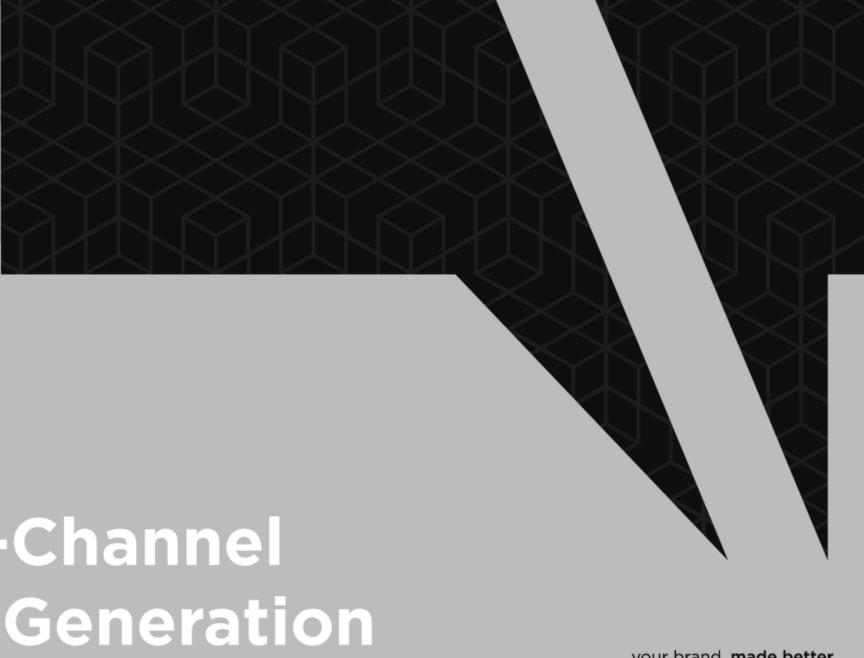
For example, reduce the spacing in between fields or align the titles to the left of each field instead of above it so that the form appears shorter.

If the form covers less space on the page, it may seem as if you're asking for less.









Chapter 5 Multi-Channel Lead Generation

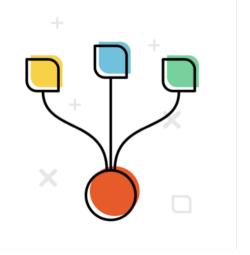
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Chapter 5 Introduction

Your website isn't a silo. Marketers must utilise multiple channels in order to maximise their lead generation efforts. In this sense, a channel might be a retail store, a website, a social media platform, an email, or a text message.

The objective is to make it easy for buyers to research, evaluate and purchase products in any way that is most suitable to them. It's all about having the right marketing mix.

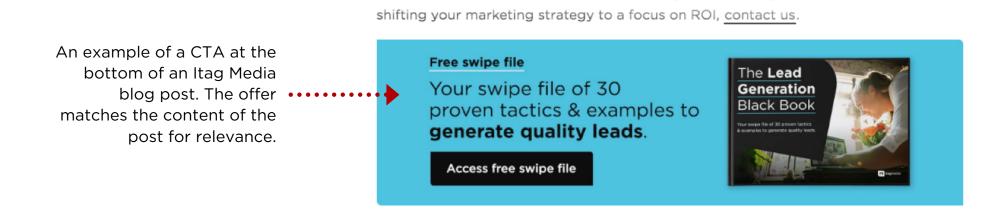
In this last chapter, we will briefly cover a few channels that help businesses generate the most amount of leads.



Blogging brings in the leads

According to HubSpot's recent Benchmarks report, companies that blog 6-8 times per month double their lead volume. This proves that blogging is a highly effective channel for lead generation.

In every blog post, include hyperlinks to landing pages within the copy of the post, as well as a prominent calls-to-action.





Email marketing

Think that email marketing is best for communicating with existing prospects and customers? Think again!

Email can be a great channel for new lead generation. Here's a couple of suggestions to do it well:

 Opt-in strategy: Don't buy email lists or spam your prospects, it's a sure fire way to get tons of unsubscribers. The first step to successful lead generation with email marketing is to make sure you have happy subscribers. Offer value: Eg. downloads, discounts or educational content - people are more likely to share your emails if you do.

Simple email promoting a valuable offer





#27 Social media

Social media isn't just for liking funny pictures or tweeting what you ate for breakfast. Social media is an emerging channel that many businesses are taking advantage of.

Here are some great tips for generating leads on social networks.

• Influence connections for content sharing. Publishing and sharing content that directs traffic to targeted landing pages is the single biggest lever to increase lead generation through social media. Share your new content offers by posting links to landing pages, and in addition, share blog posts, discounts, and other great resources.



#27 Social media (cont.)

- Build a loyal following. Building a relationship with potential customers is a critical first step. Social media
 connections are really about people-to-people, not always company-to-individual. Get to know your
 audience online, communicate and share information. In order to generate leads, you need to have human
 interaction with others.
- Remember, social media is a dialogue. Companies that only use social media to blast out messages about themselves aren't using social channels effectively. The goal is to interact with others and be helpful. When you share content on social media, don't always post something that relates to your company. Share links to other interesting things you've found online. People will be thankful you are noticing their work, too!



Organic search

While promoting your offers in many channels is crucial for lead generation, it's equally important to make it easy for people to find your landing pages in search engines (eg. Google). To do this, you need to apply Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) best-practice to your landing pages, such as:

- Pick a primary keyword/s for each landing page and focus on optimising that page for that keyword. If you oversaturate a page with too many keywords, the page will lose its importance and authority because search engines won't have a clear idea of what the page is about.
- Place your primary keyword/s in your headline and sub-headline. These areas of content have greater weight to search engines.

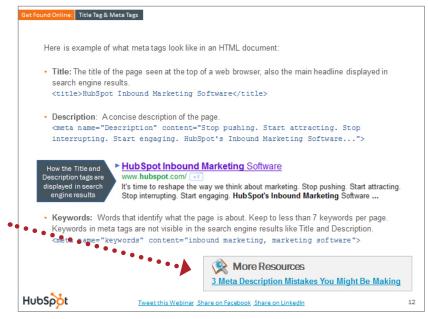
- Include keywords in the body content but don't use them out of context. Make sure they are relevant with the rest of your content.
- Include keywords in the file name of images
 (e.g. mykeyword.jpg) or use them in the ALT
 tag but make sure it explains what the image is.
- Include the keywords in the page URL (the page address).

Use links and CTA's within offers

Your offers themselves are great channels for lead generation.

For example, in this ebook example they have included links to other content offers you can download. As people share this ebook, they may discover other resources that are offered by the links within the content.

Within this ebook "25 Website Must-Haves," are links to other ebooks and guides.

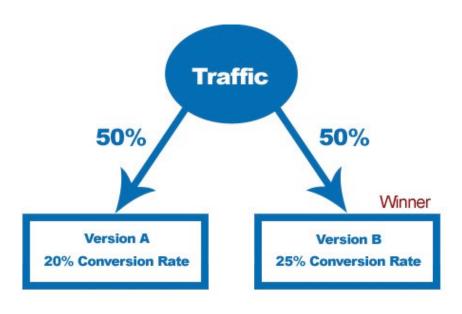


#30 **A/B testing**

While this isn't a channel per say, it is a great way to increase leads across all channels and tactics. You can A/B test calls-to-action, landing pages, email marketing, advertising, and more.

According to HubSpot research, A/B testing your landing pages and other marketing efforts can help you generate up to 40% more leads for your business.

When done correctly, A/B testing can provide a huge competitive advantage for your company.



Conclusion

Generating leads online has the power to transform your marketing.

Using great offers, calls-to-action, landing pages and forms, and promoting them in multi-channel environments, can reduce your cost-per-lead while delivering higher quality prospects. This guide contains many best practices for every aspects of lead generation to help bolster your conversion rates, but these tactics are only the tip of the iceberg.

Continue to tweak and test each step of your lead generation process to improve the quality of your leads and increase revenue.

Ready to boost your marketing efforts?

Get in touch for a free business consultation with one of our Certified Practicing Marketers.

Request free consultation





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