

INBOUND WITH A-LINE

3 Steps to Using Inbound &
Content Marketing Effectively

ALINE
INTERACTIVE



.....

A-LINE's Guide to Inbound & Content Marketing

.....

Defining Inbound and Content Marketing

So what is this inbound approach? Instead of purchasing ads and email lists, content marketing focuses on creating informative content that attracts visitors to your website where they can learn more about your product, services and differentiators. The content includes blogs, webinars, white papers and good, old-fashioned quality copywriting that help buyers make choices no longer based on advertising, but on solid information instead.

Why does Content Marketing Matter—Especially for Local Businesses?

Content Marketing ultimately drives searches to your website. As we've explained before in [SEO 101](#), Google determines search rankings based on the amount of quality information that your website includes as it relates to a particular search phrase or word. Many national businesses have large websites with a lot of inbound links from blogs, social media sites, business directories and more. These national brands have local franchises, offices or stores that compete for search traffic with smaller, regional companies.

With quality content, local organizations can use their community insights and networks to capture web traffic and make inbound marketing a champion tool for increasing website visitors, foot traffic and, ultimately, sales.

Ready to Start with Inbound?

With the following three steps and the tools we explain with each one, you'll be well on your way to using content marketing to attract web traffic, acquire leads and create sales.

.....

Inbound marketing is a strategic approach in which you "market with a magnet, not a sledgehammer."

.....



Step 1: Utilize Inbound Tools to Attract Visitors to your Website

It doesn't get much more basic than the first step. Successful inbound marketing captures web traffic by supplying quality content in the form of blogs, social media, keyword optimization and informative copywriting throughout your site.

Blog

We can't say (well, scream) it enough: Blogs attract visitors. B2C companies that blog generate 88% more leads per month than those that don't, and B2B companies that blog generate 67% more leads per month than those that don't.

Social Media

Social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and others give brands a way to engage with prospects and lend a human element to your brand. Also, they give you a place to promote content and blog posts in a fresh and interactive way.

Site Content

Got a service for which there is a popular keyword search? Have a large number of customers who rely on your business to source particular products locally? These words and phrases should be used throughout your blog posts, as well as in the copy of the pages on your website.

Step 2: Use Content to Acquire Information about Website Visitors

Once you've increased website traffic through your content marketing efforts, it's time to make your content work even harder for your brand. By using content and information as a carrot, your business can obtain information about prospects that they supply themselves, helping you tailor your future direct marketing messages accordingly.

Use content and information as a carrot to obtain information about prospects that you can use to tailor marketing messages.



Calls-To-Action

Calls-To-Action encourage visitors to take action in order to interact with your content. Buttons such as "download a whitepaper," "attend a webinar" or even "discover our newest product line" prompt visitors to click further into your website. Once they reach this point, they're often willing to share more about themselves to learn more about your business.

[Read our blog post about effective Calls-To-Action.](#)

Forms

By requiring that visitors complete forms in order to obtain information housed on your website, you can capture any relevant details to guide the sales process with these visitors in the future. Basic information, including name, company name and email address, is just the tip of the iceberg.

More complex forms can even ask questions about their business challenges, opportunities or current and future needs. With relevant information at your fingertips, you are now ready to engage with prospects in a meaningful and personal way.


***Shorter forms on landing pages and websites usually result in more leads, while longer forms typically result in fewer, but higher quality leads.**

3. Use Inbound Marketing to Create Sales

Quality content almost never grows stale. In fact, once you've got a library of great content, you can use it again and again to create sales. Including your developed content in targeted email marketing, social media posts and even one-on-one correspondence helps your organization stand apart.

Email Marketing

Well-executed content marketing will result in a solid database of self-identified prospects with whom to communicate. A strategic email marketing strategy will capitalize on this database, allowing you to send relevant messages to targeted prospects. Additionally, you can use existing content as the basis for future emails. For example, a new lead who clicked to learn more about a particular product might also want to learn more about a related service. A follow-up email should help them do just that.

 **Email is almost 40 times better at acquiring new customers than Facebook and Twitter.**

Social Media

Attended a meeting in which you discussed a particular product or service with several people? It's probably safe to assume that several others are interested in the same.

Use social media to share content not only as it is created, but also as the business climate indicates interest. If last year's blog post is still relevant, dig it out of the archives and share it again!

Good, Old-Fashioned Conversation

When you have a library of great content on your website, it can work even outside of the internet. Share your insight when talking with other peer professionals and let them know they can learn more by visiting your business online. Include a link to trending topics in your email signature. Drop a note in the mail to a contact directing her to a blog post she might find particularly useful or engaging. Just because it's online doesn't mean that inbound marketing can't be personal as well.



Content marketing doesn't have to stay online. Share your knowledge when talking with peer professionals, and always direct prospects to learn more from the content on your website.

Summary

Inbound marketing is a practice that almost every organization can use to grow brand awareness and increase sales. By coordinating content creation, promotion and engagement, brands can transform their marketing strategies with undeniable impact on their bottom lines.

Do More with A-LINE.

If you'd like assistance with an inbound marketing program, including content creation, social media management, email marketing and more, [contact A-LINE](#). We've got a few tricks up our sleeves when it comes to content marketing and we'd be honored to put them to work for your brand.

About A-LINE Interactive

A-LINE Interactive is dedicated to elevating the brands of businesses and organizations across the South Carolina Upstate—the region we call home.