



10

Steps to Start an Inbound Marketing Program Today

Getting started with inbound marketing doesn't have to be a monumental task.

By taking a logical, calculated approach, you can have your inbound marketing strategy up and running in no time.





1

Determine whether your organization is open to change

The first step in implementing inbound marketing into your organization is company acceptance of a new method of marketing. Basing your inbound marketing on customer-centric, attractive marketing that pulls willing customers into a relationship with your company is much different than interruptive “push” marketing methods. By expressing your marketing initiatives with positive business outcomes, key decision-making people within your organization are more likely to comprehend what you’re trying to achieve with inbound marketing and embrace it.



2

Discussing internal and external goals with other departments or colleagues

Knowing your company's goals and objectives is paramount to implementing inbound marketing and its associated philosophy and methodology. One of your jobs as a marketer is to help the companies achieve those goals and objectives. To do this, you need information. Interview others inside your company, starting with people in different departments that are on the same level as you, and then moving as high up the management chain as is permissible or as you feel comfortable.



3

Formulating your company's customer conversion chain

The quickest way to build a business case for inbound marketing is to formulate a Customer Conversion Chain for one of your best products or services. You may need help with this, but you can surely get started by looking at analytics to determine your current monthly numbers for the following:

- Impressions by attraction source (PPC, SEO, social media, and so on)
- Website sessions/unique visits
- Leads/contacts
- Quality leads
- Customers
- Demonstrated interest (presentations/demos/trials)
- Average purchase (in dollars)
- Repeat customers
- Average repeat purchase (in dollars)



4

Determining budget of time, energy, and money to achieve goals

After performing your initial Customer Conversion Chain assessment, evaluate the resources you'll need (in terms of time, energy, and money) to begin inbound marketing. Every company operates with limited resources so how you choose to allocate yours eventually will determine an optimal allocation of your marketing resources.



5

Performing an inbound marketing assessment

Find a consultant or marketing firm and invest in a paid inbound marketing assessment (IMA). This is your starting point to frame your future initiatives, regardless of who performs those initiatives. Keep an open mind as to what you may discover and who might be best suited to perform future inbound marketing tactics. Your IMA outlines a series of prioritized inbound initiatives some of which you may be able to deliver with your current internal marketing team and some that may require help from external marketing partners. You won't know this until after you perform your IMA.



6

Writing your inbound marketing strategy

Writing a strategy is no small undertaking; however, your strategy is your inbound marketing roadmap so it's important to your success. After introducing the findings of your IMA to your internal team members, and outlining gaps, opportunities, and priorities, begin writing your strategy.



7

Assigning in-house and outsourced inbound marketing responsibilities

After creating the framework for the inbound marketing work to be done, you'll need to apply your discoveries by assigning marketing initiatives and tactics. You'll need to consider information found during the allocation of time, money, and energy mentioned earlier when considering whether to perform your inbound marketing efforts internally versus outsourcing. You may be able to implement all your inbound marketing efforts internally. It depends on your internal marketing team's base of knowledge and how quickly you wish to achieve your objectives.



8

Retooling or rebuilding your website

You now know that your website is the engine in your Customer Conversion Machine. If your website isn't built upon conversion architecture, it doesn't make sense to attract additional traffic. Budget for a conversion-based website build now. In that budget, consider adding in marketing automation software from the get-go.

Because your website is the hub of your online attraction and conversion activity, your first initiative in applied inbound is to retool or rebuild your website. Sometimes, it makes sense to do a quick retool in order to increase conversions while redesigning an entire rebuild or your website. At the very least, create a basic CTA Map, add in CTA buttons and forms, and build out conversion-based landing pages so you can increase conversion with your current website traffic.



9

Writing your first shared strategic blueprint

A shared strategic blueprint (SSB) helps you and your company to be cognizant of the daily, weekly, and quarterly marketing inputs that contribute to achieving your business goals. Outline which campaigns you plan on building and the timeframe in which they'll be completed. Remember to build-out time for the campaign so that you're not including inadvertent falsely high attraction and conversion numbers. Add those numbers into your SSB only after your estimated campaign completion date. Be willing to change your input numbers should you not achieve your campaign build-out timelines.



10

Beginning content creation

Creating content is so important to your inbound marketing that you'll probably want to start creating campaign content while you're rebuilding or retooling your website. As part of building your content strategy, you'll want to outline your content assets, your content gaps, and your content needs. Use that information to begin content creation and ensure you're making the appropriate pieces to reach your target audience.



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