

“Be humble, be teachable, and
always keep learning.”

5 Things College Won't Teach You About Inbound Marketing

...But you really need to know



LEIGHTON INTERACTIVE
DEMAND RESULTS.

INTRODUCTION

College taught me a lot; how to use Photoshop, how to create eye-catching print ads, the history of marketing, and so much more valuable information pertaining to the world of marketing. Inbound marketing, however, was not one of those subjects. I never took a class on it, in fact, none were offered. I never even knew it existed until I was introduced to Leighton Interactive. Here are the top five things I wish college had taught me about Inbound Marketing.



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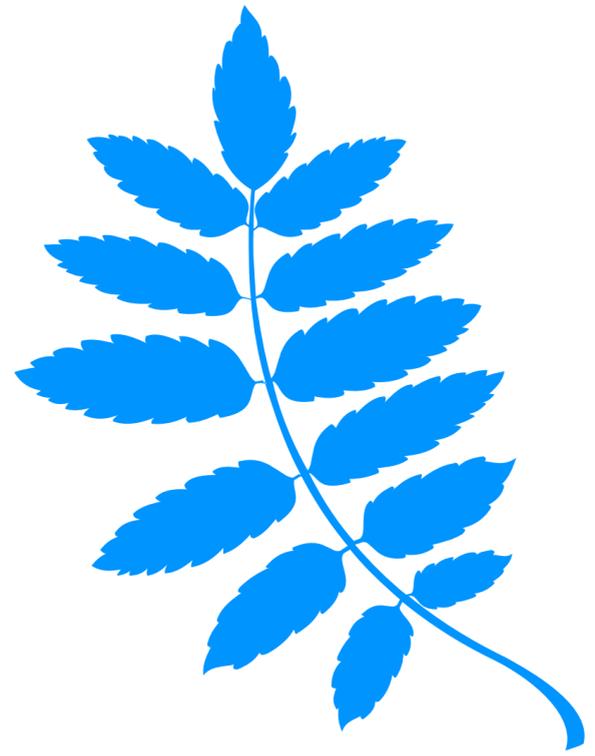
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One

OUTBOUND VS INBOUND



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Inbound marketing is all about creating content focused on your product, service, or business that will pique the interest of those who see it. By creating quality content, you will naturally attract **inbound leads** that you can then convert, close, and delight over time.

Outbound marketing is best referred to as traditional marketing, the ads you see every single day such as TV ads, the classifieds in the newspaper, magazine ads, billboards, etc.

Outbound marketing isn't focused on attracting leads that are interested in your company, product, or service. It is more focused on being the loudest or most disruptive advertiser, hoping someone notices your ad and wants your product enough to buy it.



With outbound marketing, the goal is to find a platform that has a large user base and pay to have your ads show up on that site. Most outbound marketing interrupts the user experience by doing things such as putting a pop-up ad on your favorite website, or an ad in the middle of the YouTube video you are watching, or sometimes even disguising itself as a news article.

Inbound marketing can be referred to as permission-based marketing. Businesses can communicate via mediums in which the audience has given them permission to communicate. The user is usually seeking an answer to a question or problem they are having, and the advertiser attempts to answer that question or fix the problem, usually through a blog post, downloadable offer, or eBook.



"INBOUND MARKETING
GENERATES THREE TIMES AS
MANY LEADS AS
TRADITIONAL OUTBOUND
MARKETING BUT COSTS 62%
LESS"

V I A D E M A N D
M E T R I C S



Two

KEYWORDS ARE KEY



KEYWORDS

Let's say you are looking for a Christmas tree farm near Madison, WI, so you hop onto Google and type in "Tree farm near me." Within seconds you are presented with hundreds of articles, websites, and probably even some images. You click on one of the first six or so websites you see and viola, your research is done.

If you are a Christmas tree farm near Madison, WI, chances are you're wondering how to get a piece of that prime real-estate on the front page of Google.

The answer? [Keywords](#).

As a business, you need to know how people are looking for the products, services, or information that you offer in order to make it easy for them to find you. If you don't make it easy for them, it's likely they will land on one of the countless other web pages on Google.

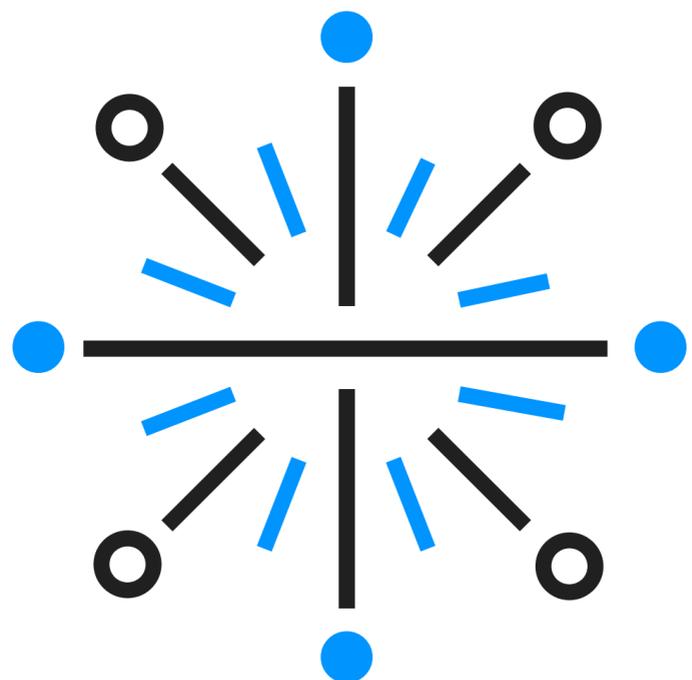




Figure out what your ideal prospective customer is searching for then determine where there are gaps in the content available. In this example, you might find that there are few articles written about “Finding the Best Christmas Tree” or “Making Family Traditions: Picking out a Christmas Tree.” If you wanted to draw in potential customers who are searching for terms such as, “How to find a good Christmas tree” or “Things to do with the family around Christmas,” you would want to write content around those topics.

Just remember to have great content, fantastic [landing pages](#), and compelling calls-to-action so once your keywords draw in the lead they turn into customers.



"38% OF SALESPEOPLE SAY GETTING A RESPONSE FROM PROSPECTS IS GETTING HARDER."

-HubSpot-

Three

**THE IMPORTANCE OF
BLOGGING**

BLOGGING

When you start [blogging](#) for your inbound marketing efforts, you are making a promise to your customers that you are going to provide relevant, useful blog content. Your business blog is a place people should be able to go to for content that will answer their questions, or help lead them in the right direction. Your blog is one of the most powerful ways to build trust right from the very start.

Aside from funny cat videos, people usually go online for two reasons:

- To solve a problem
- To answer a question

According to [bluleadz.com](#), these goals will account for 90% – or even more – of your web traffic, especially at the start.





Even if someone stumbles across your blog the first time they begin their research, they probably aren't going to make a purchase from you the first time. However, your business or brand will now be top of mind for them and they will likely read the second blog from you in the future if you can continue to provide useful content for them.

Always add value to your blog, every single one. If a lead reads a blog topic and decides the content is boring or useless, you have more than likely lost them as a potential customer because they no longer see your content as relevant. If you write a blog, always ask yourself: what is the prospect getting from this? If the answer is nothing, don't write the blog.



"61% OF MARKETERS SAY
IMPROVING SEO AND
GROWING THEIR ORGANIC
PRESENCE IS THEIR TOP
INBOUND MARKETING
PRIORITY"
- HubSpot



Four

GET SOCIAL



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is important to your inbound marketing efforts for a variety of reasons. Social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter are all valuable resources for connecting with your customers and prospects on a more personal level. You can use social media to become more relatable, post fun content, and promote your blogs, eBooks, and offers.

You should be posting content to your social media platforms on a regular basis.

There are free scheduling tools available to use such as [HootSuite](#) or [Buffer](#). These websites allow you to schedule all of your messages in advance, saving you time from logging on every day to post content. There is no magic rule of thumb for which social media platforms your business should be present on. Research and learn about your ideal customer, figure out which platforms they use most frequently, and then create accounts based on that data.

Social media itself provides great analytics that can tell you a lot about your customers. The analytics on Facebook, for example, will give you insight into the demographic and geographic breakdown of your audience, as well as telling you what type of content your audience is interacting and engaging with most. You can use this information when you create your next piece of valuable content for your website.





Social media can help you create relationships with other bloggers, social media influencers, and brand advocates. These types of people can help promote your content, especially if they genuinely find your content interesting. It doesn't take extra work on your part. When another business or person links back to your post, website, or blog it can help with your search engine results page, and that can increase your chances of gaining more views for your content.

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WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE
ON WHETHER WE DO
SOCIAL MEDIA, THE
QUESTION IS HOW WELL
WE DO IT.

Erik Qualman



Five

**KEEP IT FUN AND
INTERESTING - DON'T
BE DULL**



CONTENT

The most important thing to remember is to keep things interesting, fun, and relatable. As a consumer, think of your favorite product, brand, or business. Does that company create content, post on social media, or update their followers in some way? Chances are you answered "yes." Now answer this question ... is that product or service your favorite brand to follow because they post boring, mundane content, or because they post company updates, pictures of the staff at their holiday party, fun ways you can use their product, and a funny video of the day?

With so much content being created every day, it is easy for your business' content to get swallowed in the mix and never be found. To stand out, use an image or video with every post, and write an enticing call-to-action in the copy to make people want to click on your link or watch your video.

Oh, and did you know, according to Wordstream, “85% of the US internet audience watches videos online, accounting for nearly one-third of all online activity.” [Videos](#), whether you create them or just share them, are far more likely to be engaged with by your audience - So go out and create.

Don't worry about being too professional on your social channels. It's okay to tell a joke on your social page, ask a question, or play a game of caption the photo! Sit and have a conversation with someone about something completely unrelated to work—maybe about something they or you love! When someone comments on a post make sure your business responds, and speak like you normally would, not like you are on autopilot.



Everything Is Inbound

CASE STUDIES