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Ten Ways to Increase Sales This Month with Social Media Marketing

An extensive study by Strata Media concluded that professional online profiling techniques, known as “Inbound Marketing”, can bring in business at *63% less per sales lead* than traditional advertising and promotion. That’s well below half the cost!

Inbound techniques even had a one third cost advantage over “modern” techniques like Google Adwords and online banners.

In truth, your business can’t afford NOT to do this.

What is “Inbound Marketing”?

- Modern Inbound Marketing refers to a set of techniques whereby you set up a professional and compelling presence for your business online. This means using a website, email shots, a strong presence on search engines

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and directories (especially Google) and on Social Media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Tumblr and so on.

- The combined effect of the online presence allows people who want your kind of product or service to find you easily and understand what's great about you.
- These online media also mean it is free or low-cost to communicate with your customers and your prospects.
- Your Inbound Marketing profile in effect is a gigantic Word of Mouth campaign, except that you are *steering* what is said about your business, and you are *turbocharging* that word-of-mouth, amplifying it through multiple Internet channels.

“...like *turbocharging* a word-of-mouth campaign, amplifying it through multiple Internet channels...”

- Like much of marketing, the true aim of Inbound Marketing is not to sell, but to TELL.
- Think word-of-mouth. Think tell not sell. The idea is to put the concept of your business in their minds and keep it there, through continued messages and conversation.
- Inbound Marketing has some similarities with High-Probability Selling. The idea of High Probability Selling is not to waste time on hard sell with people who don't really want your product, or who can't afford it. The idea is to spend your telling time with people who want what you have and who are in the market to buy.

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- People aren't always ready to buy. The idea of Inbound Marketing is to establish your name in their minds for when they are ready to spend their money. It's that simple.

"...don't sell, TELL..."

That said – don't worry - the idea of Inbound Marketing comes with normal business expectations: ***getting found, getting leads and closing sales***. One beautiful aspect of Inbound Marketing is that you can make changes to your marketing execution right now and see results today, tomorrow and next week. Instead of planning and paying for a campaign to support your latest offer, or in order to hit your end-of-month targets, you can use your Inbound Marketing set-up to make a difference at very low cost.

Basically, however, Inbound Marketing is a long term play - the longer you do it, the better the results. Marketing is a marathon, not a sprint and you need to be constantly marketing. You should never consider marketing finished. You should never "take a break." Do it every day!

Inbound Marketing may be cheap, but it demands **Time, Effort, Care and Attention**.

However, there are big improvements you can make **today** that will impact your results in a positive way all through the rest of the year. *Here are 10 of the best ways to use inbound marketing to drive results this month:*

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TEN WAYS TO FIRE UP YOUR INBOUND MARKETING THIS MONTH

1. Make sure your website has the right messaging. This is a very common challenge for marketers. You have 10 seconds to capture a visitor's attention before they hit the back button. What do you say? It's much easier to talk about your company than it is to talk about your prospect. But your prospects have to feel like you "get them" – that you understand their challenges and that you have solutions to help them.

Marketing takeaway: Make sure your [web design](#) does this quickly and does it in a way that emotionally engages your visitors. People make purchase decisions emotionally, don't overlook that important point.

2. Add graphic call to action buttons on your website home page and across all your pages. Simple links just don't cut it anymore. Today you need colorful, graphic, visually appealing images to attract your visitors, get them to click and clearly communicate what they are getting and why they might find it valuable.

Marketing takeaway: Try adding a few of these to your website home page and throughout your site, you will find that this [dramatically increases the number of leads from your website](#).

3. Add offers to your website and make sure they appeal to people at all stages of the buying process. Most business websites have a single offer, "Contact Us." This makes sense for those people who are ready to speak with you. But what about all those other visitors who aren't ready? Inbound marketing has proven that by offering educational materials like whitepapers, videos, ebooks, podcasts or an invitation to a webinar, you are increasing your likelihood of generating leads.

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Marketing takeaway: Consider people who request this material LEADS but they just aren't ready to speak with one of your sales people yet.

4. Add a blog and make sure you are blogging at least 3 or 4 times a week.

Blogging does so much for your inbound marketing effort. Blogging helps you with search by adding fresh content to your website on a regular basis. Google rewards sites with fresh content by increasing the likelihood of moving up the search results page. Blogging also gives your business an authentic voice and allows you to display thought leadership.

Marketing takeaway: Take a stand, make point or share your perspective. In the end your prospects will connect with your business more quickly and likely convert from visitor to lead as well.

5. Share your blog content with everyone who follows you on social media.

Another positive result from blogging is that you're able to share it across all social media platforms. Social media marketing offers businesses a huge opportunity to connect with potential prospects. Remember, your prospects are probably already on social media and actively looking for educational content.

Marketing takeaway: Share your blog posts with your friends, followers and connections on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn and you will drive more traffic to your website, get more leads and close more sales.

6. Share your blog content and other educational material with key groups on LinkedIn. LinkedIn Groups offer you a perfect place to connect with people who match your target prospect's profile perfectly. There are hundreds of thousands of LinkedIn Groups for every industry, every role and every size firm. Some of these groups have over 50,000 members.

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Marketing takeaway: Identify groups that include your perfect prospect, join those groups and start sharing your blog posts.

7. Create dedicated landing pages that use best practices to convert visitors into leads. I know it's easy to send everyone back to your home page and let them find their way through your site. But easy isn't always better. If converting visitors into leads is your goal then you are going to need a conversion strategy – enter landing pages. Some landing page best practices include:

- No page navigation. This is a distraction and functions to take visitors away.
- Using images of the material you will be providing and offer brief description of the material including what they will learn if they download it.

Marketing takeaway: Help the visitor feel comfortable that they are going to be getting value in exchange for their email address or contact info.

8. Build out a lead-nurturing email campaign to continue the conversation with new leads even after they download your educational materials. The process shouldn't end when you get a new lead from your inbound marketing effort. In fact, it's just beginning. Now you have to [nurture that lead all the way through your sales process](#). You do that by sending them regular emails with more educational content.

Marketing takeaway: Don't sell. Don't push. Just offer helpful guidance. Just Tell.

9. Identify two or three other websites that your prospects frequent and offer to share your educational material with their visitors, drive them back to your site and capture their contact info. Reusing content is very important with inbound marketing. It can be challenging to constantly create original content.

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But you can offer your blog content, whitepapers, eBooks and slide shows to other websites that are looking for content of their own. They post your content, with a link back to your website and you get more qualified visitors, leads and potential customers.

*Marketing takeaway: The idea isn't to duplicate content but share **thought leadership**, so be sure to update content when you do repurpose it.*

10. Track and test as much as you can. Inbound marketing moves lead generation from an art to a science. But if you are going to take a scientific approach to marketing you have to track and test everything you do. This typically requires tools for analytics, testing and even content creation. Marketing automation SaaS providers like HubSpot provide marketers a complete package for tracking results, measuring effectiveness, creating testing environments and producing scalable, measureable, repeatable results from an inbound marketing program.

Start adding these elements to your own inbound marketing effort and you will start seeing your business getting found, getting leads and closing sales.

FINAL WORD...

Identify your priorities and work on them

There are so many varied channels you will feel you **have** to work on... website, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Email, Google SEO, Google+, email shots and so on and so on...

How do you prioritise?

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Common sense says that a small business will have a one or two outlets it needs to focus on, because these are the ones that sell.

Normally you should focus on visitors to your shop and your website, or phonecalls and your website, or your restaurant and your website. Other media are always secondary. Facebook, Twitter etc - they are there to drive people to your website and your shop. It's that simple. The website is key because it brings everything together and is easily your most flexible, versatile medium.

But there's one more priority. Email addresses. You should leave no stone unturned to gather email addresses. It may sound old fashioned when we're all sick of spam, but email is critical. Facebook emails you. Twitter emails you. Gather email addresses and use them.

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