

THE ESSENTIAL STEP-BY-STEP

# GUIDE TO INTERNET MARKETING



The Building  
Blocks for  
Succeeding with  
Online Marketing

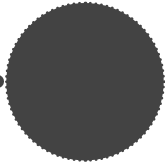
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### INTRODUCTORY ..... *This ebook!*

Introductory content is for marketers who are new to the subject. This content typically includes step-by-step instructions on how to get started with this aspect of inbound marketing and learn its fundamentals. After reading it, you will be able to execute basic marketing tactics related to the topic.



### INTERMEDIATE

Intermediate content is for marketers who are familiar with the subject but have only basic experience in executing strategies and tactics on the topic. This content typically covers the fundamentals and moves on to reveal more complex functions and examples. Read our intermediate-level ebook "[10 Commandments of Marketing Automation.](#)"



### ADVANCED

Advanced content is for marketers who are, or want to be, experts on the subject. In it, we walk you through advanced features of this aspect of inbound marketing and help you develop complete mastery of the subject. After reading it, you will feel ready not only to execute strategies and tactics, but also to teach others how to be successful.

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## THE ESSENTIAL STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO INTERNET MARKETING

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“ *Traditional marketing methods are becoming both ineffective and expensive.* ”



If you're reading this ebook, chances are you're either a marketing professional or a business owner who understands the importance of internet marketing today. You 'get' that traditional marketing methods are becoming both ineffective and expensive, and you know that by neglecting to market your business online, you're missing out on the powerful business results that an effective internet marketing strategy can bring about.

Whether your business is just getting started with internet marketing or you just want to brush up on the basics, this ebook can serve as your essential guide to setting up and implementing a successful internet marketing strategy, step by step.

From establishing your initial keyword strategy and leveraging social media to promote content online all the way through to analyzing and refining your strategies, this comprehensive internet marketing ebook will guide you through every essential step you should be taking to effectively market your business online, whether you're a software company, a chimney sweep, a tailor, or a marketing agency, to name a few.

STEP 1



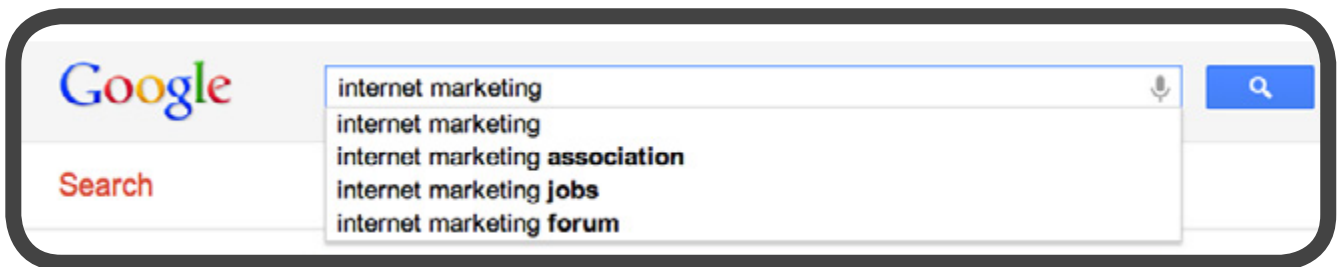
# CREATE A KEYWORD STRATEGY



“If you wanted to boil internet marketing down to single **starting point**, keywords are it.”

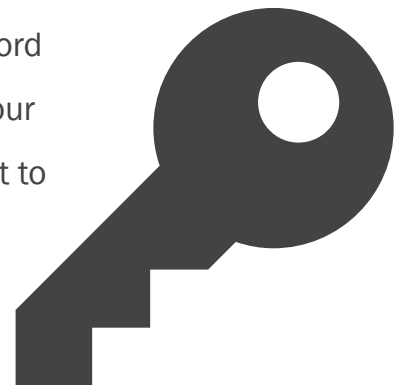
## WHAT IS A KEYWORD?

A keyword is a word or phrase that a person uses to gather information on a topic online. People can enter keywords into search engines like Google and Bing or social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.



## WHY BUILD A KEYWORD STRATEGY?

More and more consumers are finding businesses online through keyword search. You can take advantage of this consumer habit by optimizing your website and social media profiles around the keywords that are relevant to your business and that consumers are using to find you online.



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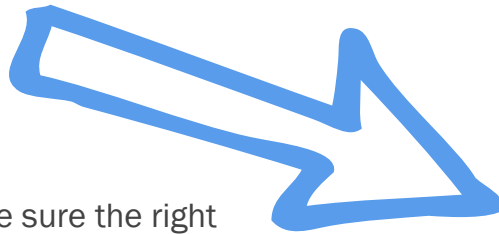






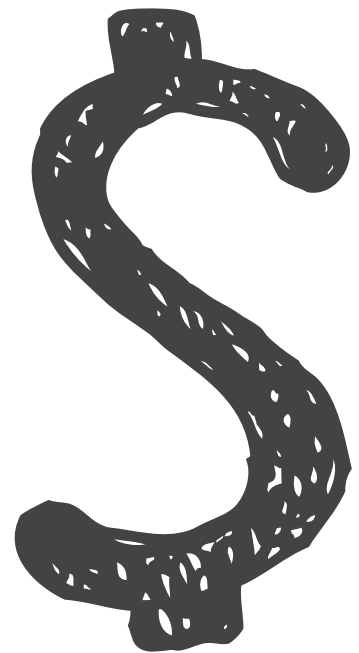
This will increase your chances of getting found by people searching with those keywords, which will drive more and better quality traffic to your business' website.

While it's difficult to know exactly which keywords will get the most relevant people to find your business, there are ways to determine the popularity and competitiveness of certain keywords. You can also test and analyze how effective different keywords are in drawing visitors to your site.



As a business professional, you should make sure the right people are finding your business online. In this section, you will learn how to define which keywords will maximize your potential to draw in relevant traffic from search engines.

Keyword research is an ongoing process that should be followed closely. It gives valuable insight on industry trends and product demand. Comprehensive keyword research can help you grow your organic traffic and save you from spending money on pay-per-click (PPC) campaigns such as Google AdWords.



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## HOW TO CREATE A KEYWORD STRATEGY



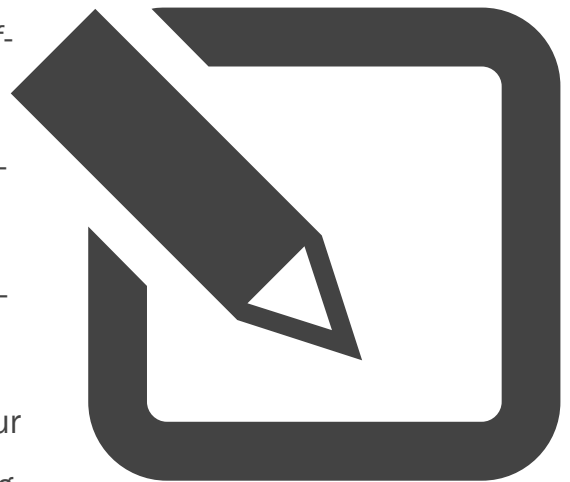
### CREATE A LIST OF 3-5 KEYWORDS RELEVANT TO YOUR BUSINESS

Think like you're using the brain of someone searching for your product online, through a search engine or on social media. For small- and medium-sized businesses, your keywords are not your brand name. Instead, think of words and short phrases that get to the core of what your product or service is about.



### CHOOSE KEYWORDS BASED ON DIFFICULTY AND RELEVANCE

The keywords you choose should be based on difficulty and relevance. Some very general words, such as "marketing" or "business," are very competitive, making it harder to rank well for them in search engine results. If you are a small- to medium-sized business, you should choose less competitive keywords, more specifically related to your business (these are commonly referred to as long-tail keywords). The greater the volume of searches on a keyword, the more competitive it is.

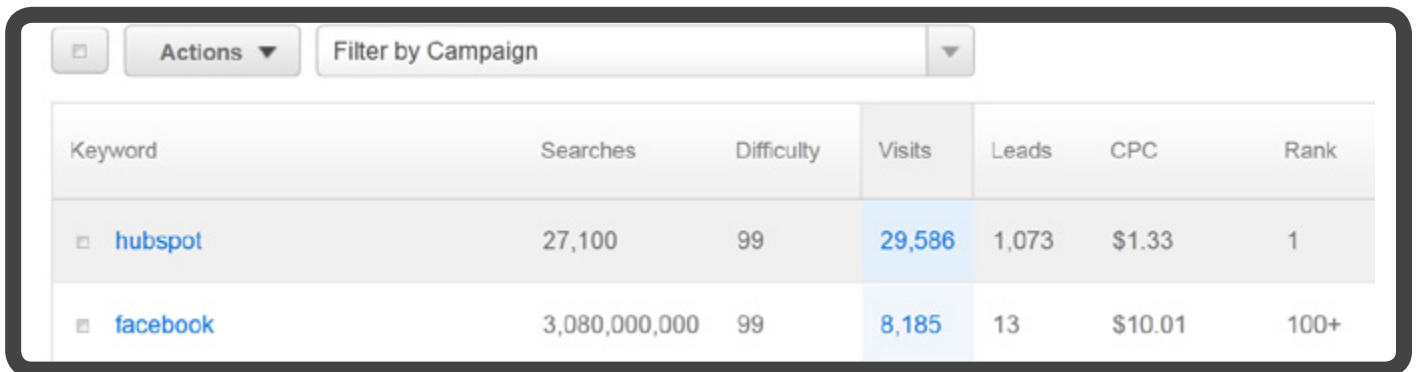


Another important factor for picking keywords is their relevance to your business. Obscure terms might be easy to rank for, but might not be relevant to your business.

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There are a number of different tools you can use to determine the competitiveness of a specific keyword as well as suggest and help you brainstorm new keyword ideas. These tools include the [Google Keyword Tool](#) or [HubSpot's Keyword tool](#).



Keyword	Searches	Difficulty	Visits	Leads	CPC	Rank
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">hubspot</a>	27,100	99	29,586	1,073	\$1.33	1
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">facebook</a>	3,080,000,000	99	8,185	13	\$10.01	100+

Another important factor for picking keywords is their relevance to your business. While some obscure terms might be easy to rank for, they might not be relevant to your business.

You should find a balance between relevance and difficulty. Choose keywords that match your business well. Note that these keywords don't have to be perfect at first. You can try out different ones to see which work best for you.



## DESIGN AND OPTIMIZE YOUR WEBSITE AROUND YOUR KEYWORDS

Now that you've chosen your keywords, you should incorporate them into your website. Optimize your website to include mentions of these words in key places. For instance, the images you use, especially those on the home page, should include alt text that reflects your keyword strategy.

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STEP 2



# OPTIMIZE YOUR WEBSITE TO GET FOUND



# “ Aim to be on the first page. ”

Now that you’ve chosen your keywords, you should increase your website’s chances of ranking for those keywords. Search engine optimization (SEO) is about doing just that!

In order to get found through search engines, you should aim to be on the first page or in the first few results pages for your keywords. Today that is easier to achieve than a couple of years ago thanks to social media. If you have created a Google+ business account, for instance, that will be immensely helpful in your SEO efforts. That is why you need to make sure you are optimizing all your social media profiles to include updates with major industry keywords.



Google suggests that you design your website for visitors, and not for search engines. While you should keep this principle in mind, it is worthwhile to learn a bit more about SEO in order to better optimize your site.

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## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT **SEO**

SEO can be divided into two categories: on-page SEO and off-page SEO.

### ..... ON-PAGE SEO

On-page SEO refers to how well your website’s content is presented to search engines. This can often be improved immediately.

### ..... OFF-PAGE SEO

Off-page SEO refers to your site’s overall “authority” on the web, which is determined by what other websites say about your site. This can take time to improve. Even though on-page SEO accounts for only about 25% of how search engines score and rank your website, it’s worth tackling first since it can be improved quickly.



## TEST YOUR SEO WITH **MARKETINGGRADER**

Find out how well optimized your website is by running it through HubSpot’s free tool, [Marketing Grader](#). This tool will analyze your entire marketing and provide you with an overall score between 0 and 100. At this stage, you might focus on the [Top-Of-The-Funnel \(ToFu\)](#) result you get, but we encourage you to also take a look at the rest of the data from your report. It will include some ideas on how you can boost conversions and strengthen your entire marketing program.

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# 9 ELEMENTS OF **ON-PAGE** WEBSITE OPTIMIZATION

## ●..... PAGE TITLE

Page titles are one of the most important on-page SEO factors. They are the text you see at the top of your browser window when viewing a web page. They are also the title of a page that is presented in search engines.



Page titles can be found and edited in your site's HTML. The text that is surrounded with the <title> tag is your page's title. Here are some guidelines for coming up with effective page titles:

- ✔ Include keywords.
- ✔ Make it fewer than 70 characters long. Longer page titles will not be seen in your web browser or in Google search results. If you make the page title too long, it will also dilute the importance of the keywords mentioned.
- ✔ Place keywords as close to the beginning of the title as possible.
- ✔ Make it readable for site visitors.
- ✔ Include your company name at the end of the page title, unless you are a big brand and people search for you through your brand name.
- ✔ Use different page titles for each page. Each page is an opportunity to target keywords.

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## ●..... META DESCRIPTION & META DATA

Meta data does not directly influence search engine rankings. Nevertheless, it is a good practice to include keywords in your meta description.

Meta data is the text seen as the description of a site in Google search. These words attract a searcher's attention and indicate if a search result is particularly relevant to the searcher. For this reason, including keywords in your meta description can draw in visitors.

**[Inbound Marketing vs. Outbound Marketing](#)**  
[blog.hubspot.com/.../Inbound-Marketing-vs-Outbound-Marketing.as...](#)  
Jul 7, 2010 – An overview of new internet marketing strategy, **inbound marketing**, and its differences from old strategy, outbound marketing.  
You've visited this page 4 times. Last visit: 3/24/11

**[Inbound Marketing Hub](#)**  
[www.hubspot.com/inbound-marketing-hub/](#)  
Various HubSpot resources (e.g. webinars, eBooks, blog articles, videos, etc.) on the general topic of **inbound marketing**.

The meta description is not something that is visible on your web page. The short summary of the web page, which is usually included at the top of the pages source code in a <meta description> tag is not used by the search engines for any SEO purposes. What the meta description is used for is to provide the searcher with a short description of the page (<150 characters to be exact) beneath each result. In fact, if a meta description is not included in the source code, then the search engine will usually display part of the content from the page in its place.

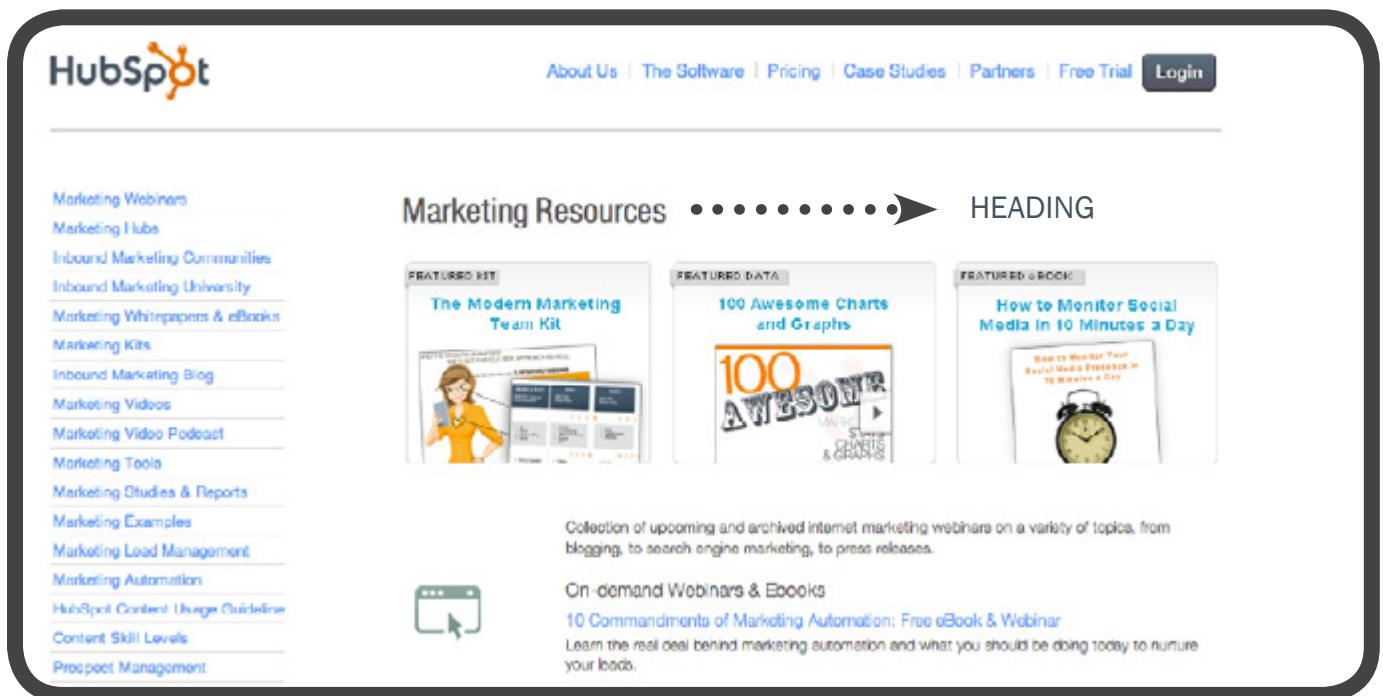




## ..... HEADINGS

If a piece of text appears larger or more prominent than the other text on a page, it's probably part of a heading. You can verify this by checking the HTML code of your website and looking for text with an `<h1>`, `<h2>`, or `<h3>` tag surrounding it.

Text in the headings is more likely to be read by search engines as keywords than text in the rest of the page. For this reason, it is good to include keywords in your headings whenever possible. `<h1>` tags give the text more weight as keywords than `<h2>` tags, and `<h2>` tags have more weight than `<h3>` tags. While `<h4>` and `<h5>` tags do exist, their influence on keywords is virtually the same as that of regular text. Including too many headings dilutes the importance of keywords in other headings, so we recommend using the `<h1>` tag only once. If the page is text-heavy like a blog post, then feel free to throw in a few `<h2>` or `<h3>` tags as paragraph titles.



The screenshot shows the HubSpot website's 'Marketing Resources' page. The 'Marketing Resources' text is highlighted with a black arrow pointing to it, labeled as 'HEADING'. Below this heading are three featured items: 'The Modern Marketing Team Kit', '100 Awesome Charts and Graphs', and 'How to Monitor Social Media in 10 Minutes a Day'. A sidebar on the left lists various marketing resources like webinars, hubs, and communities. Below the featured items, there are sections for 'Collection of upcoming and archived internet marketing webinars...' and 'On-demand Webinars & Ebooks'.

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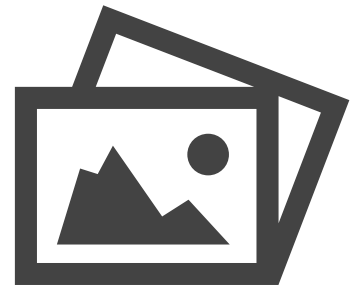





## ..... CASCADING STYLE SHEETS (CSS)

HTML is the back-end code of your website that search engines read. Search engines extract relevant information, such as keywords, from your HTML. CSS, on the other hand, holds a template for the layout of your page. In the CSS, you define how headings, links, and other visual elements of the text should look. The takeaway here is simple: use CSS. Putting layout-related information in your HTML can dilute the relevance of the HTML text, which is what you want search engines to read.

## ..... IMAGES

Images on a web page can enhance user experience. When inserting images into your website, however, you should keep in mind the following:



-  **Don't use images excessively.** More pictures can slow down the loading of your page, thus negatively impacting both user experience and search engine optimization.
-  **Associate text with pictures.** Search engines do not 'read' images; they read only text. ALT text is an HTML attribute you can add to your picture so search engines replace the image with some associated text.
-  **Include keywords in your image file name.** This will help you draw in relevant traffic from image searches. Separate keywords in the file name with a dash (-).

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## ●..... DOMAIN INFO

Search engine rankings favor sites that are registered for a long period of time. Long domain registrations indicate a commitment to the site, a signal that the site has a lower chance of being spam. Extend your website registration for \$10-20 a year for an SEO boost.

## ●..... MOZ RANK

MOZ Rank is a general measure of how much online authority your site has. A higher MOZ rank is better. Note that MOZ Rank factors in both on-page and off-page SEO. Improving your on-page SEO may help improve your rank, but there is much more you can do to improve it. Don't worry, we will get to all this.

## ●..... GOOGLE CRAWL DATE

When Google crawls your site, it updates the information related to it, such as your keywords and other SEO factors. Therefore, you want Google to crawl your site as often as possible.

The best thing you can do to make Google crawl your site more frequently is to regularly produce fresh content and publish it on your website.

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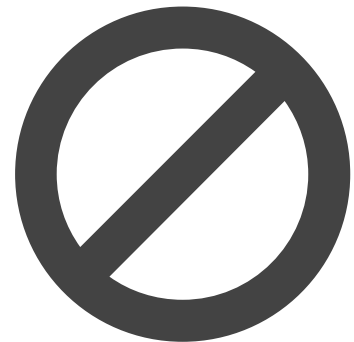


## ..... URL STRUCTURE

The URL of a web page is its web address. For example, HubSpot’s blog has a URL of <http://blog.hubspot.com>. The URL structure of a website is about how the different URLs connect with each other.

Unfortunately, improving your URL structure is one of the more difficult aspects of on-page website optimization. The methods of fixing these issues depend entirely on the back-end parts of your website, such as your content management system or programming framework. Nevertheless, if you have a competent developer by your side, having him or her tackle these issues can significantly improve your SEO.

### **AVOID KEYWORD STUFFING**



After reading this, you might think, “Keywords are really important. If having keywords all over my page helps me rank for them, I should just fill my page with these keywords.”

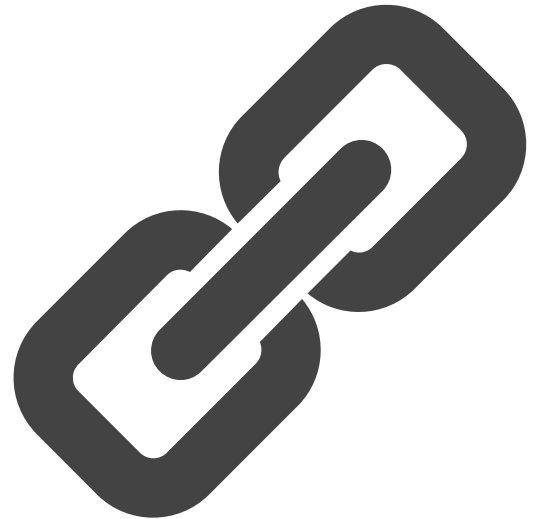
It’s not that easy. Apart from leading to a bad experience for site visitors, search engines are smart enough to detect these behaviors. Trying to trick search engines is not a good SEO strategy, and sacrificing readability for SEO is not a good idea either.

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## IMPROVING **OFF-PAGE SEO** WITH INBOUND LINKS

If on-page SEO accounts for 25% of your overall search engine ranking, what makes up the remaining 75%? As we mentioned before, off-page SEO is based on the authority of your website, or what other websites ‘say’ about yours. Simply put, websites with better or higher authority will rank better than websites with lower authority.



Inbound links are key influencers on a website’s authority. When another website links to a page on your website, that is called an inbound link. More inbound links is better, and more inbound links from websites with high authority is even better (e.g., an inbound link from *The New York Times’* website is much more valuable than an inbound link from a low-trafficked blog with a small readership).

So what’s the best way to attract more inbound links (or ‘link love,’ as we like to call it)? Through content creation! Creating valuable, remarkable content that other websites will naturally want to link to in their own content is a great way to increase your website’s inbound links. In addition, you can improve your chances of attracting inbound links by sharing your content in social media and optimizing it for search results so it can easily be found.

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# PRINCIPLES OF **GOOD URL** STRUCTURE

## APPLY A 301 REDIRECT WHERE NECESSARY



A 301 redirect forwards an old URL to a new one. Make sure you do this if you change the URL of a page on your site. A common mistake is not applying a 301 redirect between `yoursite.com` and `www.yoursite.com`. This can be quite a problem from an SEO standpoint, because search engines will give separate credit to both versions of your site.

## AVOID PAGES WITH DEEPLY NESTED URLS



Here is an example of what a deeply nested URL looks like: `http://yoursite.com/about/management/contact/phone`. Deeply nested pages will get less SEO credit. You can fix this problem by improving your overall site design.

## INCLUDE KEYWORDS IN YOUR URLS



If you've already purchased your main URL, then don't worry about buying a new one just for this sake. But you can clean the URLs of your interior pages to include keywords and not look like gibberish.

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## SEPARATE KEYWORDS WITH DASHES



For your internal page URLs, separate individual keywords with dashes (-). For example: <http://hubspot.com/marketing-resources/> is a good URL that captures ‘marketing’ and ‘resources’ as keywords.

## CREATE STATIC URLs, NOT DYNAMIC ONES



A static URL is one that stays the same. As explained [in this Webconfs article](#), a dynamic URL looks like this:

<http://www.somesites.com/forums/thread.php?threadid=12345&sort=date>

A static URL looks like this:

<http://www.somesites.com/forums/the-challenges-of-dynamic-urls.htm>

You can find how to create static URLs with your web server software: do a Google search on “create static URL” + (name of your server software).

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STEP 3

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# CREATE A BLOG & MARKETING OFFERS



*“Blogging is a powerful way to help more people discover your business online.”*

.....

Blogging platforms like HubSpot, WordPress and Blogger have made publishing content on the web easier than ever. Now that you have developed a clear understanding of your business’ keywords and optimized your website for search engines, your next step should be to attract more visitors. Blogging and creating other content like ebooks and webinars are powerful ways to drive the right people to your business online.



## HOW TO THINK ABOUT BUSINESS BLOGGING

When blogging, take off your hat as a business owner or marketing manager and try to think like a magazine publisher. The goal of your business blog should be to publish articles valuable and non-promotional articles, much in the way a column or an article in an industry magazine would be. Also, think about the words you are using. Avoid industry jargon that only your employees would understand. Just as in the process of designing a keyword strategy, think of the words your customers use to describe your business and apply those phrases to your blogging language.

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## GETTING SET UP WITH BLOGGING

Many paid and free tools let you easily publish content online. When selecting a *business* blogging platform, however, you need to consider a few special requirements. First, make sure your blog is a section of your business website.



“ Without a blog, a website is like a brochure that doesn’t change often. ”

A blog makes your website more dynamic by automatically injecting new content every time an article is published. Search engines reward higher rankings to websites that consistently add fresh content, and these higher rankings translate into new visitors and leads for your business.

## BLOGGING PLATFORMS TO CONSIDER

If you are looking for a blogging platform for your business, among your options you’ll find Wordpress, HubSpot, TypePad, Drupal and Posterous. All these platforms offer a content management system (CMS) that enables you to easily add content to your blog, without needing to know any HTML code. Thus, you can update your site without having to wait for a webmaster to make changes.



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# KEY COMPONENTS OF A GREAT BLOG POST

So what does a good business blog post look like? A well-constructed article includes several key components essential for attracting traffic and [converting the traffic into leads](#):

## ..... A COMPELLING ARTICLE TITLE

Your blog article's title is the first thing people will see, so it should clearly indicate what the article is about. Clarity and specificity attract readers and prompt them to share the post with their networks. Your titles should also appeal to search engines: remember to include an industry keyword in your title for SEO purposes.

## ..... WELL WRITTEN & FORMATTED TEXT

The body of your article should be well-written and formatted in a way that makes it easy to read. Consider using header tags and bullet points to break up the content into sections. Ask a coworker or a friend to review the post before you publish.

## ..... ADD MULTIMEDIA CONTENT

Relevant multimedia content can make a blog article more memorable and fun to read. It also helps to break up the text to make it more pleasing to the eye. Aim to add at least one relevant image per blog post. Slideshow presentations, video and infographics are examples of other multimedia content you can feature.

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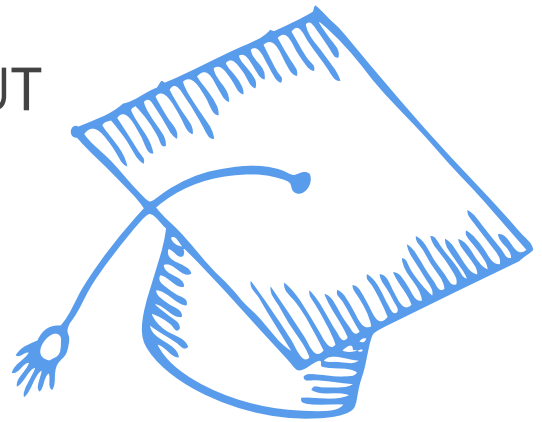
●..... LINKS

Include in-text links to relevant content, thus helping readers dig deeper into the resources they are most interested in. Your links can, naturally, point to *your* internal and [landing pages](#) to help you [generate more leads](#) from your content.

●..... CALL-TO-ACTION

Each and every blog article you publish should include a relevant call-to-action in the article to help boost lead generation. You can learn more about calls-to-action by reading our ebook, "[How to Create Effective Calls-to-Action.](#)"

## DECIDING **WHAT TO BLOG** ABOUT



Most business blogs start with a purpose. What are you trying to educate your industry and potential customers about?

This education is not about your product. It's about common industry issues, the problems your potential customers face and, sometimes, the solutions your product or service offer to tackle these challenges. A great way to start blogging is to answer the ten most common questions you get asked by prospective new customers. Do this once a week for ten weeks and you have the foundations of a successful blog.

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Once those first ten weeks are over, check out your blogging analytics to see which articles resonated the most with your audience. If two or three of the posts received a significantly higher number of views and inbound links, try to expand on the topics at hand. Consider interviewing a coworker to reveal their thoughts on the subject.



Remember to let your expertise and passion shine through your blog content and keep some of these business blog best practices in the back of your mind.

## BUSINESS BLOGGING IS ABOUT **LEAD GENERATION**

Business blogging presents a fantastic platform for attracting organic traffic and engaging with your audience. However, the primary goal of your business blog should be to drive conversions. To achieve this goal, add call-to-actions to your posts and have them link to landing pages that provide downloadable access to more in-depth learning materials, such as an ebook or webinar.



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Make sure to include CTAs both in the sidebar of your blog as well as on every individual article you publish. In addition to image/button CTAs, you can also include text CTAs within the body of your blog content. At the beginning, middle or end of every blog article, you need to place some sort of call-to-action that will encourage people to take action like:

DOWNLOAD SOME CONTENT || FOLLOW THE BUSINESS ON SOCIAL MEDIA  
SUBSCRIBE TO THE BLOG || JOIN YOUR NEWSLETTER

When designing your CTAs, make sure it resonates with the content you have introduced in the blog post. For instance, if you are in the wellness and healthy food industry, you might write about how quinoa helps people create nutritional diets. The blog call-to-action in this instance would perform well if it linked to a report about 50 interesting nutritional facts.

*an example of a  
blog call-to-action*



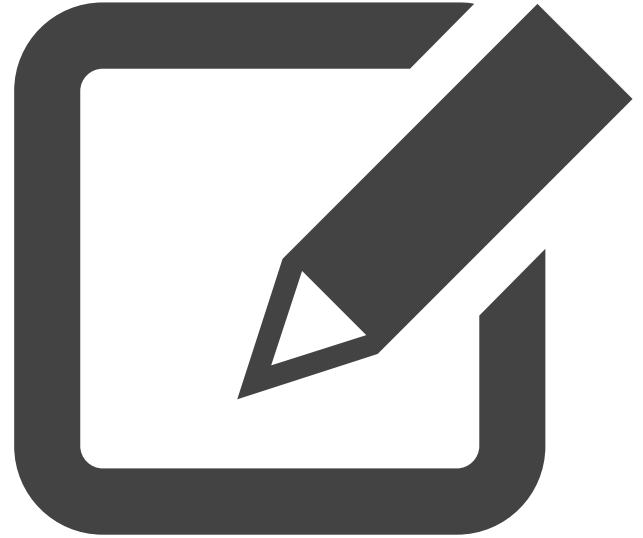
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## OTHER CONTENT USED FOR LEAD GENERATION

While it's a great place to start, blog content isn't the only type of content you can be creating to be successful with Internet marketing. You need to produce longer-form content items like ebooks, whitepapers, or research reports that can be used for lead generation. Also consider creating non-text based offers like how-to videos, webinars and slideshows.



Such offers will feed your business conversions. An industry resource that took some time and effort to put together provides the type of value visitors are looking for. It might educate, enrich one's knowledge or simply entertain. In any case, it has the power to achieve an information exchange: the process in which a visitor fills out a lead capture form to access the resource. This is a critical point in the sales cycle.

The offers you produce shouldn't be randomly selected. On the contrary, there is some precise math behind that decision: the math from your [marketing analytics](#). Reporting insights will direct you to the types of content which attracts your target audience. For instance, if a whitepaper on heating systems brought you more leads and sales than a webinar on the same topic then you should focus on writing more text-based content.

In this context, [closed-loop marketing](#) is an essential element of finding the highest converting offers and leveraging them appropriately.

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STEP 4



# PROMOTE CONTENT THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA





“*Most businesses need to first focus on the major social media players.*”

.....

Social media is generating a lot of buzz among marketers and business owners. Those who can leverage social networks to distribute business content and increase the community of advocates for their business experience significant growth in revenue.

Social media provides a platform for direct communication between your customers, prospects and employees. What is more, it is a key driver of content distribution and brand visibility online.

While new social networks, like [Google+](#) and [Pinterest](#), can significantly impact the social media landscape, most businesses need to first focus on the major players: Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Just remember that before you jump into using these networks for marketing, you need to have [marketing analytics](#) in place to measure the true success of your efforts.



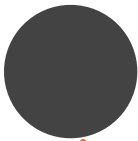
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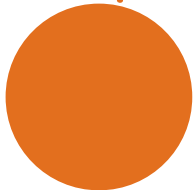
# MONITORING SOCIAL MEDIA

An important part of leveraging social media for business is to understand what industry-related conversations are happening online and recognizing when you should respond. Here are some tools you can use to monitor your business and industry mentions in social media:



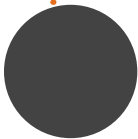
## GOOGLE ALERTS

Set up multiple [Google Alerts](#) for your company, brand, products, leaders, industry terms, etc. The alerts will get delivered directly to your email inbox at the frequency you indicate (e.g., daily or as they happen) and they are a great way to track mentions of your brand and relevant keywords on the web.



## HUBSPOT

[HubSpot's social media monitoring](#) tool enables you to set up filters in the key social media networks and track conversations relevant to your brand and industry.



## HOOTSUITE

Using a tool like [HootSuite](#) allows you to save keyword searches as a live stream so you won't miss out on what's being said about your brand, your industry and your products.

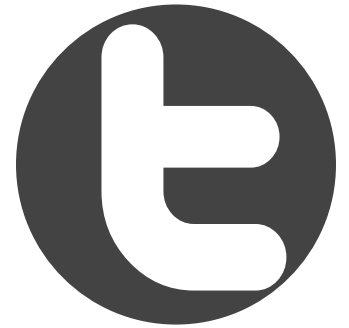
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# GETTING STARTED WITH **TWITTER** FOR BUSINESS

Twitter is a social network on which people share 140-character messages. Users “follow” or subscribe to each other’s updates and can receive messages via multiple technology devices, including desktop computers, smart phones, and text messages.



Understanding how and if people are talking about your business and industry on Twitter will dictate your decision on whether you should invest the time to start and manage a Twitter account for your business. If you decide that Twitter is right for your business, you can visit [Twitter.com](http://Twitter.com) to sign up for a free account. Here are a few tips for setting up a business Twitter account:

- ..... Use the name of you business as your Twitter username.
- ..... Use your business logo or a picture of the person managing the account as the profile image for the account.
- ..... Create a custom Twitter background that provides additional information about your business.
- ..... Use tools like HootSuite or TweetDeck to determine industry influencers and potential customers that your business should follow.

For more tips on how to use Twitter for business, view HubSpot’s free webinar, “[How to Use Twitter for Marketing & PR.](#)”





## USING **FACEBOOK** FOR BUSINESS



With more than 800 million monthly active users (at the end of December 2011), Facebook has become the major player in the social media industry. From a marketing perspective, Facebook serves as a powerful platform for building a community of advocates and increasing word-of-mouth marketing.

The first step in leveraging Facebook for business is to set up a business page. [Watch this video](#) for a step-by-step guide to creating a Facebook business page. For more in-depth information on how to use Facebook for business, check out HubSpot’s complimentary ebook, “[How to Use Facebook for Business.](#)”

## USING **LINKEDIN** FOR BUSINESS



The social network businesspeople may be most familiar with is LinkedIn. This network of over 150 million business users is a major player in the lead generation game ([especially for B2B companies](#)).

To get started using LinkedIn for your business, set up and complete your personal profile as well as a company profile for your business. When setting up these profiles, remember to optimize your information by adding links to your website and blog. Take the time to make the descriptions of yourself and your business interesting and an accurate reflection of your experience, knowledge, and passion.

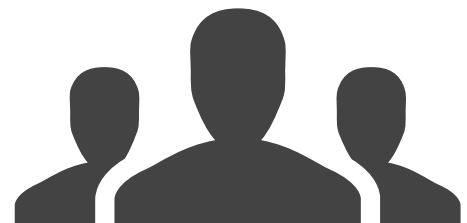
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Once you have created these profiles, you can explore LinkedIn’s other tools widely used for marketing. The professional network has two major features that are of particular use to businesses for lead generation and customer acquisition.

●..... LINKEDIN GROUPS

The Groups feature allows LinkedIn users to create and participate in discussions around a topic within LinkedIn. Groups can be a great way to make potential business connections and share relevant blog content or new offers.



●..... LINKEDIN ANSWERS

The second feature, LinkedIn Answers, enables you to find people publicly stating they have a specific challenge or need. Identifying these questions and responding with resources of yours that answer that person’s question can turn into a great marketing opportunity for your business. Ultimately, you can generate high-quality traffic and leads from LinkedIn Answers.



For more information about how to use LinkedIn for business, access HubSpot’s free ebook, [“Learning LinkedIn From the Experts.”](#)



STEP 5



# CONVERT WEBSITE TRAFFIC INTO LEADS

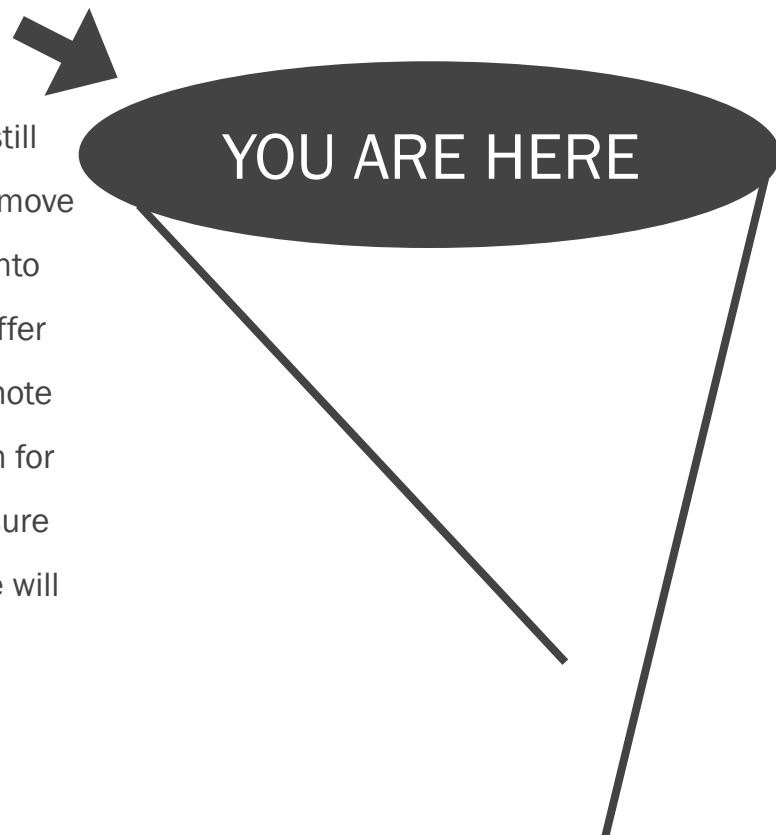


# “ People are visiting your site, but those visits aren’t leading to new customers. What to do? ”

By now, you should have already launched your blog, optimized your website to get found, and started participating in and promoting you content via social networks. If it’s been several weeks, by now you should have started to see a spike in traffic to your website.

There’s only one problem. All that traffic to your site isn’t leading to any new business! People are visiting your site, but those visits aren’t leading to new customers – or even new sales leads. So what do you do?

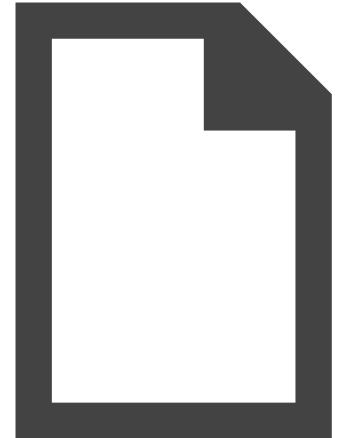
Simple: focus on conversion. Right now you are still at the top of your marketing funnel. You need to move down and start converting your website visitors into sales leads. To do this, decide on a compelling offer for your prospects, create a call-to-action to promote your offer, and launch a landing page with a form for visitors to submit their information. Finally, measure and iterate the whole process. In this section, we will go over the conversion process in more detail.





## STEP 1: SELECT YOUR OFFER

The offer is the most important part of any campaign. It's the initial attraction that catches the attention of your website visitors and gives them a reason to fill out the [form used to collect their information](#). Your offer should target the type of sales lead you're trying to attract. For example, if you're a golf instructor, you want to create offers that will appeal to golfers trying to improve their game. If you're a sales process consultant, you'll want to create offers that appeal to executives trying to improve their sales process.



“Typical content offers include research reports, how-to ebooks (like this one!), slide downloads, and webinars.”

Product-focused offers can include a custom consultation, free trial or demo of your product. Of course, there's no reason to be constrained by what's typical. Use anything you think will work for your target customers. Also, keep in mind that the offer form is a conversation starter for the sales team, so it should be designed to start a conversation that will lead to a sale.

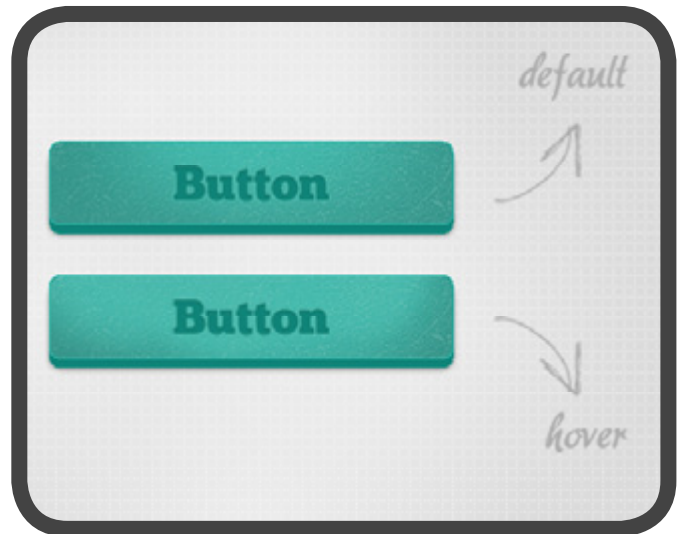
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## STEP 2: CREATE CALLS-TO-ACTION

Once you decide on your offer, create a few compelling calls-to-action (CTAs). As we suggested earlier in this ebook, a call-to-action is a button or a link that grabs a user's attention and directs that user to a landing page. Calls-to-action are located everywhere--on website pages, in emails and blog posts, within offers, etc. They are the key trigger behind lead generation.



On the landing page, a visitor is prompted to complete the form by entering their contact information and other details in order to receive what's being offered. Through this information exchange the visitor converts into a lead with whom your sales team can follow up. Naturally, not all conversion events are created equal and, as you become more experienced with Internet marketing, you will have to [start thinking about lead scoring](#).

If you have an effective call-to-action, you'll convert a high percentage of your website visitors into leads. To learn more about call-to-action design, placement and copywriting, download HubSpot's free ebook "[An Introduction to Effective Calls-to-Actions](#)."

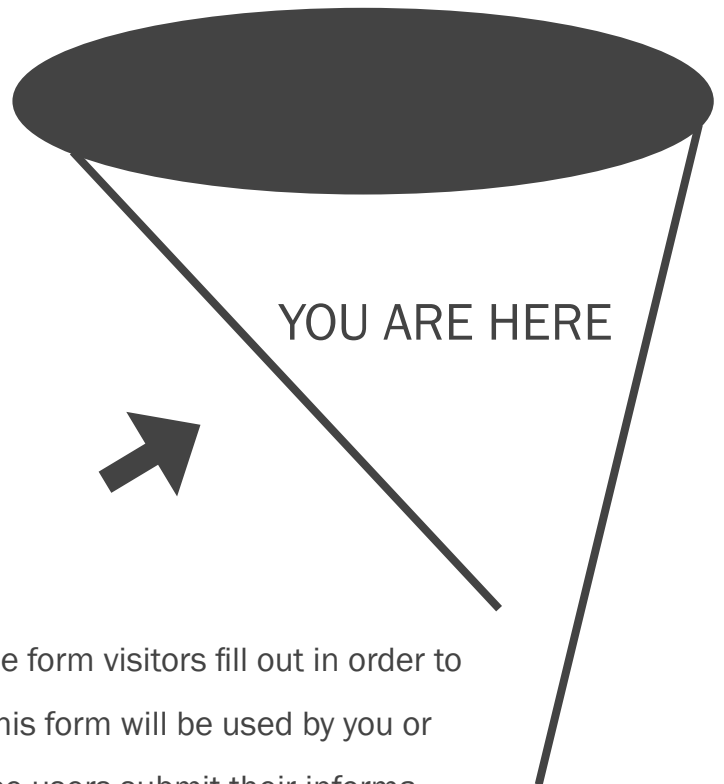
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## STEP 3: CREATE LANDING PAGES

The [landing page](#) is where your website visitors arrive after they click on your call-to-action, and where they will fill out the form to receive your offer.

You'd be surprised by how many times we've seen calls-to-action that aren't links. Whether intentional or a matter of forgetfulness, the lack of a link will make it much harder for visitors to find out how to receive your offer, and they'll likely give up. So double, triple, and quadruple check to make sure all of your CTAs link to their corresponding landing pages.



As we already mentioned, landing pages house the form visitors fill out in order to access your offer. The information you ask for in this form will be used by you or your sales team to follow up with these leads. Once users submit their information on the landing page, they should be redirected to a thank-you page where they can access the offer.

In addition to the form, a landing page should feature a clear description of the offer, preferably with an image and bullet points that are easy to browse through.

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Be clear and specific when describing your offer in the call-to-action and the landing page. If you're giving away a free guide, have the CTA read, "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. Reflect these same benefits on the landing page so that you create alignment between the two. Here's an example of a typical HubSpot landing page:

The screenshot shows a HubSpot landing page for a free on-demand webinar. The page features the HubSpot logo at the top left. The main heading is "How to Crush the Competition with Inbound Marketing". Below the heading, there is a section for "Free On-Demand Webinar" with details on duration (60min) and presenter (Brian Halligan). A photo of Brian Halligan is included. The page lists key takeaways from the webinar, such as "How to outrank your competitors in search" and "Where you should focus your marketing muscle". There are social sharing options for Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. At the bottom, there is a registration form with fields for "First Name", "Last Name", and "Email (privacy policy)".

For more tips on creating optimized landing pages, check out our free ebook, "[Optimizing Landing Pages for Lead Generation and Conversion.](#)"



## STEP 4: TEST, MEASURE & ITERATE

Offers, calls-to-action and landing pages are the core elements of the conversion process, but you can't stop there. If you just have a single conversion pathway, you have very little insight into the process and the way it performs. In order to improve your conversion process, you need to constantly measure and experiment.

The [marketing metrics](#) you should watch closely include the click-through rate of your call-to-action, conversion rate of your landing page and the number of new leads and sales an offer resulted in. Get a more granular look into these metrics by reading our free ebook "[An Introduction to Inbound Marketing Analytics](#)."



In order to determine which elements best help you achieve your goals, you have to test different CTAs, landing pages and offers. If a call-to-action has been on your homepage for a month, vary the messaging or swap out an entirely new CTA, and after another month, measure which one performed best. If landing page conversions are low, make a change to the page layout and measure the results. Don't be afraid to test different variations; you can always switch back if the old version worked better. It will be worth it when you've found the best combination that increases your site's conversions.

Once you become more familiar with this process, you can grab our ebook "[An Introduction to A/B Testing](#)" which will show you how to optimize different elements of your marketing funnel through split testing.

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STEP 6

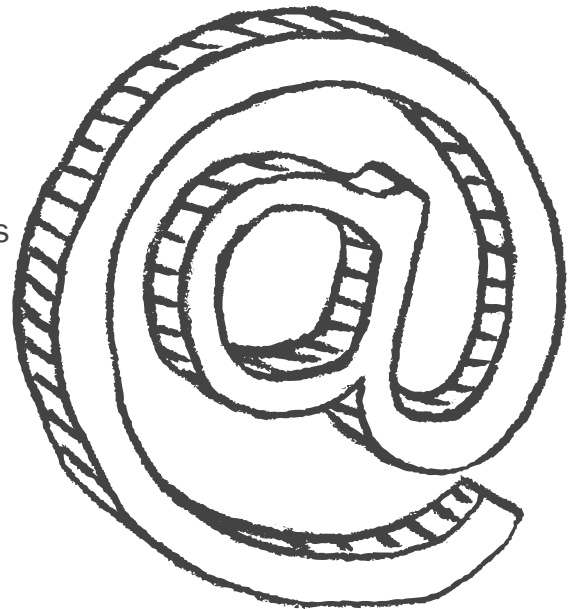


# NURTURE LEADS WITH TARGETED MESSAGES

“Companies that excel at lead nurturing generate 50% more sales-ready leads.”

.....

According to [Gleanster Research](#) 50% of leads are qualified but not ready to buy. Companies that build relationships with their leads over time have the greatest success in turning leads into customers by staying top-of-mind until the lead is ready to buy.



That is why following up with contacts through targeted messages becomes really beneficial from a business perspective.

[Lead nurturing](#) is the process of developing that relationship with your potential customer by sending targeted, relevant, and valuable messages to them in a timely manner. The end goal is to get your leads to “raise their hand” and self-select into further engaging with your business. A 2009 Forrester Research study found that companies that excel at lead nurturing are able to generate 50% more sales-ready leads at 33% lower cost-per-lead.

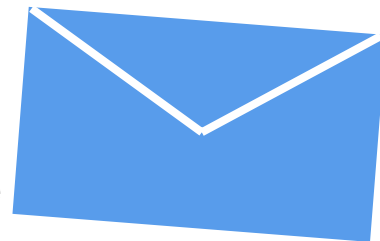
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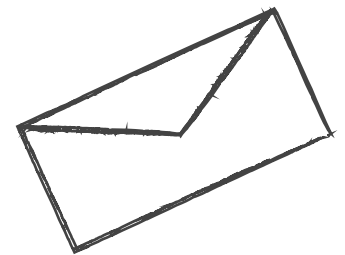


## THE CONCEPT OF LEAD NURTURING

Simply put, lead nurturing is a system that allows you to send an automated series of email messages to an early stage lead in order to pre-qualify them before handing them over to your sales team.

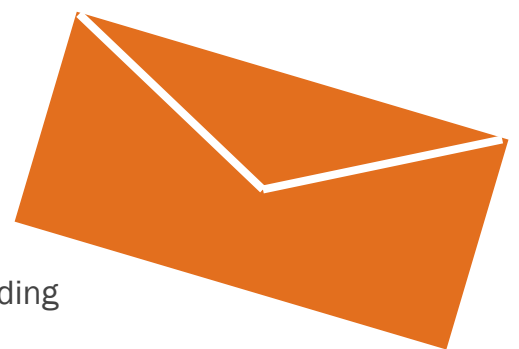


As a marketer, you know that getting leads is fantastic - but not all leads are at the point where they can be considered sales-ready. Depending on whose research you read, only 5% - 25% of the traffic on your site is actually ready to do business with you at that moment; the rest of the visitors are in a research mindset.



Take a look at your existing sales funnel. How long does it typically take a lead to become a customer after his or her first inquiry? Does the sales cycle vary for different types of purchases?

Equipped with the answers to these questions, you can build some effective lead nurturing campaigns and leverage this marketing channel to qualify leads and help your sales organization. Learn the fundamentals of lead nurturing by reading our free ebook [“An Introduction to Lead Nurturing.”](#)



# EMAIL MARKETING BEST PRACTICES

In addition to nurturing your leads through targeted email messages, you should also be looking at the larger email marketing picture, which includes growing your database, closely following key metrics and conversion best practices.

## ●..... LIST-BUILDING

One of the biggest challenge even for experienced Internet marketers is creating opt-in opportunities. In our [presentation Death By Marketing Automation](#) HubSpot's CMO, Mike Volpe, explains that email lists expire at a ~25% a year. Indeed, this is deadly for conversions and new business.



Make sure your lead forms allow your website visitors to enter their email address and opt-in to receive your messages. Give them a reason to opt-in. What's so valuable about your marketing offer? What interesting and unique information will they receive in your email newsletter? Be explicit and phrase the benefit(s) in a language your audience will understand.

Only send messages to people who have explicitly opted in. You can follow the extreme principle of Seth Godin's [Permission Marketing](#): Would your recipient be upset if they didn't receive your message? If yes, you should go ahead and send your email.

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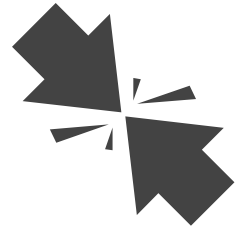






## ●..... SENDING

Send emails that are relevant to the interests of your contacts. What offer initially brought them to you? How can you follow-up on that interest to further engage them?



Be personal in your communication. Use a real email sender name and add a personal signature. Personalize the message so the recipient remembers how and why they came to your website. For example, start with “You recently checked out our ebook...” or “Thanks for subscribing to our blog!”



Make sure that your message adds value. Get into the mind of your recipient and ask, “What’s In It For Me?” Are you emailing them just to tell them how great your product is? Or are you offering to help them solve a problem? Make the value clear in the email body and subject line.



Don’t rely on images. Many email clients don’t load images automatically, so if your email is one large image, your recipient won’t have any idea what it’s about! Use images as supplementary (clickable) content in your email, and make sure you have enough text to communicate value.



Be consistent in your communication to set the right expectations in recipients. Whether you send your messages daily, weekly, or monthly, pick a schedule and stick to it.



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## ●..... (RE)CONVERTING

Each one of your marketing messages should have a goal. Make it clear what recipients are supposed to do once they open your email. Are you driving subscribers to read a product announcement on your blog? Asking them to share an offer on social media? Inviting them to download your new ebook?



If your goal is lead generation, include a call-to-action that links to a landing page on which the recipient can reconvert and self-select to further engage with your company. But these subscribers are already existing leads for my business, you might object. Then, inform them about product-centric offers and let them qualify themselves as more sales-ready. If they are not ready to commit yet, continue nurturing them with broader offers and stay top of mind for them.

Remember, the landing page is part of your email campaign. Email marketing doesn't stop with a click. Your landing page is an extension of your email, and it is where your conversion takes place. Make sure your email offer and landing page are well aligned, using similar language and images.

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## ..... MEASURING EMAIL PERFORMANCE

Many metrics can define the performance of your marketing emails. They include delivery rate, open rate, unsubscribe rate, click-through rate, list growth rate, email forwarding rate, etc. Here, we will focus on just a few key metrics, but you can read about the rest in our ebook [“An Introduction to Inbound Marketing Analytics.”](#)

### CLICK-THROUGH RATE (CTR)

Click-through rate measures response: how many of the people you emailed clicked on your link(s). The CTR can give you a sense of how compelling your offer and email messages are. Experiment with different offers, subject lines, calls-to-action, and timing to improve your email CTR.



What about open rate? Open rate is an unreliable metric, as major email clients do not load the images necessary for tracking who opened an email. Instead of worrying about open rate, focus on the number of *clicks* your email received.

### UNSUBSCRIBE RATE

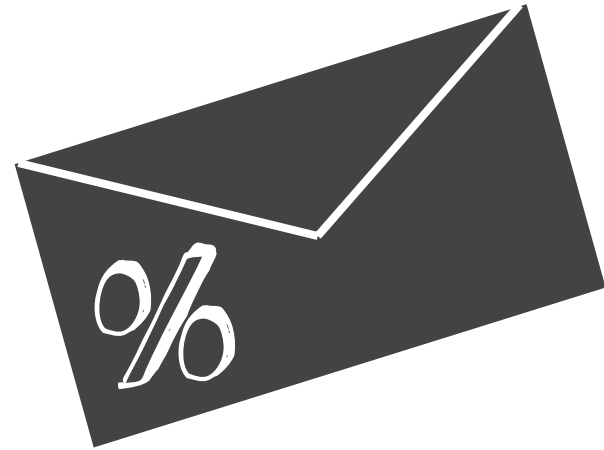
Unsubscribe rate measures the percentage of recipients who opted out of your email communication. As with open rates, the unsubscribe rate isn't a reliable picture of your email list's health. Many subscribers won't bother to go through the formal unsubscribe process but will just stop opening, reading, and clicking on your messages.

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## CONVERSION RATE MEASURES ACTIONS

Measure how many of those clicks turned into reconversions on your landing page. It's the ultimate measure of an email campaign's effectiveness. The higher your conversion rate, the more relevant and compelling the offer was for your audience.



However, conversion rates are dependent on factors beyond the original email message, such as the quality of your landing page. Test different landing pages to improve the conversion on your website. Measuring conversion rate requires integration between your email platform and your [marketing analytics](#).

In this section we covered how to use lead nurturing and email marketing to follow up with your leads and engage them on an ongoing basis to push them down the sales funnel.

“Nurturing your contacts, however, doesn't have to be limited to email communication.”



After all, you can communicate with your leads via social media or other platforms they use. That is why you should also start thinking about [behavior-driven communications](#), those that get triggered based on your leads' full history of interactions on and off your site

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STEP 7

---

# OPTIMIZE YOUR MARKETING FOR MOBILE VIEWING

“ *The primary message to marketers: optimize for mobile devices.* ”

It's clear that mobile platforms are becoming more and more of a consideration when it comes to internet marketing. The growth of the iPhone and android platform smartphones is going to continue, with reports saying that sales of smartphones, tablets and notebooks are expected to grow 26% annually through 2015. If you are trying to market on the mobile web, you need to consider the importance of creating quality content that can be easily consumed on mobile devices, such as smartphones or tablet computers.



## HOW TO **OPTIMIZE FOR MOBILE**

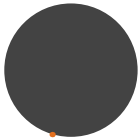
The topic of mobile marketing is being tossed around frequently in marketing circles, often with many different intended meanings. While mobile marketing can mean many things, there is one primary message being conveyed to marketers looking to take advantage of mobile: optimization of websites for mobile viewing.

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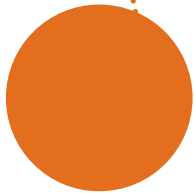


To make your website mobile-friendly for viewing, you have two main options.



### SET UP MOBILE REDIRECT

You can create an entirely different version of your website targeted for mobile viewers, and set up a mobile redirect. (Most likely, your web hosting service will be able to build a browser redirect feature into your website.) Through this feature, a line of code is placed on your website’s homepage to determine the size of a visitor’s browser screen. Based on each screen’s size, the visitor is either directed to the mobile site, or they stay put.



### USE MOBILE CSS

In addition to the redirect option, you can use mobile CSS to make your website mobile-friendly. The CSS basically allows you to change the way your website is organized and displayed just on mobile devices.

Before you proceed with either of these options, you should weed out some of the less important information that is on your actual website and tailor it toward mobile viewers. Mobile visitors are typically looking for key information when they visit your website, so reduce the information included on your web pages to provide them with just information that will be most useful. For example, make contact information prominently visible and make the navigation less robust.

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## CRITICAL ELEMENTS TO OPTIMIZE FOR MOBILE

While your entire website should be mobile-friendly, there are some critical elements that you need to pay close attention to. If you decide to outsource this help, make sure you ask your about these:

- ..... EMAILS
- ..... CALLS-TO-ACTION & LANDING PAGES
- ..... DOWNLOADS
- ..... VIDEO

With indications that mobile bandwidth cost may be on the rise, it is important for marketers to develop lightweight ways to engage mobile users. Don't ask a user to stream a ten-minute video. Instead, provide a clean text summary of the video if they are using a cellular data connection. Give them an opportunity to watch the video if they are on a WiFi connection, in an effort to help them conserve mobile bandwidth.

Now that you have all the right internet marketing strategies in place, it's time to make all of them as efficient as they can be. Your main goal in this next step is to find the best way to use all the techniques we've already discussed to get found online and generate new customers.

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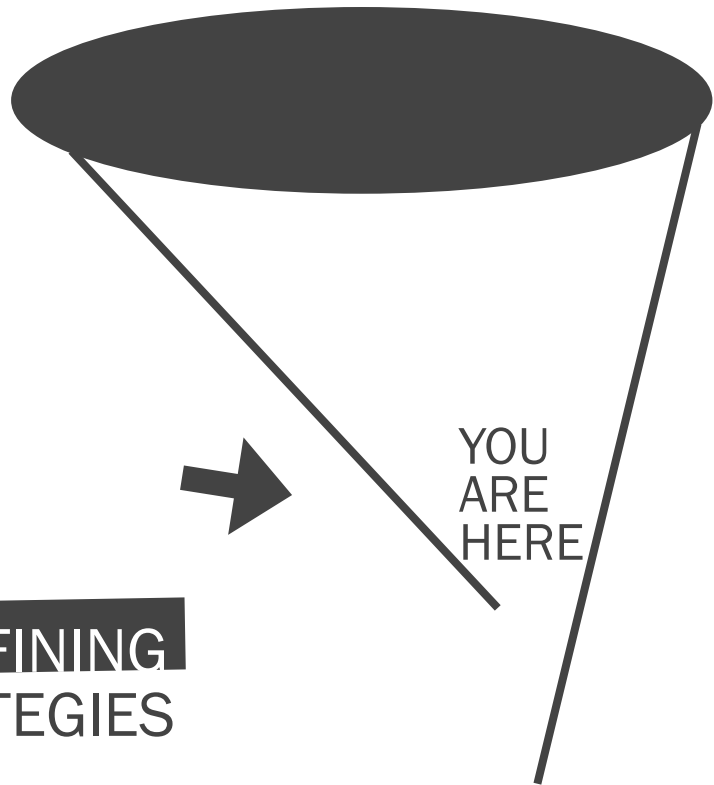
STEP 8



# ANALYZE & REFINE STRATEGIES

“ At the bottom of the funnel, review the performance of your various marketing activities. ”

Now you are surely moving to the bottom of the sales and marketing funnel. That means you need to review the performance of your various marketing activities, identify the winning ones and eliminate or drastically modify the ineffective campaigns. In this section we will review some metrics to monitor and suggestions for refining your Internet marketing strategy.



## STEPS FOR ANALYZING & REFINING INTERNET MARKETING STRATEGIES

### ..... IMPLEMENT AN ANALYTICS PROGRAM

In order to track the performance of your efforts, you need to have an analytics program in place. [HubSpot's marketing analytics](#) tie to your CRM solution and reveal astonishing data not only on traffic and leads, but also on new customers acquired from various channels and campaigns. [Google Analytics](#) is a another great tool designed to help marketers analyze website traffic.

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●..... IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

When you review your marketing activities, figure out what you want to improve. Do you want more people coming to your blog? Do you want to convert more visitors on your home page into leads? Get into the mindset of constantly looking for new opportunities.

●..... SET A METRIC FOR SUCCESS

In almost all cases, your metric should be quantifiable and involve a set time frame. For example: “Increase X website leads over the next X days.”

●..... REFINE YOUR STRATEGY

Analyze how your programs performed and make changes with the intention of achieving your marketing goals by doing less of what doesn’t work and more of what works (and by modifying what doesn’t work so that it works better).

●..... EVALUATE PERFORMANCE

Determine if you’ve met your success metric. If so, stick with your change. If you haven’t met it, see what you could have done differently. In either case, continue to monitor the metric to make sure the improvement has a long-term effect.

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# METRICS TO TRACK AND REPORT ON

In order for your refinements to have a big impact, you need to monitor several key factors. Before diving into how to improve them, let's first discuss what the relevant metrics are. This is just a minimal list of what you should be monitoring. For the complete list, check out our ebook ["An Introduction to Inbound Marketing Analytics."](#)

## ●..... MARKETING GRADE

Instantly [find out](#) the weaknesses and strengths across your marketing funnel. Your [Marketing Grader report](#) will reveal information that will guide you through any optimization process.

## ●..... TRAFFIC

Overall, how many people are coming to your website? Look into what channel drove the most and least visits. Take that knowledge, make iterations and launch campaigns that will increase visits.



## ●..... LEADS

How much of this traffic are you converting into leads and potential customers? This number should be constantly growing to ensure a steady flow of revenue.

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..... CUSTOMERS

You should always be mapping your campaigns and channels to customer acquisition. How many sales did you close this month? How does that compare to last month's performance? The ability to make this comparison is invaluable to any marketing organization. Not to mention how happy these return-on-investment (ROI) numbers are going to make your boss.



..... TRAFFIC, LEADS AND SALES BY KEYWORDS

Remember the first step of this ebook? It was all about creating a keyword strategy. To achieve this task successfully, you need to know which keywords are drawing in the most visitors to your site. This is actually data that Google Analytics can provide you with easily. However, you should go deeper than that. Which keywords brought in the most sales? [HubSpot's integrated software](#) can provide you with these insights, enabling you to take your keyword strategy to the next level.

			VISITS		LEADS		SALES		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Google Images	<a href="#">facebook</a>	2,444	0%	0	0%	0	0%	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Google	<a href="#">hubspot.com</a>	2,158	2.8%	61	1.6%	1	.046%	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Google	<a href="#">how to use facebook for business</a>	1,450	20%	293	0%	0	0%	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Google	<a href="#">lead generation</a>	1,396	3.1%	43	0%	0	0%	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yahoo	<a href="#">hubspot</a>	1,333	2.9%	38	0%	0	0%	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Google	<a href="#">linkedin</a>	940	.74%	7	0%	0	0%	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Google	<a href="#">hubspot pricing</a>	887	1%	9	0%	0	0%	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Google Images	<a href="#">facebook logo</a>	866	0%	0	0%	0	0%	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Google	<a href="#">google+ for business</a>	694	16%	109	0%	0	0%	

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## ..... CUSTOMER ACQUISITION COST

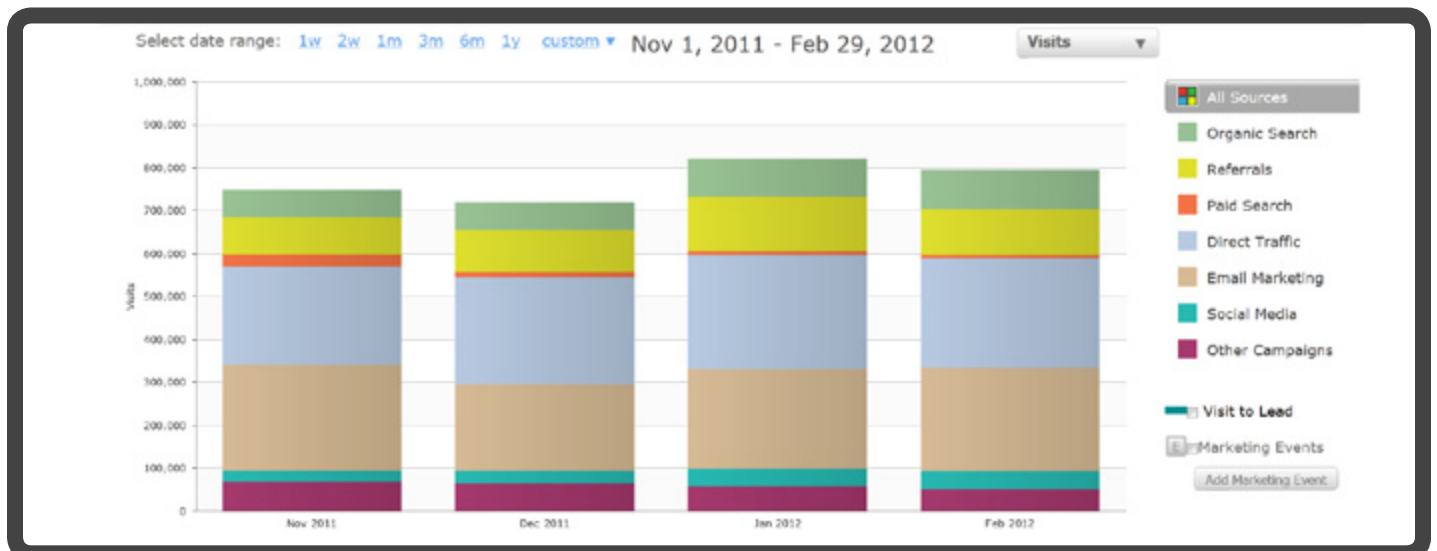
How much are you investing to draw in each new customer? If you rely primarily on outbound marketing methods, like trade shows and direct mail, your cost per customer is probably pretty high. If you are following the steps outlined in this ebook and focus on inbound marketing, you are saving your company a lot of money.

## ..... NEW VS. REPEAT VISITORS

Of your overall traffic, how many visitors are returning to your site, and how many new people are finding you? Both types of visitors are good. Attracting new visitors means people are finding you through search. Attracting repeat visitors means you've given people good reason to come back to your site. The key is finding a balance. Mike Volpe, HubSpot's CMO, recommends having around 15% repeat visitors.

## ..... EFFECTIVENESS BY CHANNEL

What promotional channels or referring sources are sending you the most traffic? Focus on long-term results, not short-term traffic spurts you might get from news coverage or press releases.





# STEPS FOR **IMPROVEMENT**

The following are some suggestions for improvement of the steps we have outlined in this ebook. These refinements should help you reach your broader goals:

## KEYWORDS



Try new keywords or variations of keywords to see if they help you get found better. Since each page on your site can incorporate different keywords, there are tons of ways to do this.

## ON-PAGE SEO



See if changing a simple on-page factor can help boost visits. Examples of on-page factors are page title, meta description, and headings. As a simple test, try changing the page title of one of your web pages to see if you generate more traffic.

## CONVERSIONS



Try new things with your conversion forms or landing pages. For example, make a change to the layout by switching up the form placement or featuring an image that's completely different from what you currently have.

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## CONTENT STRATEGY



Determine which content is bringing you the most traffic and leads. This could be an opportunity to either focus more on that kind of content, or refine your promotion of other content.

## SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTIONS



Evaluate which social media channels are generating the most site visitors and leads. Again, you can either focus on your successful social media platforms, or try improving your performance in your less successful ones.

## LEAD NURTURING & EMAIL MARKETING



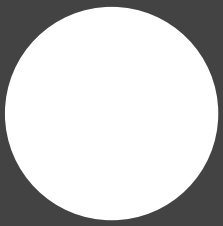
Maybe you're sending emails too frequently – or not frequently enough. Maybe the calls-to-action in your email are not appropriate for your audience. Always keep experimenting and testing.

Again, a great resource for optimizing your marketing funnel is our ebook [“An Introduction to A/B Testing.”](#) Grab your free copy now to get started with split testing.

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# CONCLUSION & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



“Tackle each tactic step by step to make internet marketing more manageable.”

For starters, the concept of internet marketing might seem difficult and daunting. But by tackling each internet marketing tactic step by step, businesses can make it more manageable and start seeing results. We hope that by reading this ebook, you’ve gained an understanding of how internet marketing can improve your overall marketing plan and help you achieve business growth.

You now know how to build a keyword strategy, develop your SEO plan, convert traffic into leads, nurture contacts down the sales funnel and analyze all these efforts in order to improve and get even better results.

Now go forth and conquer internet marketing, one step at a time!



# GET A FREE MARKETING ASSESSMENT

Wondering if you have got all the steps right? Find out in a custom inbound marketing assessment with an expert from HubSpot's team.



[www.HubSpot.com/IMA](http://www.HubSpot.com/IMA)

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