

Lupo Digital

# **INBOUND MARKETING FOR RTOs**

**EXECUTIVE GUIDE**

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CHAPTER

# 01

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## THE EVOLUTION OF MARKETING

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How will the modern marketer adapt in the age of ad blockers?

# CHAPTER 1: THE EVOLUTION OF MARKETING

## Technology has changed the 'path to purchase'

For a long time the dominant belief amongst marketing and sales people was that their messages had to reach as large an audience as possible to be successful. Spray-and-pray strategies were rife, and marketing was anything but scientific.

Today, however, things are very different. Most consumers have learned to block out the constant stream of irrelevant and pushy messages, and marketers who once relied on broad appeals to punt their products are finding that they have little influence over modern buyers. When consumers want answers, they go straight to the internet. This is where the new battle of the brands is won or lost.



## Inbound marketing is the evolutionary next step.

Instead of casting as wide a net as possible, inbound marketing uses a strategic approach to attract people who are already looking for your product or service. It engages them with relevant, informative content and guides them down a sales funnel towards a solution.

But content is only one of the elements used in inbound marketing. A successful inbound marketing strategy requires that a marketer come up with the right marketing mix to reach a brand's audience. Such a cocktail always involves the use of social media to promote a brand's content, but it can also include the use of paid search ads, direct marketing, and email.

### → Inbound marketing improves brand image.

Even worse than the wasted ad spend of unscientific, untargeted marketing is the public's perception of brands that use such tactics. In the best case scenario, an irrelevant advertisement is seen as only a benign distraction. More frequently, however, these messages are seen as an interruptive nuisance, and at their worst they're seen as the root of all evil, the dark force behind greedy consumerism and a nefarious element to be spurned and avoided at all costs. For marketers who cling to the old ways, it's not a pretty picture.

Inbound marketing can rectify much of this. By giving consumers valuable content for free, it changes a brand from an organisation concerned solely with profit into one with a genuine interest in that industry or field. Done correctly, the content element of inbound can convey values that consumers can relate to, turning the brand from "one of them" into "one of us".





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CHAPTER

# 02

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## THE INBOUND METHODOLOGY

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“Don’t interrupt what consumers want to consume - be what they want to consume”

### STEPS OF INBOUND MARKETING

The inbound marketing process can be divided into four steps:



Each of the four steps have specific tactics associated with them. Here we examine those tactics more closely:

#### **Anonymous Persona**

To attract visitors, marketers identify the keywords that potential students may use to find a qualification or course and then create related content. Visitors may find a webpage directly through a search engine or through a media link, but the result is the same: increased traffic.

#### **Prospect**

Once traffic has been driven to the website, interested web visitors are converted into leads by prompting them to volunteer their contact details in exchange for a content offer. Brief and informative landing pages tell visitors what they're getting, while CTAs tell them how to take the next step. Because only serious buyers will part with their details, the form guarding the downloadable content also acts as the first level of qualification.



### Customer

Most leads who enter a sales funnel are not initially ready to buy yet. However, after they submit their details, they are guided down the sales funnel by an automated email workflow that qualifies them according to how they engage with the content and messages. Only leads that are qualified are then passed on to the relevant sales channels, where the final tasks – such as contract negotiations – are completed.



### Promoters

Interaction with students doesn't end with a purchase. An inbound campaign continues to engage and delight students long after a sale is made, turning them into even happier promoters. To ensure that students are delighted with a business' after-sale correspondence, training organisations can do three things. They can provide students with guidance on how to get the most out of their course, keep up correspondence with emails designed to keep the brand front and foremost in a student's mind, and give their students the resources that will enable them to do their jobs better. By maintaining an open conversation, brands create lasting customer relationships that result in increased sales and greater ROI.



### THE ELEMENTS OF INBOUND MARKETING

Inbound marketers use a range of resources and tools to work their magic. The following are integral to a successful inbound strategy.



#### Content strategy

Content is the fuel that drives inbound marketing, and a solid content strategy is essential. Start with student personas, as these should be at the heart of everything your business does. Once they have been identified, you can map out their lifecycles and plan a content strategy accordingly.



#### Digital channels

The most important of these is blogging. A keyword-optimised blog is the single best way to draw traffic to your website. The most relevant and engaging blogs attract visitors well after they are posted and can go far to establish an author as a thought leader. Other digital channels utilized by inbound marketers include podcasts, videos, and eBooks.



#### Social Media

Successful inbound strategies require remarkable content, but they also depend on social publishing to share that information and to give your brand a human face. The different social media networks attract different demographics, and you need to figure out where your student personas spend their time.



#### Email marketing

Email marketing plays a crucial role in both lead generation and lead nurturing. Much of this is achieved through automated workflows which rely on carefully segmented lists to ensure that their messages are as clickable as possible. With the right subject lines and content, automated email creates a consistent stream of leads from the top to the bottom of your sales funnel.

### **Websites**

Most businesses treat their websites as digital storefronts, but your most important digital property can be so much more. Optimize your website to appeal to students by making it visually engaging and easy to navigate. It should come across as an eternal fountain of great ideas and the answer to all their challenges.

### **SEO**

Great content is the surest way to organic SEO. Pick keywords that will attract visitors to your website and then write high quality, engaging content on topics that feature those keywords. Other effective SEO tactics include linking to pages on related topics and employing a responsive web design to lower your bounce rate.

### **Marketing automation**

This process involves the employment of software to automate email marketing and lead nurturing actions. Such systems can be programmed to respond to triggers tied to the different lifecycle stages of individual leads. These will ensure greater consistency and allow marketers to spend more time on more important activities.

### **CRM integration**

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems put customer information at your fingertips so that you can better communicate with prospects across all channels. Integration with your CRM system allows your sales team to provide feedback that your marketing department can then use to improve their strategies.

### **Analytics and reporting**

Inbound marketing platforms like HubSpot give you access to integrated metrics across your contacts database, marketing content, and website traffic - all on one interface. These holistic marketing management tools tell you how individuals interact with your content and website, thereby providing the insight needed to fine-tune your marketing machine.

CHAPTER

# 03

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## THE ADVANTAGES OF INBOUND MARKETING

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“We are not going to outgrow our need for information.”

- Seth Godin

The greatest advantage of inbound marketing is its ability to place training organisations where students can find it easily. However, in addition to this, there are many other benefits driving the adoption of inbound marketing



### **Brand awareness**

In the offline world, brand awareness is created primarily by placing adverts in channels that your target market consumes most frequently. However, when it comes to the digital realm, space is so vast that it is very difficult and costly to maintain such a presence through paid advertising alone. Inbound marketing ensures that your brand is present and positioned as a thought leader while keeping costs low and ensuring ROI.



### **Increased web traffic**

Sales and marketing is a numbers game; only a percentage of web visitors become leads, and the more traffic you direct to your website, the more sales you will make. This traffic can be increased by optimizing your web pages for strategically-chosen keywords and by blogging regularly on topics related to your industry.



### **Conversion of visitors to leads**

Anonymous web traffic is not much use; your visitors could be mistaking your website for another site, or they may even be competitors trying to work out what you are doing. At the conversion stage, visitors on your website are enticed to provide their contact details in exchange for premium content. With this exchange they become known leads.

## CHAPTER 3: THE ADVANTAGES OF INBOUND MARKETING

### **Lead nurturing**

The submission of a lead's contact details should not be interpreted as a sign that they are ready to buy. In fact, as few as 20% of people are ready to buy when they first find you online. The lead nurturing element in inbound marketing ensures that those who are not yet ready for a sales pitch are guided down a path to purchase using strategic content and messaging.

### **Actionable insights**

Unlike most marketing strategies, inbound marketing is entirely measurable. Companies can see the result and easily calculate the return on their investment. However, the biggest advantage of analytics is that marketers can identify what is and isn't working and then adjust their strategies for greater impact and ROI.



CHAPTER

# 04

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## CONTENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA

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“ People share, read and generally engage more with any type of content when it’s surfaced through friends & people they know and trust.”

- Malorie Lucich, Facebook spokesperson



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Social media is important to an inbound strategy for two reasons. It helps drive traffic to your blogs and other digital assets, and it serves as a social monitoring tool.

### **Your content strategy depends on social media.**

Content is the fuel driving inbound marketing, but social media is the O2 that turbocharges it. Content that is shared by friends is much more clickable than that which isn't, and a viral social media post will distribute your content faster than any other means. However, to make the most of social media, you need relevant, engaging material that people want to share - material that makes them seem intelligent and informed. Link titles are obviously very important, and the best strategies take an integrated approach to ensure a high interest level from tweet to blog.

### **Social media is an effective social monitoring tool.**

To ensure that your content is relevant to your target audience, you need to do some research on your audience's interests and concerns. While interviews and surveys can offer a very direct approach, social monitoring often gives marketers a more candid view of their audience's thoughts. The tools that make such insights possible also allow marketers to determine what's being shared as well as who's doing the sharing. Such knowledge allows them to produce content that resonates with their different audience segments, thus ensuring that their content gets the attention it deserves.

CHAPTER

# 05

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## MEASURING SUCCESS IN INBOUND MARKETING.

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“If you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it.”

- Peter Drucker

## CHAPTER 5: MEASURING SUCCESS IN INBOUND MARKETING

Inbound marketing is data-driven. Just about every aspect in inbound can be measured and analyzed, and now, with the advent of big data, there's an even greater drive to measure the myriad quantifiable variables. However, to get the most from an inbound campaign, you have to focus on measuring the right things – metrics that can help identify and fine-tune underperforming assets or elements for greater impact. Here are a few of those performance indicators.



### Media performance indicators

Your blogs and social media posts can be assessed according to views, shares, keyword ranking, clickthrough rates, and conversion rates. Your email marketing efforts, on the other hand, are best assessed by delivery rates, open rates, and click-through rates. A significant slump in any of these would require immediate attention, though you'd have to know how these metrics reflect buyer behaviour and how any changes in strategy can affect these.



### Profit performance indicators

You don't want to spend more on acquiring a customer than that customer is worth. Calculating the Cost Per Acquisition (CPA) will tell you how much you can spend converting leads into customers before you start losing money. The Lifetime Value of a customer (LTV) is an equally important metric as it allows you to determine the repeat revenue you'll generate from a given customer, an important element in the calculation of ROI.



### Return On Investment (ROI)

Your ROI is the ultimate measure of how your marketing efforts are performing. In order to calculate your ROI, follow this formula:

$ROI = \text{Profit} / \text{Cost per Customer Acquisition}$

\*Profit = Customer Lifetime Value - Cost per Customer Acquisition

## CHAPTER

# 06

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## IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH IN INBOUND MARKETING

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“If marketers aren’t creating quality content that is, above all, useful, the effectiveness of their inbound efforts will be curtailed. content is the soil in which inbound success is grown.”

- Jay Baer

## CHAPTER 6: IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH IN INBOUND MARKETING

As the fuel that drives your inbound strategy, your content is of the utmost importance. Get it right, and you can achieve industry domination. Get it wrong, and everything else you do is in vain. Your content has to be well-written – that’s a given – but pitch-perfect prose by itself is not enough. To warrant the attention of your audience, your content also has to be interesting and insightful. And to produce such irresistible content, you have to figure out what topics are most relevant to your audience. You have to do some research.

### **Put student personas at the center of everything you do**

Student Personas are complete, fictional consumer profiles based on your ideal customers. They are formed using both research and educated speculation, and include your customers’ problems, needs, and desires. Everything you do should start with these student profiles. They should be at the heart of everything you do, including your content.

### **Flesh them out in lifelike detail**

You need to outline your persona’s problems, challenges, objections, backgrounds, and media preferences, and nobody knows these better than the people who talk to your customers every day. For this reason, a meeting with your entire organisation, especially your sales team, will result in the most accurate and in-depth student persona profile. The more detailed you can make your student buyer personas, the more targeted and relevant your content will be.

### **The buyer journey is key**

Once you’ve identified your student personas, you need to determine how their thought processes will change as they move through the different stages of the buyer’s journey. Both content and messages need to be tailored to these, but first you need to identify the signs indicative of the different lifecycle stages. Both qualifying questions and content engagement can be used to determine whether a lead is ready for a pitch or needs further nurturing.



### **Review and update.**

People change and so should your student personas. Perform new research at least every quarter to ensure that you understand evolving buyer behaviour and that your content stays relevant.



CHAPTER

# 07

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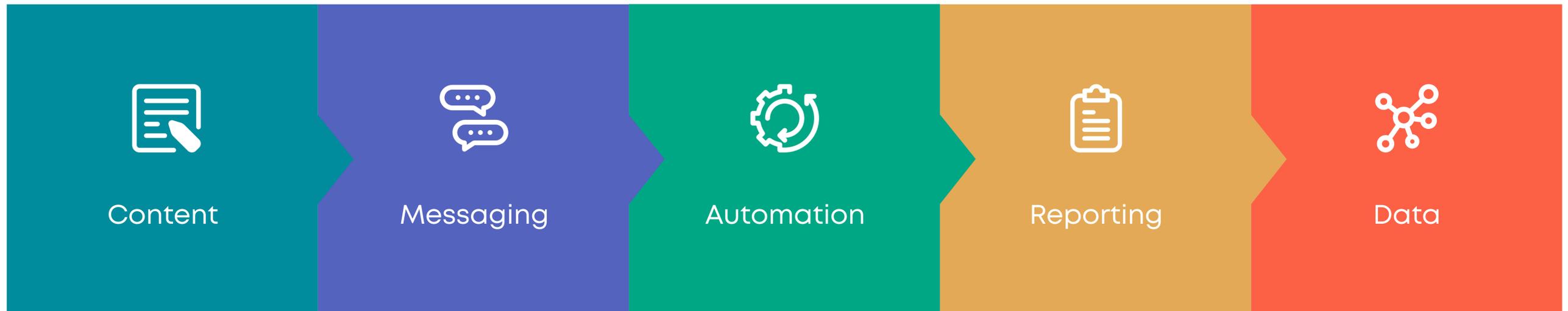
## HOW TO INTEGRATE INBOUND MARKETING INTO YOUR OVERALL MARKETING STRATEGY

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“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

- Aristotle

# CHAPTER 7: HOW TO INTEGRATE INBOUND MARKETING INTO YOUR OVERALL MARKETING STRATEGY



Just as humans need key elements like air and water to survive, every business has 5 essential elements that together help it run smoothly and underpin its growth...



## **Content**

Content to reach people who are unaware you exist: blogs, Knowledge Base articles, landing pages, etc.



## **Messaging**

Messaging & Communications to have conversations: email, live chat, bots, etc.

# CHAPTER 7: HOW TO INTEGRATE INBOUND MARKETING INTO YOUR OVERALL MARKETING STRATEGY



## Automation

Automation to streamline your processes with workflows, sequences etc.



## Reporting and Insights

Reporting and Insights to understand and isolate what's working & what isn't.



## Data

And of course, an underlying layer of data to capture all of this and be able to optimise accordingly.





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**CHAPTER**

08

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# **INBOUND PREREQUISITES**

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Yes, people really are your greatest asset.

## CHAPTER 7: INBOUND PREREQUISITES

Because content marketing is an integral part of inbound, you'll need people (or access to people) who can produce winning content. You'll also need the kind of creative thinkers who can keep a team's efforts aligned with the bigger picture.

### **Strategists**

Creative thinkers will be responsible for creating and coordinating your inbound marketing strategy. They need to be SEO wizards capable of gearing social media and content for the greatest ROI, and they need to know how to prompt a purchase without selling.

### **Writers**

You need enough writers to ensure a consistent stream of daily content as well as premium content and lead nurturing content. They need to be experienced at producing key-word optimised articles, and have experience in writing for your industry.

### **Graphic designers with web skills**

Your graphic designers are responsible for making the content developed by the writers look good. Ensure designers have a diverse range of web and design skills that you can fully utilize the various media at your disposal.

### **Data analyst**

A good strategist should have a grasp on basic analytics. For crunching more complex data, you might need a specialist who should have a thorough understanding of Google Analytics and Search Console, and be able to provide your strategist with the insights needed to take your inbound strategy forward.

# CHAPTER

# 09

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## DIY OR ASK AN EXPERT

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Consider the capabilities of your existing staff, your ability to find new staff, and your available budget.

When deciding whether to outsource your inbound marketing or do it internally, consider the capabilities of your existing staff, your ability to find new staff, and your available budget.

The most suitable option for each business will depend on its ability to satisfy these prerequisites.

### THE INTERNAL ROUTE

Your existing staff understand your products, services, and customers best. As long as some of them are strategic thinkers, they should be able to come up with a sound inbound strategy and produce equally good content. However, if you do take this route, it's important to ensure that your chosen staff are not preoccupied with other work. Failing to give your inbound strategy the attention it deserves will have a direct impact on your bottom line.

Your marketing and sales teams should be divided according to buying stages (and of course by any other segmentation your company has implemented). You should have a team for each of the following tasks:

- Generating web traffic
- Converting web visitors into leads
- Converting leads into customers
- Customer services and support
- Customer retention and advocacy
- Cross-selling and upselling

### → THE OUTSOURCING ROUTE

Outsourcing your inbound marketing allows you to focus on the activities more central to your business. And if you have no experience in content or inbound marketing, outsourcing will allow you to try content without running the risks of having to retrench staff if it doesn't work for you.

#### **What qualities and abilities should an inbound marketing agency have?**

A capable inbound marketing agency should be able to manage the whole suite of resources involved in an inbound strategy while giving the client a holistic overview. It needs to have a comprehensive grasp and understanding of your industry. It needs to be an expert at producing and delivering high quality, engaging content, and know how to build a sales pipeline geared towards lead generation and nurturing.



**CHAPTER**

# 10

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**HOW WE CAN HELP YOU?**

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We work at the intersection of art and science

## CHAPTER 10: INBOUND PREREQUISITES

At Lupo Digital we work with RTOs who want serious results from Digital. We are here to help you understand and leverage the potential of digital marketing technology.



### **Attract qualified prospective students**

Optimize new and existing content to attract site traffic and increase program awareness with blogging, social media, and your website.



### **Personalize email and online interactions**

Engage prospective students with customized content unique to their stage in the admission cycle, intended area of study, or website activity.



### **Speed up the enrollment cycle**

Create multiple conversion points to tailor campaigns and shorten the length of time between a prospective student's first visit and their application submission.



### **Pass off better info to sales**

Automating the hand-off process between marketing and sales to deliver timely and relevant information about perspective students.



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