

# *How to* **ACHIEVE EXPONENTIAL GROWTH**

*With*



# **MARKETING ANALYTICS**

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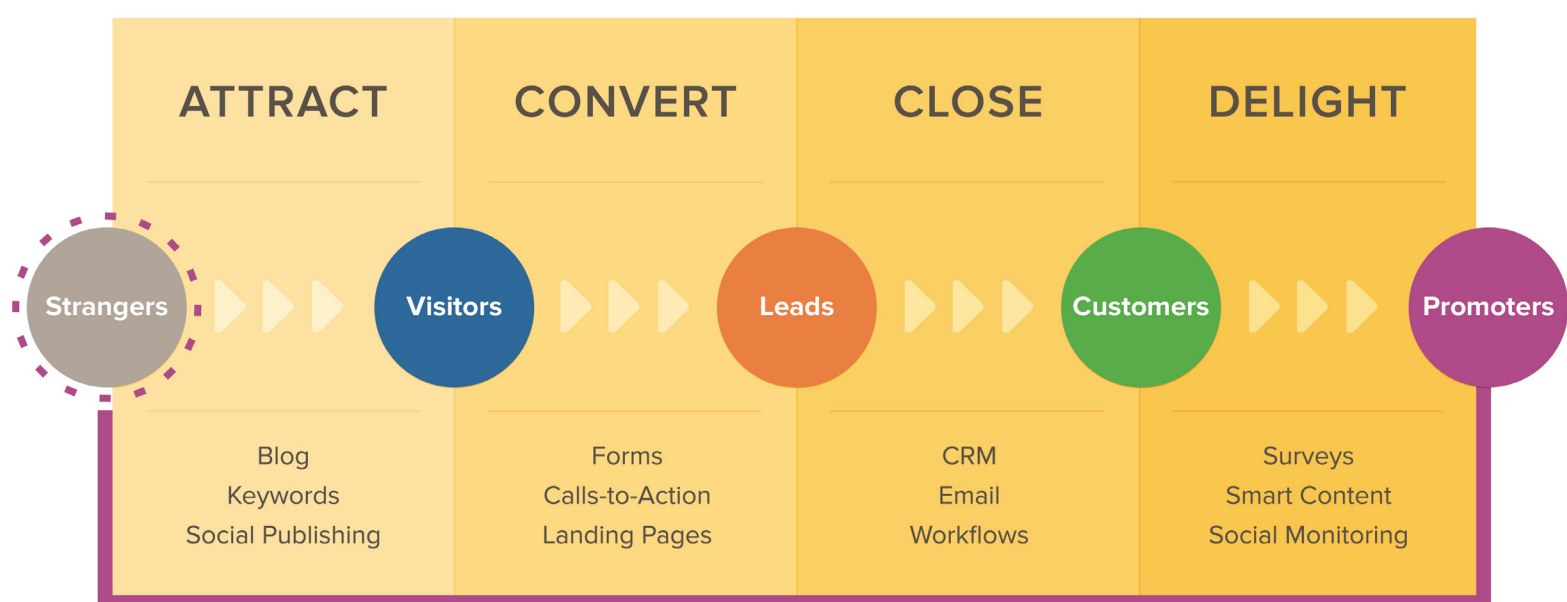
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# Introduction

Successful inbound marketers don't make decisions based on feelings -- their decisions are based on data. Where does that data come from? Why, their marketing analytics, of course! It's important to track the success of your landing pages, SEO, business blogging, social media, email marketing, and lead nurturing. More importantly, it's important to understand what all of the metrics associated with those marketing channels really mean, so when you're looking at your marketing analytics, you know how to interpret all those charts, numbers, and data points, and you understand why they are important. Many of the actionable improvements here will rely on data from your closed-loop marketing analytics, so before we dive in, let's talk about what that means and why it's important.

The interesting thing about reporting is that it actually falls in every single stage of the [Inbound Methodology](#). Unlike certain marketing tactics such as business blogging, where it only falls into the attract stage of the funnel, reporting falls in every stage. This will help you understand what's working through each stage and how you can best optimize and make sure you have a well-oiled machine.



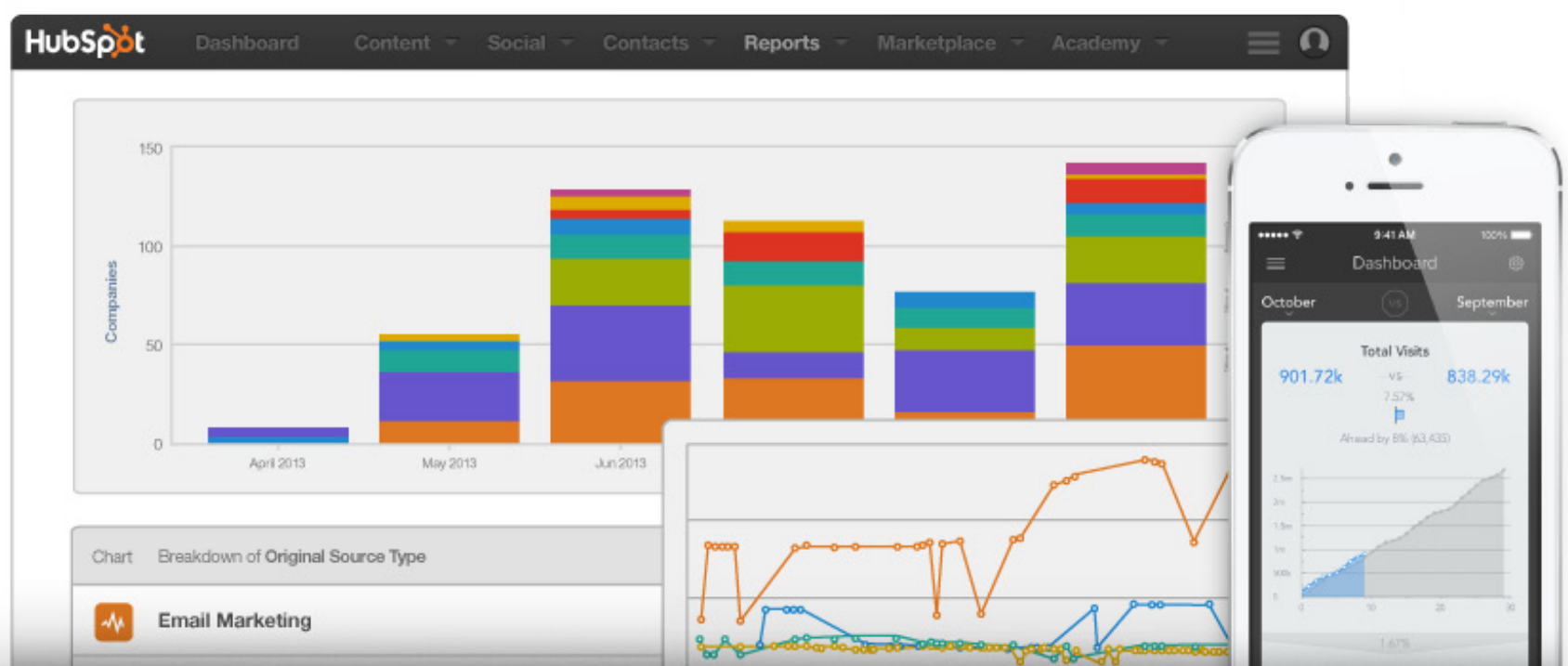
by **HubSpot**

This ebook will investigate how to use marketing analytics to improve each channel's marketing performance, including landing pages, SEO, blogging, social media, email marketing, lead nurturing, and referral sources. Many of the actionable improvements here will rely on data from your closed-loop marketing analytics, so before we dive in, let's talk about what that means and why it's important.

With closed-loop marketing data, you can track a lead from the moment of first conversion on your website, until that lead becomes your customer. With this information you can look back to see which marketing channels -- your blog, SEO, social media, email marketing, etc. -- are most effective at generating customers. We will revisit the concept of utilizing data from closed-loop analytics throughout this ebook.

Before reading this ebook, make sure you also have your personas set up. Personas will help you figure out the background of the audience you're targeting. You'll be able to determine what your audience is really interested in, and how you can better market to them. When you start with reporting, make sure you build lists with your personas in mind so you can start segmenting accurately. If you're new to creating buyer personas, check out "[The Beginner's Guide to Segmentation and Buyer Personas](#)."

Alright, are you ready to dive into your marketing analytics and learn how to interpret them to improve your inbound marketing performance? Let's get started!



# *Chapter 1*

# ORGANIC & PAID SEARCH



Organic search results are unpaid, natural listings on search engine results pages (SERPs) that are surfaced and ranked based on their relevance to a user’s query. Although it takes time and effort to optimize your web pages for organic search, once you rank high in SERPs, you’ll typically see lucrative long term returns on your investment. While paid search is a quicker alternative to ranking in search results, it’s only a temporary ranking that requires recurring payments to see results. So once you turn off the budget, the rankings go, too. If you’re trying to improve your SERP results, here are the metrics you should pay attention to:

TRAFFIC FROM ORGANIC AND PAID SEARCH

Organic search traffic used to just mean the amount of traffic that came to your site via someone who found your site using a search engine. Then, you could drill down into more detail to see which keyword they searched to get to your website. For example, we might learn that someone came to HubSpot.com by searching the keyword phrase “inbound marketing.” This is important to know because it helps businesses understand which keywords are driving the most traffic, leads, and customers so they can develop better-informed content and keyword strategies.

However, that is all changing. We can still see all of that information ... sometimes. Things got a whole lot more complicated when [Google introduced SSL encryption](#). What does that mean? It means Google started encrypting keyword data for anyone conducting a Google search while logged in to Google. So if you’re logged in to, say, Gmail when you do a search, the keyword you used to arrive on a website is now encrypted, or hidden. So if that website drilled down into its organic search traffic source information, they’d see something like this:

Keyword	Visits
Unknown keywords (SSL)	156,865
memes	1,983

This means that businesses have much less visibility into which keywords searchers are using to find them, making it much harder to understand which words and terms are or working -- or not working -- in their search engine optimization. Google said this would only affect about 11% of searches, but the truth of the matter is the number is much greater than that, and is only continuing to increase as Google’s user base grows. It’s important to keep this curveball in mind when evaluating organic search as a traffic and lead generation source.

On the other hand, If you’re running a pay-per-click (PPC) campaign -- whether through Google or some other PPC provider -- you can track how much site traffic it drives in this part of your sources report. Obviously for [proper PPC campaign management](#), you’ll also need to be reviewing whether that traffic actually converts, too. Like email marketing or social media as a source, be sure to include tracking tokens with all of your paid search campaigns so this is properly bucketed as paid search (more on UTM tracking codes in Chapter 3).

## KEYWORD PERFORMANCE & RANKINGS

Organic search traffic includes both brand-related keywords and generic keywords. Your closed-loop analytics will help you determine which search terms have driven the most qualified traffic to your website – in other words, traffic that converts into leads and customers. With this information, you can focus your SEO efforts on creating content and generating inbound links around search terms that drive real results for your business. Focus your SEO efforts on creating content & generating inbound links around search terms that drive qualified traffic.

It's important to monitor your listing position for the terms that you're currently driving traffic for – especially those with high search volume and high competitiveness -- because you need to ensure you don't suddenly slip in the SERPs to a competitor. Maintain a steady stream of content around the important keyword phrases for which you currently rank high in the SERPs, and if you notice your listing position begins to slip, amp up your content creation and link building efforts. It requires far less effort to stay in the top of the SERPs than it does to climb your way back up again.

HubSpot's Keyword app is great at offering relevant recommendations when it comes to your SEO strategy. It takes into consideration the volume of searches, level of difficulty and your rank to point out realistic opportunities for improvement.

## UNIQUE SEARCH TERMS DRIVING TRAFFIC

Hypothetically, you may find that the term 'unicorn shoes' – for which you rank in listing position nine in the SERPs -- drove less traffic than the term 'unicorn hats.' But the traffic that came to your site on the search term 'unicorn shoes' actually generated five new customers for your business last month, while the traffic that came to your site for the term 'unicorn hats' has led to no customers. With this information, you know you should spend more time creating content and building inbound links around the term 'unicorn shoes' to improve your listing position in the SERPs for the term, and thus increase the amount of qualified traffic that comes to your site for that term.

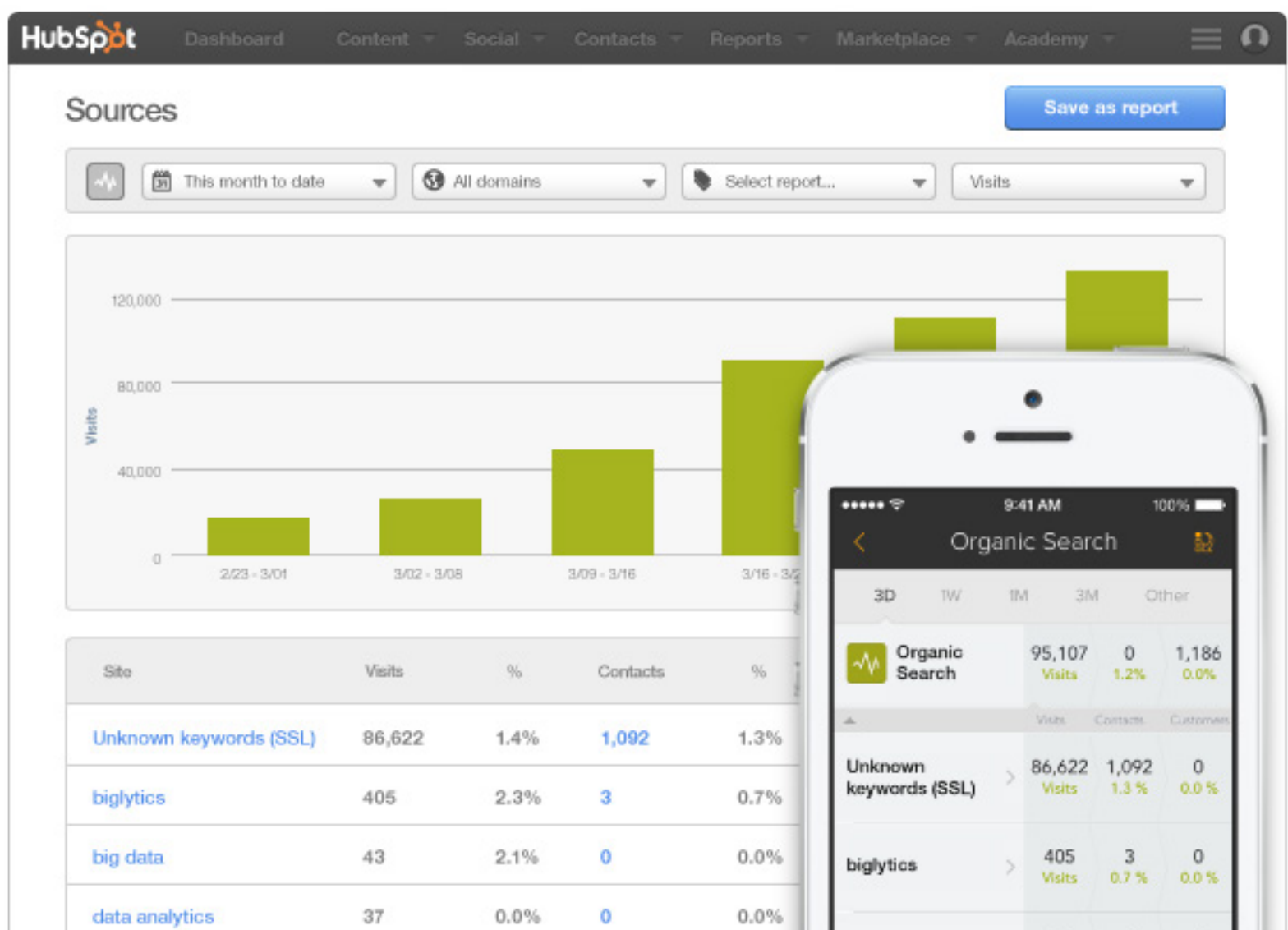
Because we realize the importance of tying keyword performance to dollar value and customer acquisition, HubSpot's software does that for our customers. In the screenshot on the next page, you will see that HubSpot's Sources app shows marketing professionals not only the volume of searches for a certain keyword combination, but also visits and leads generated from the traffic this phrase drove.

Such intelligence can help you make SEO strategy comparisons based on actual numbers rather than guesswork and assumptions. Bet on the keywords that perform for your business and gain valuable insights into your target audience.

## LONG-TAIL KEYWORDS

One way to improve your strategy is by generating new long-tail variations from your highest-performing keyword phrases, and then targeting them in your content creation and link building efforts. For example, knowing that the term ‘unicorn shoes’ yields qualified traffic that generates customers, you may consider targeting a less competitive, but still traffic-generating long-tail variation of the keyword, such as ‘unicorn shoes for girls.’ Targeting this search term in your content creation and link building efforts is an easier win for your business because it is less competitive than its head term ‘unicorn shoes.’ Still, it helps you improve your rankings for that difficult head term!

When adding new keyword phrases to your arsenal, be sure to maintain a healthy balance of competitive and non-competitive terms. Your keyword strategy should include keyword phrases with high search volume and high competitiveness as well as terms that require less content and inbound links to rank for. This balance allows you to steadily increase the amount of traffic you generate from organic search month over month while you also put effort into ranking for more difficult search terms.





## CONVERSION RATES FROM ORGANIC SEARCH

This is the percentage of visitors who arrived at your site through organic search and completed a desired conversion action, such as becoming a lead or customer. The best way to increase your conversion rate from organic search is by increasing your conversion rate across your blog and landing pages. We'll go into more detail about this in the next chapter.

### *Identify Holes In Your Content Strategy*

Just as you can identify opportunities for content creation by looking at your keyword performance in closed-loop analytics, you can identify holes in your content strategy, too. If a search term is generating a lot of organic traffic to your website, for example, but none of that traffic converts into leads, it's an indication that your marketing offer is insufficient (or nonexistent!) Remedy this by creating or updating your offer to better reflect the needs of the audience who searched for that keyword phrase. For example, we at HubSpot were able to identify such an opportunity using HubSpot's Keyword app that shows that we're getting lots of visits for the keyword phrase "Google search tips" but no contacts. We might need to optimize our website with some Google-related calls-to-action!

### *Establish Benchmarks*

Most marketers are always looking to improve their SEO – it drives free traffic to their websites that can then be converted into leads and customers. The first step towards improvement is establishing baseline SEO metrics, which you can do by finding out:

- What percentage of your website traffic comes from organic search?
- The conversion rate of your organic traffic into leads and customers
- Which non-branded keyword phrases drive the most organic traffic to your website
- Your listing position in the search engine results pages (SERPs) for keyword phrases for which you want to rank
- How many inbound links you have, and to what pages on your website they point

To improve many of these areas, you'll need to take a look at your blog and landing pages. Let's head to the next chapter where we discuss how to get more granular with your content strategy.

## *Chapter 2*

# **BLOGGING & LANDING PAGES**

When it comes to your blog and landing pages, there's truly no end in sight. You can optimize, A/B test, and optimize some more, and there will still be something else you can improve. But that's the beauty of marketing! The key is simply knowing what's worth improving first, and which improvements will garner more ROI.

Business blogging without measuring results is a complete waste of time. But when it comes to your blog, there are a whole range of metrics you can consider. In fact, the number of blogging metrics can get so overwhelming that tracking them all wouldn't leave much time for blogging, let alone other important aspects of inbound marketing. The same applies to landing pages where you can tweak headers, subheaders, copy, images, form fields, etc. The possibilities are endless!

Let's look at the most important metrics you need to keep an eye on to know how your blog and landing pages are performing.

## INDIVIDUAL POST VIEWS

Tracking the number of views you get per blog post is a great way to get quick feedback on your blog articles. You're more likely to get a higher view count if you picked a topic your audience liked and wanted to share. If you're a HubSpot customer, you can get this information in the [Blog Dashboard](#). To see post-level view counts as well as total view count, sort the columns within the app by number of views, and pick a time frame like one month. Now you can see how your recent posts have performed against each other.

Start by exporting your blog posts, grouping articles by topic, and analyzing the views for each individual blog post. Are there certain topics that perform better than others? Do certain posts receive more inbound links than others? Sort your spreadsheet based on number of post views—do you notice any trends in the post title structure in posts that receive the most views? For example, perhaps posts that start with the phrase “How to” dominate the top views. This is an indication that a certain title structure or blog post structure is more attractive to your readers, and you should create more content following that format or title structure.

Knowing what content naturally got the most views can help you decide what topics and types of posts to write next. Of course, you should ideally leverage lead and customer generation data to bring in a higher quality audience, it's also important to grow the top of your funnel with general traffic. You could use post view information to plan out your traffic-heavy content to help bring new visitors into your funnel, which will ultimately help you hit your monthly goals. And by looking at this information week over week, you can make adjustments to your content schedule to improve your results.

## BLOG TRAFFIC AND REFERRAL SOURCES

Analyzing where the traffic to your blog comes from is the easiest way to improve blog content promotion and distribution for more traffic. After all, if you know where people are finding your blog (and where they aren't), you know where to focus your efforts. If very little traffic to your blog comes from organic search, for example, you know you need to spend more time optimizing your blog content and getting inbound links. You may also find there are sites you hadn't thought of that refer traffic to your blog. Have you drilled down to what social media sites drive traffic? You may assume your biggest traffic drives is Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn, but perhaps it's actually Pinterest – a site you haven't put much effort into. Knowing this, however, you can focus more effort promoting content on Pinterest to increase blog traffic.

## CALL-TO-ACTION (CTA) PERFORMANCE

Before you look at how well your landing page converts visitors to leads and customers, you should analyze whether the call-to-action that precedes it is actually driving visitors to click and stay on your landing page long enough to convert.

The performance of your blog's lead generation is directly impacted by your call-to-action performance. To improve your blog's call-to-action performance, analyze the CTA clickthrough rate. If you have a low clickthrough rate, there are three places you can make improvements:

1. ***Make a more compelling offer.*** If what you offer is not enticing enough to get clicks, then don't expect to collect many landing page conversions.
2. ***Create an offer that better aligns with your blog post.*** If your offer isn't relevant to the topic of the blog, it probably isn't enticing to the reader.
3. ***Split test the CTA copy and design.*** The copy may be confusing, too indirect, or not clearly conveying the value of the offer.

In order to optimize your calls-to-action, you need to monitor their performance and figure out what to improve. In addition to clickthrough rates, you should also be tracking views to submission, a metric that will give you a deeper knowledge of how your calls-to-action affect lead generation. Your views-to-submission rate tells you how many of the people who saw your CTA actually filled out the form on your landing page. That is how you can start tackling the alignment between your calls-to-action and landing pages. If you're using [HubSpot's CTA app](#), you can track the performance of different CTAs and see which ones are performing best. You could even take it a step further and show a Smart CTA based on a reader's lifecycle stage or membership to a list.

Take a look at what CTAs are performing the best today. Then, decide if there are higher conversion rates on certain types of CTAs, as well as what might cause that better performance. Is it the design of the CTA? The design of your CTA may blend into the page too much. If the CTA doesn't visually stand out, visitors may simply be glossing over the button. Is it the content positioning? Is the content that the CTA is promoting more appealing than your other content? For example, if you have high conversion rates on CTAs that lead to a worksheet and lower conversion rates on CTAs that lead to a whitepaper, that may mean your audience prefers worksheets over whitepapers. Embrace agile experimentation to figure out why certain CTAs perform better than others.

## *Ensure Alignment*

Check that the copy between your call-to-action and landing page is aligned. The language in the call-to-action that describes the offer and its subject matter should be present on your landing page, too. Once you ensure the language is the same, make sure it is easily visible so your landing page passes a visitor's blink test. The blink test refers to the commonly accepted three seconds you have to orient a visitor on your landing page once they are there. If a visitor comes to your landing page and can't figure out what to do on that page, they will click the back button immediately. To prevent that from happening you need to reinforce the language of the call-to-action by using it in the beginning of your landing page headline, within the copy on your landing page, on your form's title, and in the form's button.

## **BLOG LEADS**

Now that your blog's calls-to-action are optimized, see how many leads you generate from your blog every month compared to your other lead generation channels. Knowing how much of a direct role your blog plays in lead generation will help you prioritize marketing efforts. It's important to have a good idea of the number of leads generated by each marketing channel. Are your customers finding you and converting via social media? Email marketing? PPC? As you plan future marketing campaigns, this information will be extremely useful in helping you allocate your resources.

For example, let's say you're working on your budget and want to figure out whether to invest more resources in email marketing or social media. To figure this out, you'll need to know exactly how many leads each of those channels are driving -- not just the number of visits they bring in to your site.

One of the most important parts of blogging is figuring out which content performs well and which doesn't -- so you can avoid writing content that doesn't. To figure out what works on your blog, it's helpful to understand not only how many visits you get to an individual blog post, but how many leads that blog post generates.



Getting this data can sometimes be tricky. After all, the conversion from visitor to lead doesn't usually happen on the actual blog post. Usually, the blog post ends with a call-to-action, which brings you to a landing page where a visitor can fill out a form and then convert to a lead. So how does that work? What you need is the referral information. That means you need to see what page a person visited right before they went to the landing page where they converted. Check to see how people are interacting on your site, which pages they're visiting, and what they're reading to help you figure out what kinds of blog content generate leads.

That's where Attribution Reports come in. An attribution report is used to understand the journey someone takes from the first time they set foot on your website to the time they become a customer -- basically, measuring the conversion path to see what made someone convert. In order for marketers to be successful, they need to understand all of the influencers that drive conversions throughout the funnel.

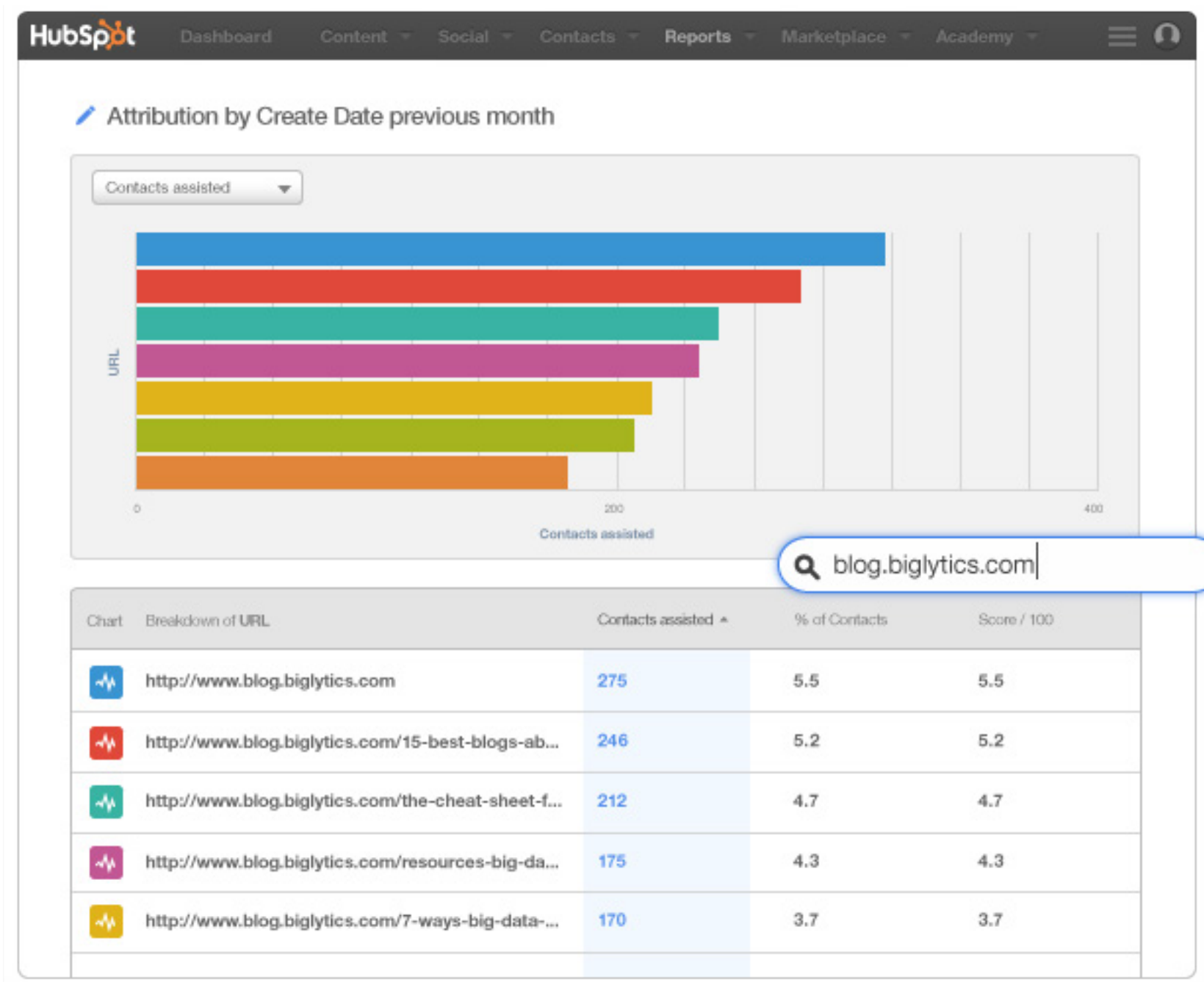
The value in this report is marketers can now pinpoint the exact marketing effort that lead to a conversion in the funnel. By using this information, they can then make better-informed decisions about where to invest their time and resources. It may be easy to show how blog content affects traffic to your site, but being able to prove the ROI of blogging by number of leads it generates is even more valuable.

For instance, if you run a report based on First touch (as it is called by HubSpot) or First interaction (as it is called by Google Analytics), 100% of the credit is given to the page URL or source of the first visit a contact was on. If you run a report based on All interactions/session (as it is called by HubSpot) or Linear (as it is called by Google Analytics), equal credit is distributed across all pages and sources visited before the conversion. How you assign "credit" here is extremely important because that'll help you gain a better understanding of which pages or sources were used the most to drive traffic to and convert on your website.

There isn't a right or wrong answer to what type of report to run -- it just depends what you hope to distill from the data. If you want to understand how all of the pages or channels viewed before conversion affect conversion, you will run one report. If you want to understand what happened at the exact point of conversion, you will run a different report. You could even run a combination of reports to understand what happens in certain parts of the funnel.

HubSpot customers can do this through the [Attribution Report](#). If you don't have HubSpot, use your analytics or marketing software to pull some of the same data. You may need to do some manipulation in Excel after exporting your data. The biggest difference between using reports on Google Analytics vs. HubSpot is that you cannot connect the report back to specific contacts unless you use HubSpot. That means you cannot apply attribution trends to specific personas, contact groups, lifecycle stages, or other categories that are relevant to your business. So when deciding on what report to use, take that into consideration. [Learn more about these reports here.](#)

*Here's an example of an Attribution Report in HubSpot:*



## VISIT-TO-LEAD CONVERSION RATE

Now that you've got visitors staying on your landing page long enough to fill out your form, you'll want to analyze more than just number of new leads from your blog. Drill down into your blog's visit-to-lead conversion rate to see how effective you are at converting blog traffic into leads. Do you have low traffic, but a high conversion rate? Then you know you should put more effort into generating traffic to your blog. Increase your content publishing frequency, target keywords that generate quality traffic (otherwise your conversion rate might slip!), and amp up your social promotion efforts.

In addition to understanding which blog posts drive the greatest volume of leads, it's also helpful to understand which landing pages convert the greatest number of visitors into leads. If you know that some landing pages convert a higher number of visitors into leads, you may want to consider directing more of your calls-to-action to that particular landing pages. Or you may want to see if that landing page topic is the reason more people are converting.

HubSpot customers: You can keep a close eye on your conversions through the Attribution Report. Create a report based on Last Interaction and URL to see what pages have successfully converted the most amount of visitors into leads.

### *Find Winning Content Offers*

Analyzing your visitor-to-lead rate is also important for establishing what content assets drove visitors to convert into leads. Is there a particular content asset type that converts more leads? For example, you may find that webinars convert more visitors into leads than ebooks. Or perhaps it's a particular content topic that performs better. Do your content assets about unicorn hygiene have a higher visitor-to-lead conversion rate than your content assets about unicorn fashion? If you know the content asset types and topics that generate a higher visitor-to-lead rate, you can focus your content creation efforts around them to generate more leads.

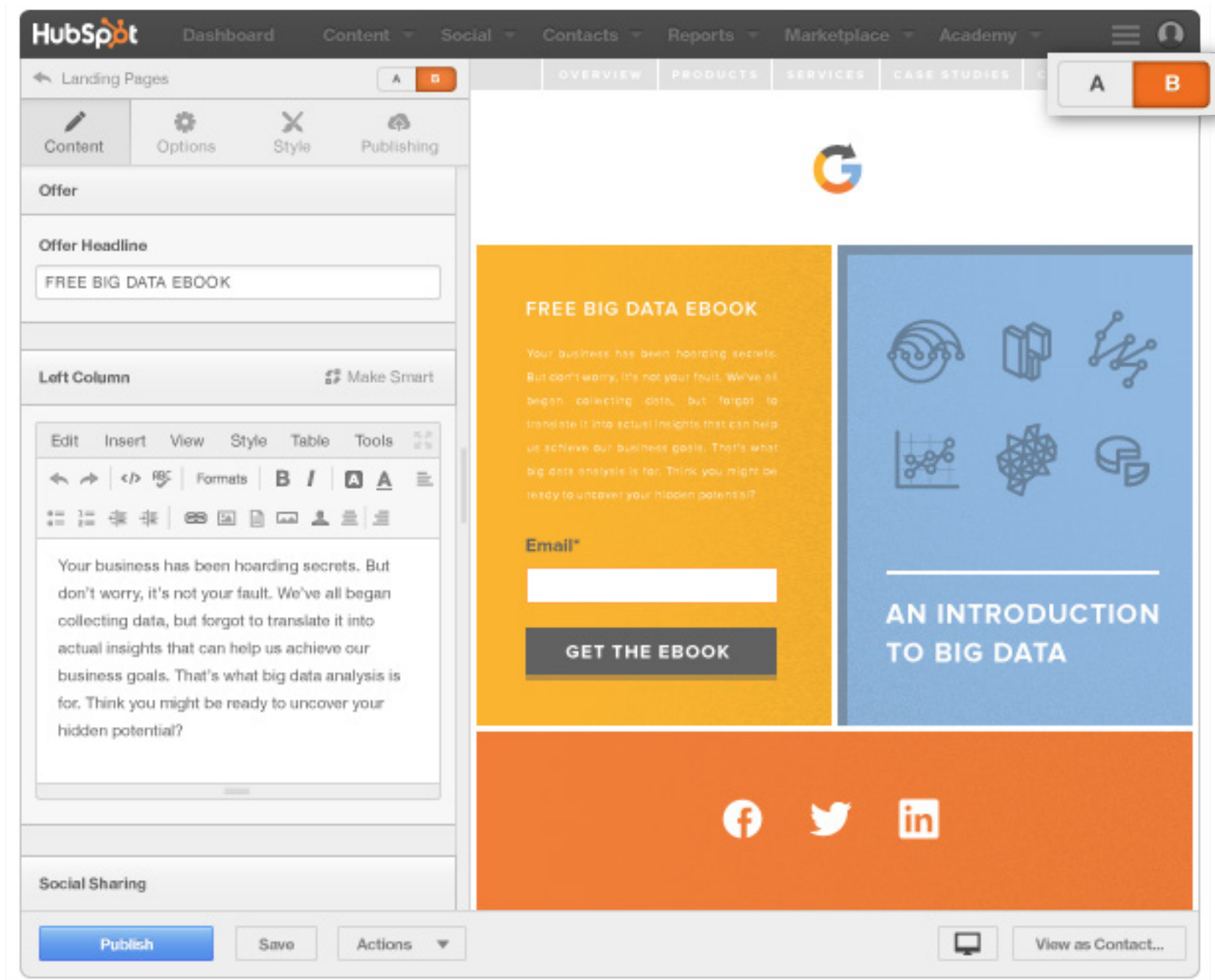
### *Optimize Through Split Testing*

If you have a high clickthrough on your call-to-action, but a low visitor-to-lead conversion rate, there is a problem with your landing page that you should set out to improve through A/B testing. If your visitor-to-lead conversion rate is high but the number of new leads that page generates is low, your problem lies with the traffic the landing page is generating. Start by taking a look at your call-to-action's conversion rate. If it is low, your problem lies in the call-to-action -- begin A/B testing its design and copy to help drive more traffic to your landing page.

When conducting A/B tests, set up your unaltered version as your landing page “control,” the page you would normally use. From there, build variations, or “treatments,” pages you’ll test against your control. For example, if you are wondering whether including a testimonial on a landing page would make a difference in conversions, set up your control page with no testimonials. Then create your variation(s).

- Variation A: Control (the unaltered, original version)
- Variation B: Treatment (the optimized version which you expect to perform better)

The screenshot below is an example of [HubSpot’s advanced landing pages A/B testing app](#). You can easily clone the control and modify it to create a treatment page.



## *Remove Navigation*

One more way to prevent visitors from abandoning your landing page is removing the navigation and any other calls-to-action on the page. If you've included your site's regular navigation at the top of your landing page or you give visitors another place to visit on your site with competing calls-to-action, you increase the likelihood of a visitor bouncing from your landing page. Removing your navigation menu and all other calls-to-action on your landing page is the quickest way to keep those visitors on your landing page long enough to fill out your form.

## **LEAD-TO-CUSTOMER CONVERSION RATE**

Finally, use your closed-loop analytics to analyze how effectively your blog leads convert into customers. Just as the number of leads generated helps you prioritize your marketing channels, the rate at which blog leads turn into customers should help you prioritize, too. For example, if your blog generates leads that convert into customers at a higher rate than, say, social media does, it's more efficient to put more time into creating blog content, and use social media to promote your blog content.

But you can't stop at just the topics and content asset types that convert visitors into leads at a higher rate. Analyze which leads actually turn into customers -- your lead-to-customer rate and visitor-to-customer rate -- using closed-loop analytics. Which landing pages converted the most visitors and leads into customers? Which pages assisted the customer acquisition process? Use that information to identify your most powerful offers, and silo your weakest. If you know the landing pages that generate the most customers, you can promote the offers associated with them more frequently to bring in more of the leads that convert into customers, and spend less time focusing on the content that perhaps brings in visitors and leads at a high rate, but ones that convert into customers at a low rate.

Next up, we'll talk about how you can measure your content efforts outside of your own domain.



## *Chapter 3*

# **DIRECT & REFERRAL SOURCES**

As you learned in Chapter 2, Attribution Reports allow marketers to create advanced reports by URL, Source, or Referrer to better understand what marketing efforts lead to conversions throughout the funnel. HubSpot customers can create these reports based on someone's first interaction, last interaction before converting, last touch, all interactions, first and last interaction, or a group of recent interactions before the conversion. This report will help marketers deconstruct what marketing efforts are working and pinpoint areas that could be improved, and can be applied to measuring referral sources as well.

"Referrals" is one of those source names that could mean a lot of things, because the definition of it is simply ... any website sending traffic your way via an inbound link. Pretty vague, eh? Depending on the software or app you're using to track the sources of traffic to your site, what's included under this might vary.

For example, sometimes this could include social media websites, sometimes it might not -- in [HubSpot's software](#), social media websites are not included in referral traffic because they're included in a separate "social media" bucket. Another instance of variance is whether subdomains are included -- HubSpot software, for example, includes subdomains (like [academy.hubspot.com](#)) as a traffic source under Referrals. And sometimes it's not that tricky -- you'll always see third-party domains, like [mashable.com](#), for instance -- right under here.

This is particularly helpful if you're trying to ascertain which web properties are great for co-marketing, SEO partnerships, and guest blogging opportunities. Guest blogging is a referral source that can provide a variety of awesome benefits: it can do wonders for your search engine optimization, be a great way to get exposed to a brand new audience, help you improve your thought leadership, and better establish you as an expert in your industry. The things you'll be able to measure with guest blogging are post views, website visits, post engagement, link clicks, and even leads generated using Attribution Reports. Whatever app or software you use to measure referrals, just be sure you sort out exactly what is bucketed under it.

On the contrary, direct traffic refers to traffic you receive to your website that doesn't come through any other channel. So, when you type [www.hubspot.com](#) into your search bar and hit 'Enter,' you're accessing HubSpot.com via direct traffic. If someone posted a link to [www.hubspot.com](#) on Facebook, however, and you clicked on that link, your visit would be bucketed in HubSpot.com's social media sources. In other words, there is no referring URL when someone reaches your site via direct traffic. So if your direct traffic is going up each month, that means more and more people know you by name. Good job, branding team!

Finally, if you're running some other kind of marketing campaign for which you've generated a tracking URL, but does not fit into any of the other buckets, you might find it ends up in a nebulous "Other Campaigns" source. Hey, just because it doesn't neatly fit into another bucket doesn't mean it shouldn't be tracked, right?

## The Importance of UTM Codes

No matter which metrics you use, you want to prove to your boss and the company at large that you're worth your salt. You deserve your budget -- and maybe need more of it. You deserve to hire another person to supplement your marketing activities. You deserve to dedicate time to the marketing activities that work.

But actually measuring the impact of these activities can be kind of tricky without the right apps. Sure, you know that Twitter drives a certain percentage of traffic to your website ... but do you know that your company's tweets were the ones driving those visits? Or that your specific guest post drove actual leads and customers to your website? Luckily, you can prove all of that with a few special codes added to the end of your URLs: They are called UTM codes. Also known as UTM parameters, UTM codes are little snippets of text added to the end of your URL to help you track the success of your content on the web. An example of UTM codes is highlighted in the URL below in yellow:

**[http://blog.hubspot.com/9-reasons-you-cant-resist-list?utm\\_campaign=blogpost&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=facebook](http://blog.hubspot.com/9-reasons-you-cant-resist-list?utm_campaign=blogpost&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook)**

Adding the snippets of code after the question mark doesn't affect anything on the page -- it just lets your analytics program know that someone arrived through a certain source or overall marketing channel as part of a certain campaign. Here are the five things you can track with UTM codes:

1. **Campaign:** Groups all of the content from one campaign in your analytics. Ex: `utm_campaign=20percentpromocode`
2. **Source:** Which website is sending you traffic. Ex: `utm_source=Facebook`
3. **Medium:** The type of marketing medium that the link is featured in. Ex: `utm_medium=socialmedia`
4. **Content:** Used to track the different types of content that point to the same URL from the same campaign, source, and medium codes. Often used in PPC or with two identical links on the same page. Ex: `utm_content=sidebarlink` or `utm_content=headerlink`
5. **Term:** Used to identify the keywords you've paid for in a PPC ad. Ex: `utm_term=marketing+software`

The best part about UTM parameters is that you can make any combination you like of these code -- use the bare minimum (campaign, source, and medium) to track all of your links, or use all of them to get super specific about your tracking. Here are a couple ways you could use a combination of UTM parameters:

- Track the success of certain marketing initiatives.
- See how well your social channels promote your content versus when your followers promote your content.
- Measure the effectiveness of guest posting referral traffic.
- Track the same piece of content across multiple marketing channels.
- See where most people click on your internal links in a blog post.

Now that you've got your tracking codes all sorted out, let's head over to the next chapter for a look into what you should be measuring on social media.

## *Chapter 4*

# **SOCIAL MEDIA**



As we mentioned earlier, when someone finds your site via a link on a social network, they'll be bucketed under social media as a traffic source. This could include someone tweeting out a link, or it could include you posting a link to your Facebook page. If it's you doing the posting, you can also add a tracking token (as mentioned in the previous chapter) before posting to track those links as part of a larger campaign for you to analyze later. If you're a HubSpot customer, you might notice that [Social Inbox](#) does this automatically for you when you schedule your social media messages.

Remember that social media as a source could include more than just Facebook and Twitter, too. There are sites like StumbleUpon, Reddit, Tumblr, Xing, even HootSuite that might be bucketed under here! Be sure to confirm with your software provider what social media sites are included under social media as a source.

Every social media network has its own set of strengths. For example, you may find that Twitter drives the most site traffic, Facebook generates the most leads, and LinkedIn generates fewer but more qualified leads. Yes, you should absolutely analyze your social media strategy as an aggregate of all social media networks so you can compare it to other campaigns, but then be prepared to break it down network by network. This will let you determine which networks are best helping you meet specific sales and marketing goals...and which aren't making the cut.

To figure out what you should be measuring on social media, let's revisit the [Inbound Methodology](#) mentioned in the introduction of this ebook. In this image, you'll notice that social media falls in the "Attract" stage, which is the very first stage, also known as the very top of the "funnel." With the traditional funnel, the bottom is typically making a sale or generating a customer (but, of course, you need to continue to delight your customers after you've closed them). If we were to take social media and break it out into its own funnel, the goals could look a little something like this:





Of course you can go deeper with what you'd like to measure on social media, but since social falls in the "Attract" stage of the Inbound Methodology, let's stick to more top-of-the-funnel metrics. You can see it's important to gain followers and engage your audience, but you should also attach an ROI-driven metric to social media including traffic to your website and ultimately net new leads. If you are a B2C company or a company with a short sales cycle, you might want to switch "net new leads" with sales or customers to prove even further whether social media is an effective app for generating revenue for your business.

REACH

The number of Twitter followers, Facebook fans, LinkedIn group members, etc. you have is directly related to your social media success . Also known as "reach," the more of it you have, the more people will see your content, spread your messages, and therefore increase your ROI. Start by measuring follower growth month over month. What does this growth rate look like? Did you increase that rate from last month? If you're not attracting new followers as time goes on, focus more of your social media efforts on generating new fans and followers and building your reach to increase the value you get from social media marketing. The wider you can make the top of the social media "funnel," the better chance you have of having that success trickle down to the bottom so you can generate more leads.

In [HubSpot's Social Inbox](#), you can track your social reach growth for all of your accounts. Did your campaign on Facebook grow your reach last month? Take a look at your graph. If it did, what do you think made it successful? If it didn't, what tactics can you use to help grow your network for the next campaign? See an example of the Reach Report below:



## ENGAGEMENT

If you haven't noticed, there are a lot of social media networks that are constantly updating features and layouts. Applying marketing analytics to your social media is crucial to help you prioritize on what sites you should spend time – because it probably can't be all of them. Make sure you keep track of your social media engagement, as measured by metrics such as Facebook "Likes," retweets and @replies on Twitter, Facebook page comments, content embeds on SlideShare, etc.

Perhaps you notice that traffic from LinkedIn doesn't seem to like your blog content – there's low engagement, and a low visitor-to-lead conversion rate on blog offers. But they share and comment on your product-related LinkedIn content, and have a high visitor-to-lead rate on product-related offers. This is a good indication that your LinkedIn fans are further down the sales funnel than your followers on other social media networks. Use that information to tailor the content you publish to each network accordingly and increase your visitor-to-lead and visitor-to-customer conversion rate for each social channel.

## CLICKS & TRAFFIC

As simple as it sounds clicks are an extremely helpful health metric to gauge how well your campaigns are doing. A click means somebody has, in fact, clicked the link attached to your social message. The higher your click total, the higher interest your audience has for the material you are posting. Also look at which social media sites send traffic to your website to establish on which sites you should allocate the most time and resources. Social media is also often a huge traffic generator for business blogs and landing pages – likely two of your big lead generators. Use your closed-loop analytics to determine how much of that social media traffic turns into leads, and which sites provide the best visitor-to-lead conversion rate.

## LEADS

Social media helps drive traffic to your site, but traffic doesn't bring home the bacon. Track (network by network, and as an aggregate) how many of those visitors convert into leads. Knowing exactly how much of a role social media plays in lead generation will help you meet your monthly lead goal by giving you the historical data to set an educated goal based on how much social media brings in, and what that rate of growth looks like month over month.

If you'd like to take social a step further, make use of closed-loop analytics to see how many leads turned into customers. Which sites have the highest lead-to-customer rate? Leads are great, but customers are better! Looking at your closed-loop data alongside how engaged your followers from each social media network are can help you learn what kind of content resonates with your social media followers, too. This insight will help you implement a mature lead scoring system so your sales team can focus time on the leads most likely to close. When you use closed-loop marketing on social media leads, you can also learn metrics like how much social media customers cost to acquire, and how much they spend with you compared to leads from other campaigns.

## *Chapter 5*

# **EMAIL MARKETING & LEAD NURTURING**

When you run an [email marketing campaign](#), we hope you're including links in that email that lead recipients back to your website -- to read more content, convert, etc. When you take a look at email marketing as a source of traffic, you'll be able to see how much traffic is sent to your website due to email marketing campaigns you've sent out. That's how we found out, for instance, that driving blog email subscriptions was extremely important to the growth of a business blog -- because many of the visits we receive each month come from subscribers who get pinged in their inboxes that a new blog post is published, prompting a click through to the post! Just be sure to include tracking tokens in the links of your email, otherwise the clicks won't be properly bucketed under the email marketing source.

## BOUNCE RATE

Of all your email marketing analytics, your bounce and delivery rate are two of the most crucial to measure. A high hard bounce rate or a low overall delivery rate is often a symptom of an unhealthy email marketing program. Your email deliverability rate could be impacted by: your email sending reputation, the health of your email list, the value of your content, how well segmented your email list is, and bounce & delivery rate -- scored by many ISPs using the free service by Return Path called Sender Score -- is crucial to email deliverability. 83% of the time an email is not delivered to an inbox, it is because of a poor sender reputation.

When an email bounces in general, it means it can't be delivered to an inbox. "Hard" and "soft" designate the two groupings of failures: one's more permanent, and one's less permanent.

A hard bounce is an email that couldn't be delivered for permanent reasons. Maybe the email's a fake address, maybe the email domain isn't a real domain, or maybe the email recipient's server won't accept emails. There are lots of reasons that an email could be a hard bounce, but the core of it is that it's a permanent failure. You should remove all of these addresses from your list (if you're a HubSpot customer, we'll ensure hard bounce addresses won't receive emails from you so your sender reputation remains in tact).

A soft bounce is an email that couldn't be delivered because of temporary reasons. An inbox may be full or the email file might be too large, among other reasons. If they get a soft bounce on an email send, most email providers will continue to try to deliver the email over the period of a few days. You should keep an eye on these addresses -- if you notice that the same ones are popping up over and over again, it's best to remove them.

Try to keep your total bounce rate under 2% -- much higher than that, and you'll start noticing some deliverability issues. Hard bounces = permanent delivery failures. Soft bounces = temporary deliverability failures. Not as complicated as it first seems, but definitely just as crucial.

If you are experiencing a high hard bounce rate – the undelivered emails that are the result of a permanent problem with an email address, such as being invalid or non-existent – immediately remove all of these email addresses from your list to prevent gaining a reputation as an email spammer and harming your email deliverability. Your email delivery rate should always stay at 95% or higher. If it is lower than this or you find one month it slips below 95%, use this opportunity to scrub your list of the following contacts to decrease your bounce rate and increase your deliverability rate:

- Duplicate and invalid email addresses
- Contacts who haven't opted in
- Alias email addresses
- Email addresses that hard bounce
- Completely disengaged email recipients

If you find just one particular campaign has a lower than average delivery rate, it doesn't mean that entire list segment should be deleted. Instead, examine the content of the email to see if there was an accidental indication to SPAM filters or ISPs that your message should be blocked.

## LIST GROWTH RATE

Now that your [email marketing program](#) is healthy again, you may notice the size of your list has seriously decreased. The average email marketing list depreciates at a rate of 25% a year -- which is a good thing, as it keeps your email list healthy and deliverability rates high. Take a look at your list growth rate, though, to ensure you're continuing to add new contacts to that list for nurturing. If your list growth rate is low, it could mean:

- ***More top-of-the-funnel offers***  
You need more compelling offers that drive visitors to fill out a form and opt-in to your email communications.
- ***More traffic to existing offers***  
You have compelling offers, you just need to drive more traffic to those pages through content creation, better calls-to-action, and social media marketing.
- ***More optimized pages***  
You need to improve the visitor-to-lead conversion rate on your landing pages to better capture the traffic you're driving.



## CLICKTHROUGH RATE

You may notice open-rate hasn't been included as a measurement for your email marketing effectiveness. Clickthrough rate is a far more accurate indication of how well your email content resonates with your audience, as open-rate is often misreported based on how each individual email client calculates an "open." If you have a high clickthrough rate for a campaign, you know the offer was compelling, aligned with the content in the email, and matched the interests of that particular list segment. Naturally, you should expect to see lower clickthrough rates on offers with a higher barrier to entry. For example, if the offer in your email prompts your recipient to purchase something, you'll receive fewer clicks than if your offer is to download a free content asset. When analyzing whether your clickthrough rate for a campaign is good, compare it to the clickthrough rate of other email offers of that type.

Whether you're suffering an inordinately low CTR on a campaign or you simply want to improve an already good clickthrough rate, there are three different ways you can do it:

- ***List segmentation***

The better segmented your email list, the more targeted your email offer. eConsultancy reports that marketers who segment their list have 24% more sales leads, 18% more transactions, and 15% greater customer acquisition.

- ***Optimize the email & landing page***

A/B test the layout and copy in your email offer. Email recipients scan emails, so your offer should be above the fold, visually bold, and written with action-oriented copy. You can also add a sense of urgency by adding a time frame during which the recipient must redeem the offer.

- ***Email sharing options***

Including social sharing options in email enables you to increase the email sharing and forward rate. Emails with only one social sharing option have a 30% higher clickthrough rate than emails without any social sharing options. Those with three or more have a 55% higher clickthrough rate. This is a quick addition to your emails, and helps you grow your email list while improving clickthrough rates and engagement.

The effectiveness of your lead nurturing is dependent on how well you've segmented your leads. Dive into your analytics to identify any problems with your list segmentation. Start by looking at your unsubscribe rate, which should stay below 1% at all times. If it's higher for any particular list segment, it's an indication the content you are sending isn't relevant to that list segment, and they are unsubscribing as a result. You can glean similar insights by examining the clickthrough rates of each list segment. Marketers who suffer a low clickthrough rate for a particular list segment haven't aligned their offer well with the recipients on that list.

## TRAFFIC

Having a high email clickthrough rate is only really helpful if you also have a high conversion rate on the landing page to which your email links. The conversion rate of your email campaign relies on having a well-optimized landing page, which can be difficult if you're pointing email recipients to a generic landing page instead of one messaged according to each individual list segment.

For example, perhaps you have an offer and landing page for a webinar about unicorn grooming, and you send an email campaign promoting that offer. That email campaign might go to two different list segments – unicorns interested in learning new hairstyles, and unicorn groomers interested in learning how to give their unicorns new hairstyles. You'd position those emails differently, and you should position the landing page for the webinar differently, too. If you have a high email clickthrough rate but a low overall conversion rate for an email campaign, it could be due to this type of disjointed messaging between email and offer content and landing page content.

You can optimize the offers you deliver by analyzing which CTAs have the highest clickthrough rate, and which landing pages have the highest visitor-to-customer conversion rate in your closed-loop analytics.

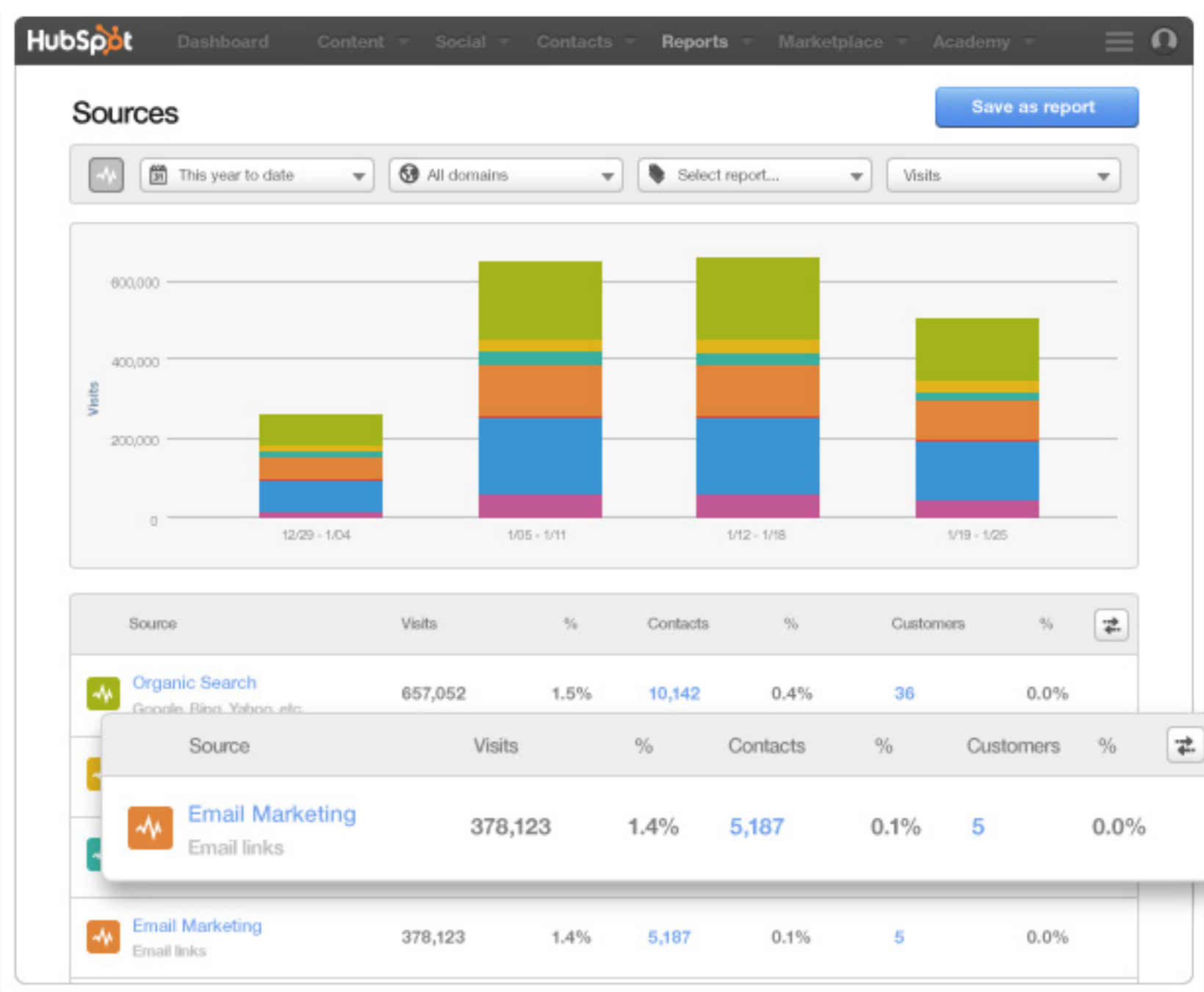
### *Fix: Poor List Segmentation*

Faulty list segmentation can be remedied by revisiting how you've mapped content to your list segments based on their stage in the sales cycle. Deliver email content to leads based on the pages they've visited on your site, the content they've downloaded, the blog posts they've commented on, and how far down the sales funnel they are.

## REVENUE

If you are using email marketing for direct sales, you should use closed-loop analytics to attribute revenue to your email marketing efforts. To do this (and any other closed-loop marketing analysis, for that matter), you must integrate your ESP with your marketing analytics. You can do this by using a unique tracking URL in all of your email links so you can attribute clicks to a specific email campaign. If you find that your email marketing isn't actually driving revenue, perhaps email should be utilized more frequently as a lead nurturing app to drive reconversions, not a mechanism for direct sales.

[The HubSpot software](#) can automatically take your email marketing messages and place performance in the right analytics bucket. So when you visit your reporting data, you will be able to see the number of customers brought in from email marketing and compare that number to other channels. Undoubtedly, this step is essential to any marketer who wants to prove the worth of their work to management, putting it in language that the entire organization understands. Check out the screenshot below for an example:



## **TIME TO CUSTOMER CONVERSION**

You should always be looking for ways to make your lead nurturing more efficient. To improve your time to customer conversion, analyze how good you are at generating marketing qualified leads (MQLs) with your lead nurturing. MQLs are the leads that are more likely to become a customer based on their pre-close activities. If you've implemented lead nurturing effectively, more leads should be moving to the MQL stage of the sales funnel. Analyze this for each lead nurturing campaign – you may find that some list segments move more slowly than others, indicating you have a bottleneck in your lead nurturing somewhere. Revisit the content and offers you're using for that list segment. You may be sending less-than-compelling offers, or pointing leads to under-optimized landing pages.

You can also improve your time to customer conversion by looking at the number of sales-accepted leads in each lead nurturing campaign. Marketing automation should increase not just your number of MQLs, but the number of sales-accepted leads. If this is not the case, meet with your sales organization to diagnose the problem. This is often a result of misaligned lead scoring criteria between Sales and Marketing. But by fixing it, you should see your time-to-customer conversion rate decrease as Sales reaches out to leads that have reconverted enough to provide the quality information needed to close sales.

## **COST PER CUSTOMER**

Effective lead nurturing converts leads into MQLs and sales accepted leads, but it must follow through all the way to customer. Use closed-loop analytics to ensure the leads you're nurturing actually turn into customers, and they do so at an efficient cost. Over time, your cost per customer should decrease as more leads that typically bleed out of the top of the funnel are adequately nurtured down through the bottom of the funnel – until they are finally converted into a customer. Check this metric monthly to ensure your lead nurturing efforts stay cost-efficient.

## *Chapter 6*

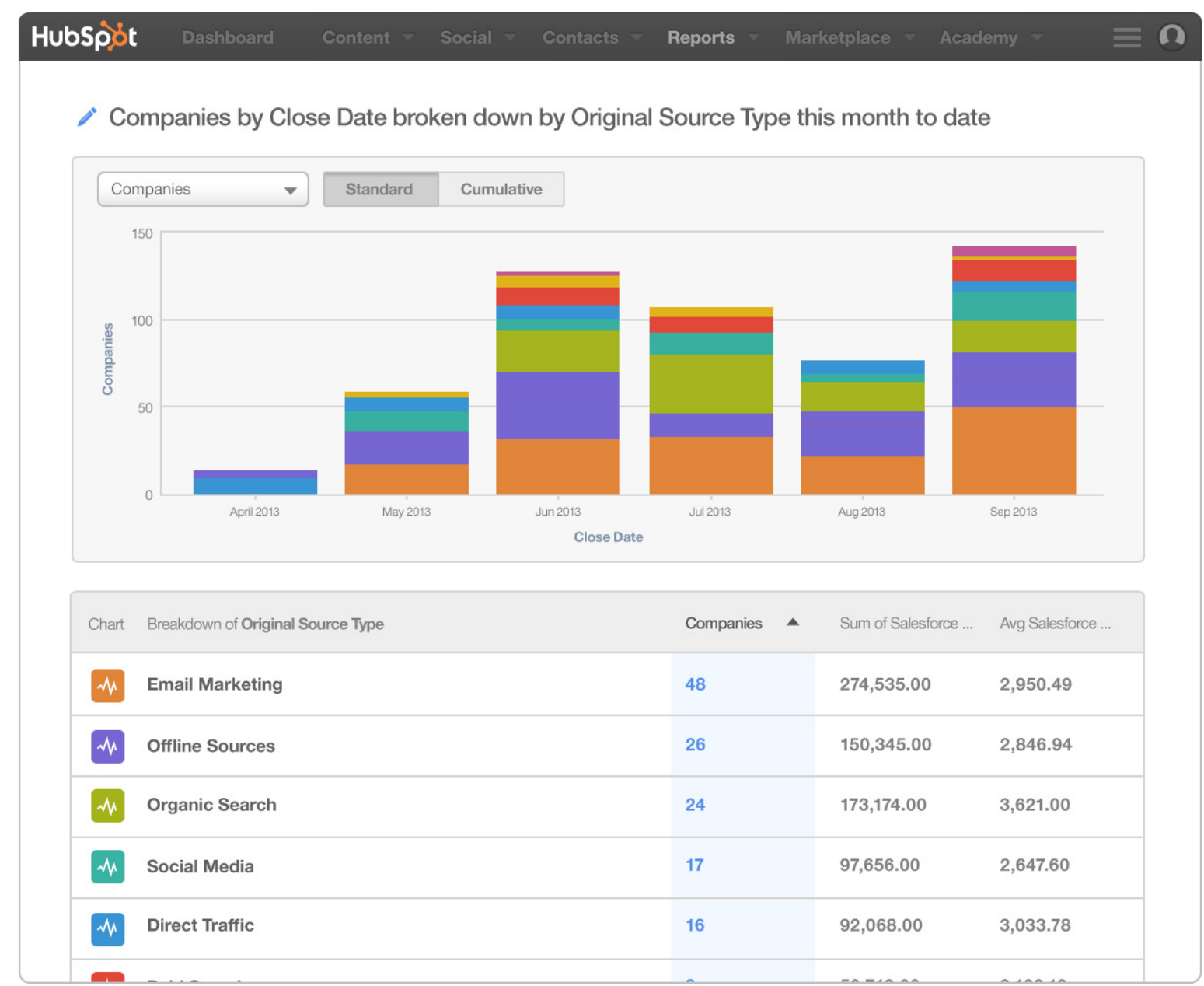
# CLOSING THE LOOP



Closed-loop marketing directs your attention to the most powerful conversion events and channels. By looking at the sources and offers that traditionally brought in new customers for your organization, you will be able to identify the behavior you need to engage in to qualify leads and push them down the sales funnel. For instance, by looking at HubSpot's Sources we are able to compare the efficiency of different channels in respect to customer acquisition. In the screenshot below we are comparing the number of sales from social media marketing to the number of sales from email marketing. It becomes clear that email marketing has a higher lead-to-customer rate than social media. This insight can then help us take action: nurture the social media leads with targeted email messages.

Marketers are responsible for generating leads for their sales team. But in order to figure out whether or not these are quality leads, a marketer needs to understand how they are impacting the company's bottom line. After all, you can generate thousands and thousands of leads, but if the majority of them don't close, something needs to change in your marketing. How do you report on the revenue generated from your marketing activities?

[HubSpot has an app](#) that allows you to report not just on contacts, but on the number of companies in your database and the total revenue your marketing produces. With this app, you can do revenue reporting based on source or based on different content that performs the best. An example of this would be a recent conversion to see which landing pages are driving the most revenue for your company. See an example of Revenue by Source below:



Though revenue is just one metric, it can give you insight into many different parts of your marketing. Of course, it can tell you how much money you made in the last month ... but it also can help you understand which channels are your most lucrative, or which types of customers bring in the most money (among other things).

The intelligence marketers can gather from closed-loop reporting will expose conversion assists, or pages on their website that visitors viewed before they converted into leads or customers. Understanding a website's conversion can help marketers identify the most influential pages they own. In doing so, they can learn a lot about why those pages are (or aren't) effective, and apply these insights to improve poorly performing web pages and enhance other components of their marketing.

If "closed-loop marketing" all sounds pretty dependent on apps, you're right -- it does. In order to set up closed-loop marketing, you need to be able to map marketing activities to sales. As we hinted at earlier, such an integration requires connecting your marketing software to your customer relationship management (CRM) software. In other words, you need to be able to tie the intelligence emerging from your marketing communication with prospective, current, and former customers to the intelligence your internal team has built with these same people. [Click here to learn more about HubSpot's free CRM](#), which connects to the dozens of places where the modern sales process takes place - on your website, in email, on phone calls, across social media, and more.

As a sophisticated marketer, you want the two systems to talk to each other. And technically, your CRM and marketing software are able to talk to each other through an application programming interface (API). So when one of your sales representatives closes a deal, he/she can mark that sale as "won" in your CRM, and that will trigger an update in the marketing software. You will then be able to go backwards and identify where this new customer originally came from. What channel brought them to your website? What pages did they view afterward? At what point did they convert into a lead, and then a customer?

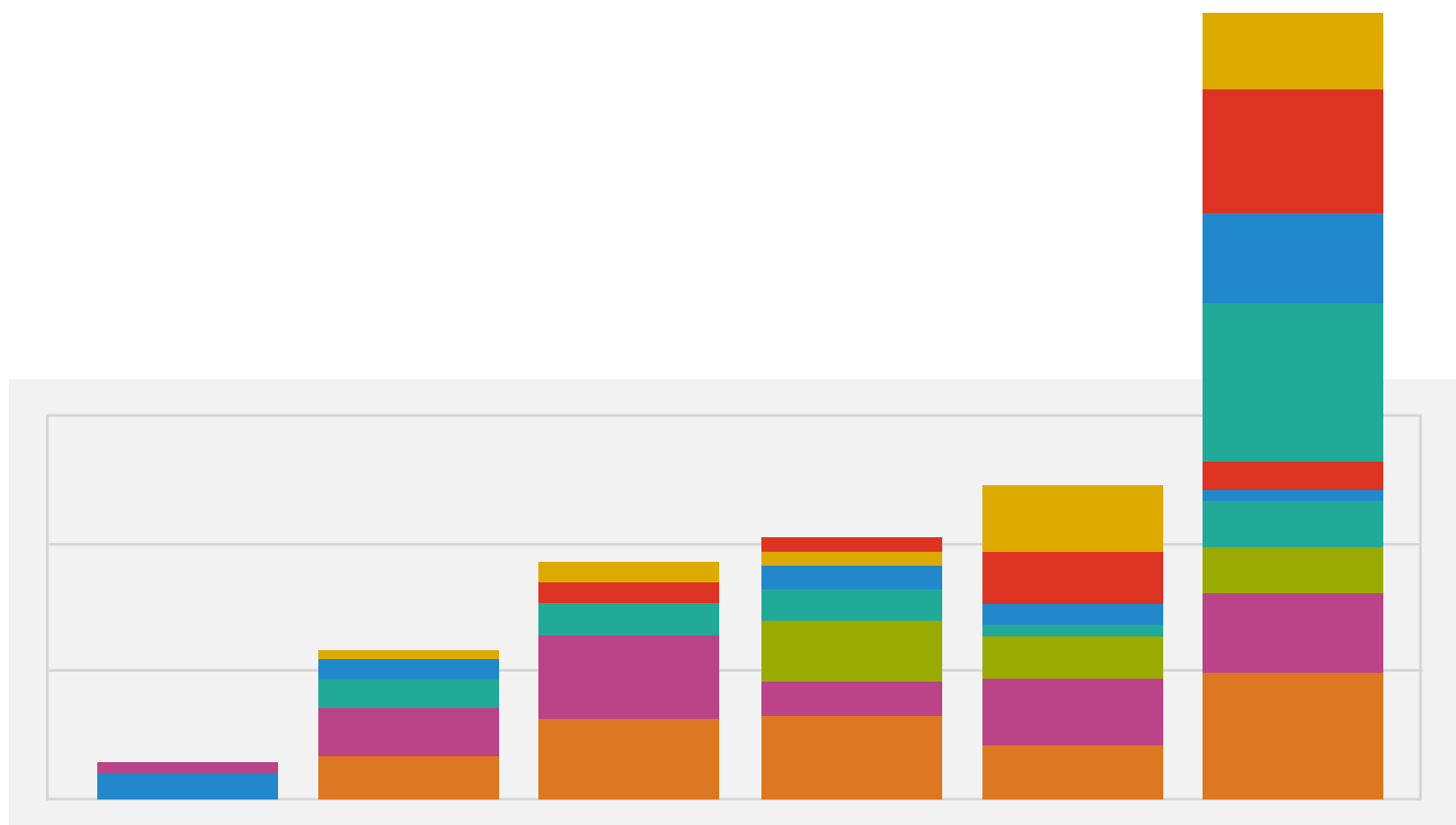
Closed-loop marketing also enables you to achieve alignment between sales and marketing and define the operations between the two departments. Other benefits of the integration between your marketing software and CRM solutions include the ability to implement sales assignment rules, lead scoring systems, lead nurturing campaigns, custom lead scoring, and monetary goal setting.

# Final Thought

*You* probably noticed none of the actionable improvements you can make by looking at your marketing analytics are possible without closed-loop analytics. The mistake many marketers make is thinking their end goal is generating leads. It's not. Your end goal is generating customers. And you have no way of measuring whether you're doing that, nor how efficient you are at it, without closed-loop analytics.

After analyzing all this data about your blogging, social media, lead nurturing, email marketing, landing pages, and calls-to-action, ask yourself—what marketing channels are the most helpful at generating leads that turn into customers? Be sure you are allocating the most time and resources to the marketing channels with the most ROI, and constantly monitoring these analytics to see if, over time, some channels start to become more effective for your business.

Now get out there and achieve exponential growth with your marketing analytics!



# HubSpot ANALYTICS



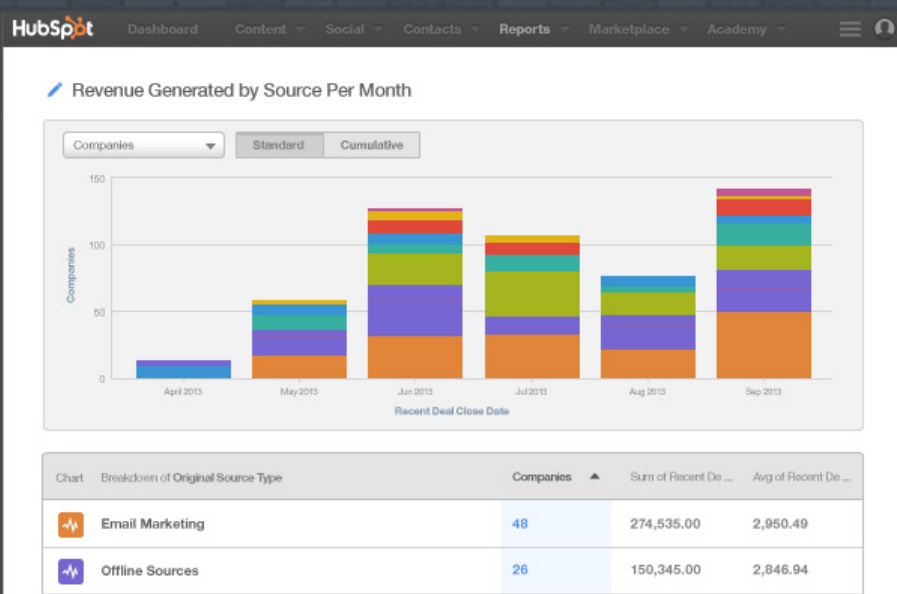
[Read more >>](#)

The power of real-time analytics has helped improve the overall marketing dialog at HCSS. “It’s helpful to immediately see what’s happening,” says Dan Briscoe, the VP of Marketing at HCSS, “they allow us to implement something new and see what’s working, which sparks conversations across teams.” The HCSS marketing team uses real-time data in HubSpot to stay on top of the progress of their marketing activities and keep a pulse on the overall health of their sales pipeline. They track performance by connecting all of their content into the HubSpot Campaigns app to see what posts generate which leads, helping to shape the type of content that they produce.



[Read more >>](#)

Sandra Almeida, Inbound Marketing Manager at WeDo Technologies, is a big fan of the HubSpot Analytics app. It has helped her see the full conversion process across all her email campaigns, from new contact to customer, which has helped her to build knowledge about WeDo Technologies’ target market: “We know now that some of our contacts prefer a direct response over a click and that the more personalisation elements we add, the better responses we receive.”



With HubSpot’s inbound marketing software platform, you have access to integrated metrics that span your contacts database, marketing content and website traffic - all in one platform. *One happy home for all your marketing data.*

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