

# How Inbound Marketing Can Grow Your Niche Business or Directory

Inbound marketing is defined as the marketing activities that bring visitors in, rather than having to go out to get a prospect's attention. Inbound marketing gets the attention of customers, makes the company easy to be found and draws customers to the website by producing interesting content. Best of all it's usually free or comes at a very low price.

For smaller or "niche" businesses the larger-scale outbound marketing initiatives (newspaper ads, TV spots, billboards, etc.) would cost a larger sum of money and end up reaching an audience that is around 99% irrelevant to your business. However, inbound marketing lets you appeal to the most qualified prospects to your business or niche industry by using highly targeted subject matter.

Our goal here is to maximize your growth from inbound marketing while keeping your time and costs to a minimum. To do this we are going to focus on the "Big 3" for inbound marketing to get the most out of your efforts: SEO, Content and Social Media.



## SEO: Simple Tips for Big Results

SEO can be made simpler if you focus on just a few key factors for optimizing your site. To be most effective in being found by your customers in search engines its vital to optimize every page that is on your website with keywords and phrases that are most important to your business. For niche industries, the more specific the keywords and phrase the better.

Here are some simple ways to optimize:

- Include keywords in the page properties: URL's, meta descriptions
- Include keywords within the content itself: headers, page text, captions
- Include keywords when adding images: keywords in the name of the image, using an alt tag with the keyword in it
- Link keywords in your content to other pages on your site: create internal links by attaching URL's to a keyword on one page to other pages on your site such as blog posts and articles
- Include links to your site on social media posts and newsletters

For a more in-depth look at SEO check out our white paper titled "SEO Toolkit for Directory Sites" by visiting our website or shooting us an email.



## Content: To Educate is the Best Way to Sell

If you run a business or website in your niche industry then you have a certain expertise that can be shared with your prospects. You can show you are knowledgeable and have a chance to build up trust in your ability as a potential product or service provider. In niche industries the availability of useful content is fairly minimal and it provides a great opportunity to become the first stop for any kind of information in your market

### Blogging

The simplest, yet most affective, way to leverage this expertise is through a business blog. It allows you to demonstrate your know-how and become your own micro media company, able to publish your knowledge for others to see. Educating your readers is key, as it is established thinking that in any industry it is easier to sell when people see you as an authority and a thought leader.

Blogging will help you to build up your inbound links and also help to raise your website's rank for main keywords and phrases, which are crucial for SEO and growing your site's inbound traffic.

### High Quality Content

High quality content is meant to go a step deeper than blogging and really drill down into some topics for your visitors. The goal of this content is to convert a lead to a customer.

An example of this is that your blog may have brought in a visitors to your site and helped them to understand what your business is about, now you can introduce them to a case study that shows them direct benefits of your services and provides them with a clear incentive to join as a customer.

Besides case studies here are some other examples of high quality content that can be highly affective:

- Webinars
- White papers
- eBooks
- Tutorials
- Slide decks
- Demos
- Videos
- Infographics



## Social Media: Reach Your Specific Audience

The social media tools available to you from Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, or an industry-specific social network allow you to directly connect with your target audience. The more narrow your focus, the easier it is to pinpoint the specific people and businesses interacting on these social networks about your niche industry. Utilize these platforms to engage with your prospects outside of your website and outside of an in-person or over-the-phone interaction.

Use these tips to get the most out of your social media efforts:

### Research

- Determine how much time and resources are needed to participate affectively in each social network and participate in the ones that make the most sense for your business. Some may be useful for you and others may be too time consuming and wasteful.
- See who is using social media and determine why they look there and what they are looking for.
- Identify if these users are potential customers or if they carry influence over those who may be your potential customers.
- Find out what types of content these people are most interested in and are likely to link to and share.

### Promote

- Leverage your online profiles and make sure to provide information about your business and most importantly link back to your company's site. Use this area or the "About" section to provide a short elevator pitch about who you are and why people should use your business.
- Promote your original content and provide links back to your website. Create enticing headlines and tags to grab the attention of potential readers and bring in more visits.
- Share links and content from others. This can be a useful practice to build relationships and goodwill between yourself and other influencers in your industry.

With built-in tools for SEO, content management and social media integration eDirectory can help you grow your business directory.

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