

The **ABC**'s of Inbound Marketing

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The **ABC's** of Inbound Marketing

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What is Inbound Marketing?

Simply put, it's the opposite of Outbound Marketing.

No, this is not a glib answer, as it really helps to first consider the tactics that are involved in Outbound Marketing: reaching out via phone, email, letter, and gasp! faxes. etc.

Now, Inbound Marketing being the opposite of Outbound Marketing leads you naturally to understand that it includes activities that leads prospects to you, as opposed to you reaching out to them.

The "How To" contains a long list of activities, united by one single strategy:

offering great information to buyers looking for it

Online purchases start with online research

It does not matter if you are selling to businesses or to consumers. By now, you know that your potential buyers have been conducting research online before they make any buying decisions.

So the question for you is to know what they are looking for, i.e. how do they go about to find the information they're looking for? And more importantly, how do you then provide that information so that they'll want to contact you?

We'll cover that topic in this white paper.

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Or, the alphabet soup of acronyms

SEO, PPC, SMO, SEM.... That's pretty much it, so hopefully no one will forget them. And actually, they don't just apply to Inbound Marketing, they apply to all things related to internet marketing. Here are our definitions:

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SEO: Search Engine Optimization, meaning building a website so that search engines will give it a high rank during web searches. SEO marketing companies will tell you that they can give you 1st page rank through their unique, sophisticated methodology.

PPC: Pay-Per-Click, the advertising model that generates revenue for the ad seller and the affiliate marketers. You, as the buyer of pay-per-click advertising, will spend enormous amounts of time tweaking your keywords, offers, budget and pouring over the analytics, and you will always wonder if real prospects are clicking on your ads.

SEM: Search Engine Marketing is a companion to SEO that focuses on the marketing, or promoting end, of your website development effort.

SMO: Social Media Optimization intends to use the myriads of social networking sites to promote your own website, your products, services and companies.

Let's now go into the core of **Inbound Marketing**.
And be prepared to go visit a number of authoritative sites. Yes indeed, we've chosen to send you to the folks who are writing the books on Inbound Marketing.

By deploying SEO, SEM/PPC, SMO, blogging, participating in social media, providing RSS feeds, free tools, trials and viral videos, you'll effectively be deploying your inbound marketing strategy.

Getting started

Keywords—they are the engine to your inbound marketing. Done right, you'll have done 50% of the work required to get prospects into your site and interacting with you.

1. **Target the correct keywords**
2. **Write keyword-rich content**
3. **Get lots of relevant one-way inbound links**

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Go to this [keyword tool](#) site and enter your own web site url to get the tool to extract your keywords. This is the Google Adwords keyword tool that will tell you not only which keywords are relevant for your site, but also the number of global and monthly searches conducted for these words. Great information to gather.

You can also extract the keywords that your site contains at [SEOMoz](#). This tool analyzes the content of a given page and extracts the terms that appear to be targeted at search engines.

The top terms give you an overall picture of the words and phrases most prominently employed on the page. Are they the correct keywords? If not, make changes to your text.

Next, do the same for your competitors' web sites, and then weight the search volume of each keyword against the number of competitive websites.

Next, identify the correct keywords for each page of your website.

Here's what you do with your keywords

- Include the keyword(s) in your url
- Include the keywords in your meta content: page title up to 70 characters, meta description up to 150 characters and meta keywords (used by Yahoo)
- Mention the keywords on each page at the rate of 2-3 times per 300-350 words. Obviously you want the text to make sense to humans too.
- → capitalization has no effect.
- → use unique keywords for each page

Know that once you've done this exercise, you will have completed just about 50% of your SEO preparations. Unfortunately, that was the easy 50%. The last 50% counting towards your SEO is composed of inbound links. Link building strategy is a whole other topic that we'll cover in a separate document. For now, we're sharing some key research that will tell you what to look for when building your inbound links:

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Ranking Factors

Top 5 Ranking Factors

1. Keyword Focused [Anchor Text](#) from External Links
73% very high importance 
2. [External Link Popularity](#) (quantity/quality of external links)
71% very high importance 
3. Diversity of Link Sources (links from many unique [root domains](#))
67% very high importance 
4. Keyword Use Anywhere in the [Title Tag](#)
66% very high importance 
5. Trustworthiness of the Domain Based on Link Distance from Trusted Domains (e.g. TrustRank, Domain [mozTrust](#), etc.)
66% very high importance 

Top 5 Negative Ranking Factors:

1. Cloaking with malicious/manipulative intent: 68% very high importance
2. Link acquisition from known link brokers/sellers: 56% high importance
3. Links from the page to web spam sites/pages: 51% moderate importance
4. Cloaking by user agent: 51% moderate importance
5. Frequent server downtime & site inaccessibility: 51% moderate importance

Source: <http://www.seomoz.org/article/search-ranking-factors>

Number of indexed pages

Check the number of pages that Google indexes for your site. And for fun, do site:cnn.com [over 5 million pages!!!!]

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Create content

Now that you have your core inbound marketing elements defined, it's time to start writing your content. The more material (pages and other) you have online, the more you increase your chances of being found. Keep the following 4 recommendations in mind:

Provide some value for free and results will follow
You need to stand out among your competitors
Inbound Marketing only gets results if you're persistent
Interesting content will help you build a following

Here are many suggestions for where and how you can post your content

- blog articles
- web pages
- Videos
- Photos
- Webinars
- Whitepapers
- Presentations
- In-Person Events
- Podcasts
- Press Releases (run them through [Press Release Grader](#) to make sure they are optimized)
- Whitepapers & eBooks
- Kits
- Online Tools, Games & Quizzes
- Testimonials
- Interviews
- Get listed: directories (DMOZ, business.com, yahoo directory, about us, zoominfo, and others that are relevant to your industry,

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Listen to online conversations

When we say conversations, we mean the business-end of conversations. Your prospects are asking questions in their online communities and they rely on their fellow members to provide them with good insights. Become one of the experts that they listen to.

You'll need to find all the relevant forums and communities for your business, only you can do that. But don't forget the pure social sites either, as they are currently crossing over from the 'pure social' aspect of online communities into the realm of business.



Analyze, nurture and follow-up

The beauty of inbound marketing is that all of your activities can be measured. Yes it will take time to set up the baseline, or benchmark, and then continuously monitor your progress, but this is the only way you're going to know if you're on the right track. Keep in mind too that new tools come onto the market place, search engines change their algorithms [Google's Caffeine is a recent example], and competitors keep up their own improvement efforts.

Here's the synopsis of what we covered in this ebook

1. Create great content and make it available on your blog, via podcasts, videos and webinars, presentations, etc.
2. Optimize all your content in accordance to up-to-date SEO recommendations
3. Publish your content throughout all the social media sites that you've identified as relevant for your business.
4. Give your prospect a reason to share their contact information with you.
5. Nurture your leads by continuously provide them with valuable information that will ultimately bring them into your lead pipeline.
6. Analyze your website traffic, leads and conversions by channel and content.

Your action item

Determine if you have the inhouse resource, know-how and talent to implement your own inbound marketing strategy yourself. And if the answer is no, consider asking us to do it for you: brigitte@turfbuildermarketing.com