Inbound 281
MARKET YOUR WAY UP

How to Build an Inbound Marketing website

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Inbound281.com

Introduction

Are you looking to create a dynamic website that attracts customers? To build an inbound marketing website that keeps customers coming back, you need to plan properly and commit to regular assessment and adjustment.

You need to create a website that, despite changes to content, is familiar and easy to use for visitors.

That can be a tall order. However, following this handy guide will help you build an inbound marketing website that connects and compels.

Content Creation

A great inbound marketing website focuses on content and user experience.

Inbound and static websites have some things in common. Both should have an appealing design, be search optimized, and give visitors a great experience.

That's pretty much where the similarities end.

Inbound marketing websites have one distinctive feature that separates them from other websites: compelling content.

Content is the fundamental core of inbound marketing. Effective inbound marketing sites are rich in content. This content can take on many forms: blogs, white papers, videos, webinars, infographics, podcasts, tips, and articles.

Content is displayed in prominent places throughout the website.

Visitors to your site will likely be at various steps in the buying process. It's important to include offers that will entice people to learn more. Whether these are no-

risk offers for those at the top of the sales funnel, low-risk offers for those in the middle or direct business offers for those close to making a buying decision, providing offers gives prospects a chance to sample your products and services.

Content is the most critical part of inbound marketing websites. It is this content that helps turn visitors into leads. Content also has a secondary benefit. It helps people find your site, especially when keywords and search engine optimization techniques are used. More content helps improve rankings in search engine results, while sharing content on social media drives viewers, too.

Inbound281.com

Content Creation

Blogs must be an active part of most inbound marketing websites. Posting regularly has multiple impacts. For one, blogging with strategic keyword placement drives better search engine results. Second, having an active blog presence establishes your site as a valuable source of information and your writers as experts. Well-written, informative blogs increase the perceived value of your site as a resource.

No matter how well your website is designed, visitors will lose interest and leave if they can't find rich, robust content.

▶ KEEP IT PERSONAL

Consumers today expect personal relationships with the brands they purchase from. That means your content must be personalized using smart tools that know where a customer has been and what's been download, viewed, or purchased. The information can help visitors more easily navigate your website and help them to build a stronger relationship with your brand.

▶ IT'S ABOUT THEM

The key to effective inbound marketing is to remember it's about your prospects and customers, not you. The most effective content is that which provides valuable information, insights, tips, summaries, guidance or explanations. You want your visitors to gain value from the content they consume.

While content is the most important element of an inbound marketing website, it is only as valuable as its ability to attract prospects and drive conversions. Inbound marketing websites need processes in place to ensure that content is evaluated regularly, updated, removed or replaced in response to what website visitors are demonstrating. Content that never gets clicks is a waste of valuable web real estate.

Inbound281.com

Core Elements
SEO

Now that we've discussed the importance of content, let's look at some of the important features that that must be included as essential components for that content to be effective.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

Maximizing the visibility of your website is vital. SEO tools allow you to embed certain pieces of information in your website that will improve your rankings in search results. Many of the SEO techniques are behind the scenes while others are a part of your content.

One important factor of SEO is the integration of social media. Using the platforms that are right for your audience and your business is crucial. Once you determine the platforms to use, your social media content should both complement and cross-promote website content.

Whenever a new blog entry, infographic or white paper appears on your site, you want to promote it with compelling Tweets, Facebook and Instagram posts, and LinkedIn announcements. Not only does social media messaging drive more visitors to your page, but it helps improve your search results, too.

Inbound281.com

Core Elements

Title tags and meta descriptions are descriptions built into your page design that are not noticed by a visitor but are essential to search engines. The meta description is a brief sentence or paragraph that's displayed underneath the URL in search results. It's a concise summary of what information is on the page. These descriptions are helpful both for search engines and those browsing results. A title tag is part of the HTML coding and is a concise description of the page.

Search engines are looking for pages that are relevant, contain quality content, are navigable, load quickly, work on deskbound and mobile devices (in different operating systems), and proper internal linking.

▶ KEYWORDS

Relevant keywords need to be an important part of your web content. Why? Because that's how people search. Think about how you use a search engine like Google or Bing. You're more likely to type in a few keywords than a sentence. "Charlotte pool cleaners" or "Pool services in Charlotte" are far more likely than "I need someone to clean my pool. I live in Charlotte."

You want to be sure you pick the right keywords that will draw users to your website. If you own a shoe store, "extra-wide shoes" and "women's flats" are far better than "downtown Buffalo businesses" as keywords. Make sure your keywords are relevant. Test them in a few search engines to see if they are pulling up your site or competitors.

Inbound281.com

Core Elements

▶ CALLS TO ACTION (CTA)

You've delivered dynamite content. Readers are enthralled with the information. Your content is informative, entertaining and compelling. What now? It's time to issue a call to action. An effective CTA asks a reader to do something. It might be as simple as "call us today to learn how our services can improve your accounting practice" or it could be something more complex.

Some CTAs encourage people to download content. To access that content, a reader may need to complete a form that asks for name, company information, title and contact information, giving sales people an instant lead. Other CTAs may ask you to fill out a similar form to learn more about a service or get a free quote.

CTAs need to be appropriate and should not be pervasive in your content. Best practices usually call for one CTA for each piece of content. Often a CTA is found at the bottom of a blog post or article, or at the entry point for access to a white paper or infographic.

These essential elements ensure that all the hard work you've done on building great content is not wasted. When done right, prospects are eager to learn more and respond to the CTA you've offered.

DOWNLOAD OUR FREE E-BOOK

Inbound281.com

▶ UX DESIGN

People often believe that user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) design are the same. While they are related concepts, they are distinct areas of website design. UI is primarily designed with the interaction between person and device. UI design examines the responsiveness of a site and helps transfer a brand's strengths and visual elements into the digital interface to create a better experience. UI is a very technical side of web development, and UI designers often work closely with developers and code.

UX design focuses much more on improving customer loyalty and satisfaction through web design. UX design is used to ensure that the user's experience with the product is pleasurable. UX also coordinates with UI developers and coders to ensure that plans are changed to serve the UX goals.

UX design is an amalgamation of marketing, page design and project management. UX design is a broad, far-reaching perspective that incorporates the following skills and needs during website development:
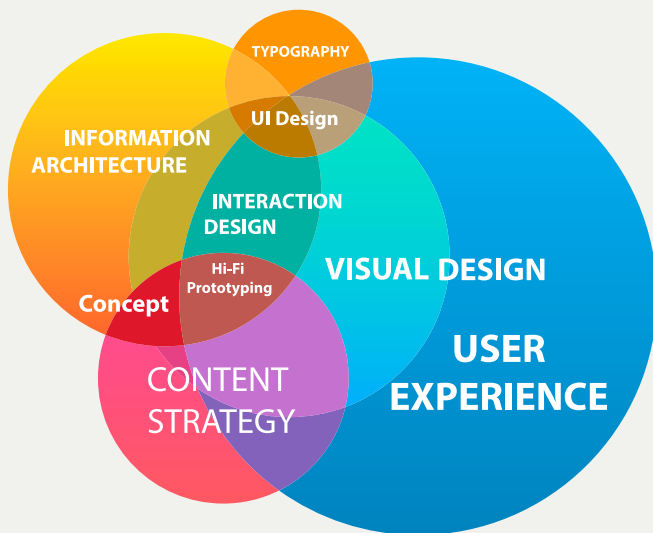
• User Research

UX designers must understand how customers behave on the site, what they want and need, and what motivates them. This work is usually done via testing and observation. One example of such observation is creating a heat map, which looks at which areas of a page generate the most clicks. This visual representation of activity can be used to tweak design elements and content placement.

• Content Strategy

UX designers plan the creation, governance, and delivery of site content.

• Information Architecture

UX design understands how information is organized, built and delivered to users.

• Web Analytics

A UX designer tracks, studies, and acts upon website data, using such information to tweak the content, design, and experience on the site.

• Usability Assessment

UX design must understand how satisfied users are with how easily they can learn about and use a website's features.

Inbound281.com

Automating Your Marketing

Marketing automation software is making it much easier for inbound marketers to be more efficient, personal and coordinated in their work. Marketing automation software integrates your web content and email distribution lists.

With marketing automation, emails can be timed for delivery due to actions taken on the website. The software can create personalized content based on customer preferences. These emails can be pushed to further calls to action or awareness of other products or services.

With such specificity, results are far more useful, driving more visitors back to your website. Good inbound marketing automation focuses on the prospect, using what is already known about a person to deliver information of value. This approach can more effectively deliver the information a prospect needs the most when making a purchase decision.

Inbound281.com

Website as Salesperson

t's important to think about your inbound marketing website as a member of your sales team. It may well be the most critical member of your sales team. Why? If correctly built, a great inbound marketing website will be intelligent, captivating and intuitive – giving you all you need to land more customers.

- **Intelligent**

An intelligently designed website reflects the answers to these questions:

o Who is our target audience?

o What content does that target audience need?

o Is the content valuable and valued?

o What points of pain does the site help solve?

o Is the site sticky? Does it bring people back regularly to solve other problems?

o Is it cross-promoted through other channels, from social media to word of mouth?

- **Captivating**

You want your site to have the functionality and tools to capture contact information from the most relevant leads. This approach means having the right content that relates to the visitors most likely to buy your product or service and compels them to take action on your site.

- **Intuitive**

Websites must be easy to use and follow a logical sequence. Internal links should direct users to needed information and the site's overall design should support the buyer's journey by guiding visitors along a path that ends with them acting on a call to action or making a purchase.
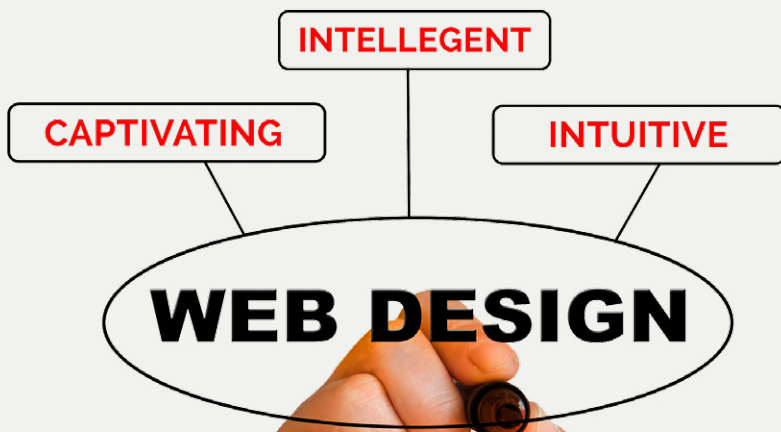
INTELLEGENT

CAPTIVATING   INTUITIVE

WEB DESIGN

MARKETING   MARKETING
MARKETING   MARKETING
MARKETING   MARKETING
MARKETING   MARKETING

Measuring Success

How do you know your website is working? There are several indicators to gauge efficacy. These metrics can also help to make course corrections in the design and content of the website. This continuous evaluation - creation, measurement, assessment, revision - means that your website is never done. That's OK. You want it to evolve and grow as the needs of customers change and the composition of your lead funnel modulates.

So what kind of metrics should you be tracking on your website? Here are some key indicators to keep an eye on:

Audience
- o Month-over-month and year-over-year unique visitors
- o SEO rankings
- o Number of blog posts or other content pieces
- o Value
- o Qualitative assessments of customers or visitors, e.g. "how valuable did you find the content" or "were you able to find what you needed?"
- o Number of return visits over X days
- o Referral rate
- o Bounce rate
- o Social media shares
- o Time on site
- o Number of pages viewed

Functionality
- o Percentage of visitors acting on CTA
- o Calls/emails for assistance with site usage
- o Completion percentage of activities (downloads, CTAs, transactions)

Content
- o Leads generated by content piece
- o Ratio of leads generated to content page visits

Inbound281.com

Conclusion

An inbound marketing website is such a powerful part of your marketing strategy. Done well, the website will be a driving force in lead generation. With the right focus on content, design, and experience, your website will become a key revenue generator and an invaluable asset.

Inbound281.com

About Inbound 281

WHO WE ARE

We are a digital marketing agency dedicated to helping our clients navigate the digital landscape, connect more meaningfully to their customers, and inspire their audience with purposeful content. We do this by leveraging inbound marketing and web design strategies for business, corporate, and enterprise marketers.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to use our inbound approach to develop leading-edge digital marketing plans, perceptive strategies, and valuable solutions to help you engage your customers with more two-way conversations and personal interactions to support revenue generation.

READY FOR A CONVERSATION?

If you are interested in a comprehensive plan that combines website design, email marketing, social media marketing, content development, and automation – or if you'd just like to learn more about how an inbound marketing plan can complement your established branding and communications strategies to meet your organization's unique needs, reach out and have a conversation with us.

TALK TO US

Inbound281.com

Inbound 281
2155 Butterfield Dr, Suite 205
Troy, MI 48084

1.800.834.4910

hello@inbound281.com