

The Home Builder's

GUIDE TO

INBOUND MARKETING:

Landing Leads & Leveraging Home
Sales With Inbound Marketing



Create.
Engage.
Analyze.



HOMES BUILT TO LAST IN A MARKET MEANT TO CHANGE.

Though the details and circumstances vary, people need homes - always have, always will. But in our increasingly technological world, where information is everywhere, the companies people turn to for help are the ones that keep up with the times.

Gone are the days of door-to-door flyer hand-outs and bulletin postings. The modern consumer is versatile, on-the-go, and—most importantly—technologically inclined. People need homes like they need food or clothing, and they decide to build or buy homes in the same way they decide to spend too much money at a new sushi restaurant: through appeal.

The modern consumer wants to feel special, understood, and valued. In a world where “likes” are social currency, digital media is more than a medium of entertainment—it is a platform for relationship-building.



ENTER: INBOUND MARKETING

Inbound marketing is the use of content, data, and optimization strategies to establish and build relationships between a brand and its target audience. These relationships position the brand as a thought leader, industry expert, and—ultimately—the best choice for audience members to invest in.

Inbound strays from traditional marketing efforts to cast a wide net and bring customers to your company. Instead, it aims to create and spread messages that specifically appeal to the kinds of people you want to reach. These messages, shared in a variety of forms and on a variety of platforms, build trust between your company and its prospective clients. This trust leads to the audience member's reliance on your company, whether for information or resources.

Though it's become a clichéd iteration of the rom-com genre, trust is the foundation of any healthy relationship. It is this baseline of trust that leads those people you've been targeting through strategic messaging to become your customers. And it doesn't end there. Unlike traditional marketing, inbound works to actively maintain positive relationships with your customers.

THE PHASES OF INBOUND

Inbound marketing takes your prospective clients and leads them through a buyer's journey. The destination? A mutually beneficial business-client relationship for years to come.

It's a lofty objective—one that wouldn't come to fruition were it not for a well-thought-out strategic process in four phases:

Attract ▶ Convert ▶ Close ▶ Delight

the types of people you've selected as your ideal prospects.

them, or win them over, to rely on the knowledge and resources you have to provide.

the sale, securing your company a new paying customer.

your customer, turning them into an enthusiastic promoter of your brand.

The challenge faced by these phases is to reach the right people, on the right platforms, at the right time. This means taking into account both key characteristics of your brand and your audience in order to create the perfect messaging.

5 | CONSIDER YOUR SERVICES & DETERMINE YOUR AUDIENCE

As a home builder or developer, you don't have to work as hard as other companies to determine your audience's needs. Those you will be reaching out to are either in the process or the consideration stages of buying a home. It's up to you and your inbound strategy to position your company as the best means by which this goal can be accomplished. You can do this with messaging targeted to the kinds of people you're looking to attract.

You must know your target demographic in order to effectively communicate with them. Take a look within: what does the average customer look like for your company? Do they resemble what you would consider to be the ideal customer? Gather as much data as possible in answering these questions. Using factual information as a baseline, create a **buyer persona**.

A buyer persona is a data-backed, semi-fictional biography of your ideal customer. Factors like age, marital status, and household income are core components of this persona, but there are less tangible elements that matter as well. What milestones is this person hitting in life? Is this their first home, or are they looking to upgrade? Downgrade? What preferences do they have in terms of physical landmarks, neighborhood characteristics, and cost? By nailing down these definitive factors, you won't be limiting yourself to only reaching this person—you will just have someone to keep in mind as you create your campaign.

WHAT SETS YOU APART?

Your inbound marketing strategy is only as good as your ability to show prospective home buyers what it is that sets your company apart from others. In order to effectively do this, you must both show and tell in a way that is relatable, appealing, and non-gimmicky.

For example, Homebuilder Bob wants to attract more first-time home buyers to his company. In order to do this, he works with an expert agency to create an inbound strategy that is tailored to his audience and business. Together, he and his agency determine the best channels (more on this later!) on which to share marketing messages. They also create a buyer persona: Millennial Mark (31), a just-married architect looking to start a family in the next year. Bob moves on to answer the next big question: what would set his homebuilding business apart for Millennial Mark?

Given Mark's age, needs, and preferences, it's pretty clear that Homebuilder Bob's affinity for clean, modern design and highly customizable home features would be highly appealing to Mark. This begins the creation of an inbound campaign designed to reach Mark on multiple channels, highlighting the features that both show and tell him that Bob's company is the best possible choice.

ATTRACT

Phase 1 of an inbound marketing campaign is the “Attract” phase, where the goal of your messaging is to make prospective buyers aware of your company, incentivizing them to learn more. The goal of the Attract phase is not to close a sale; it is to make a meaningful and appealing connection that will have prospects coming back for more.

Because of its objective, the Attract phase does not require messaging of the “Call us NOW” variety. Instead, the Attract phase is conversational, positioning your company as a valuable asset in the buyer’s life in an indirect way.



CONVERT

Phase 2: Conversion. During this step in your inbound campaign, your objective is to persuade prospective customers of your value for them. In fact, your goal is to become so valuable that the prospective client gives you their contact information. When this is done, the prospective client becomes a lead.

Conversion is usually successful when the customer views it as beneficial to them to give you their contact information. Chances are, a potential home buyer is more likely to give you their phone number if it's required to get a free eBook than they are if one of the landing pages on your website just asks for it. Conversion is about compelling calls to action combined with valuable tradeoffs for client information. By nailing that combination while conveying appealing, relatable messaging, you will be primed for a successful conversion phase.

CLOSE

Phase 3: The Sale. This is the part of your inbound campaign during which messaging and calls to action should encourage your lead to make the decision they've been leaning toward all this time: becoming a customer.

The key during the close phase of your campaign is to drive urgency without seeming pushy, desperate, or annoying—these faux pas are disastrous developments with the potential to undo all of the great work your campaign did so far. How do you do this? By making sure the urgency in your messaging is both subtle and justified.

Generally speaking, effective closing messages may include time-sensitive promotions, invocations of seasonal incentives (“No better Christmas gift than seeing the home of your dreams come to life”), or other means by which to drive urgency that feels reasonable, spinning factors (like holidays, time of year, and the day of the week) outside of your control to your advantage.

DELIGHT

Congrats! You've closed your sale, and your company has another satisfied customer in its hands. Now, the fun part.

The truth is, a good inbound campaign never stops. A great one never stops giving. Keeping your customers happy is among the most valuable marketing strategies in which you can invest. Give them eBooks, birthday and holiday greetings, blog posts about owning a home, and even—if your company has the bandwidth—invitations to socials or mixers you host.

In a consumerist world ruled by Yelp, Google, and other review platforms, a satisfied customer is the ultimate certification of your company's quality. People look to customer experiences with a service before investing in the service themselves—especially if that service is as monumental as building a home. By taking extra steps to ensure your customers are happy, you will not only incentivize favorable reviews—you will kick off an effective and robust word-of-mouth campaign.

INBOUND IS DIGITAL

*and its four objectives are upheld by two pillars:
Content and SEO*

Content & SEO

The content shared by your company throughout an inbound campaign will be instrumental in determining your voice, thought leadership, and value to prospective and existing customers. In order to develop effective, appealing content, determine what's appealing about your company. Humor? Expertise? Family values? Have a clear, distinctive voice that remains consistent regardless of the messaging being shared.





SEO, or search engine optimization, is a digital strategy that aims to make your website as well-developed for social media as possible. SEO is an intricate initiative that is most successful when carried out by a specialist, but it essentially revolves around keywords.

Keywords are the terms that people type into a Google search—the results are determined by the websites they visit. Basically, the more strategically a keyword is incorporated into a page on your website, the more likely that page turns up better on Google search results.

A placement on the highly-coveted first page means tremendous visibility for your company. SEO has the potential to be the driving source of organic leads (that is, in its simplest definition, leads generated without the use of ads) coming into your pipeline.



YES, YOU SHOULD HAVE A BLOG

Any inbound marketing campaign worth its salt entails a series of strategically executed blog posts. Having an active and consistent blog does wonders for developing and sharing your company's voice, but that's not the only reason to do it. Blogs are also a massive SEO booster for your website when done correctly.

Remember when we discussed the importance of making your company valuable to those you're trying to reach? Blog posts are a fantastic way to easily and effectively share your knowledge with members of your prospective audience. When you do this consistently, you establish yourself as a thought leader in your industry, as well as a company your prospects, leads, and clients can turn to for expert information. Blogs are a way for you to demonstrate that you're willing to give to your audience, not just to take their business.

AND SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS, TOO



Do not fall victim to the misconception that Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook are not places for home builders. Not only is there plenty of room on social channels for every businesses, but there are valuable tools offering insight into your audience demographics, as well as the extent to which they interact with your company on a daily basis.

Inbound campaigns leverage social media to further develop your company's voice while driving engagement with audience members, sharing important developments and news, and incentivizing those who come across your account to move further along their buyer's journey.

Social media allows you to be more creative and personable than other elements of your inbound campaign like search engine ads and website landing pages. These platforms are the places where you will have the most one-on-one interactions with prospects and clients, establishing meaningful connections that prove mutually fulfilling and beneficial.



INBOUND IS LIKE A HOUSE

Knowledge of your company's mission and target audience is the foundation. Your execution of the messaging that drives buyers along their journey builds on that foundation. Attract, Convert, Close, and Delight are the four walls that shelter both your message and the ones who come into contact with it.

A successful inbound campaign not only opens the door; it invites those who are meant to be there, who will benefit from your company as much as you will from theirs. You know better than anyone the foresight, attention to detail, and commitment involved in transforming plans into a functional home. An inbound campaign is no different.

Going inbound?

You're taking your company into the future—a dynamic world characterized by expert messaging, meaningful relationships, and fantastic results.

We'd love to
help get you
there.

CONTACT US

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**Create.
Engage.
Analyze.**