



Sales acceleration for SMB

Rapidan Strategies is an inbound marketing agency and HubSpot partner located in Fairfax, VA. We help small and mid-sized businesses accelerate revenue growth by syncing sales processes with the 21st century buying paradigm. We provide a complete range of service to enable revenue-producing internet marketing affordably using the HubSpot3 marketing automation software platform.



Lead Generation



Marketing Automation



Blogging & Social Media



Lead Nurturing & Email Marketing



Search Engine Optimization



Closed-Loop Analytics



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Introduction

If you're reading this eBook, chances are you're either a marketing professional or a business owner who understands the importance of internet marketing today. You understand that traditional marketing methods are becoming both ineffective and expensive, and you know that by neglecting to market your business on the web, you're missing out on the powerful business results that an effective internet marketing strategy can afford.

Whether your business is just getting started with internet marketing or you just want to brush up on the basics, this eBook can serve as your essential guide to setting up and implementing a successful internet marketing strategy, step by step.

From establishing your initial keyword strategy to leveraging social media to promote content online all the way through to analyzing and refining your strategies, this comprehensive internet marketing eBook will guide you through every essential step you should be taking to effectively market your business on the web, whether you're a software company, a chimney sweep, a tailor, or a marketing agency, to name a few.



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STEP 1: CREATE A KEYWORD STRATEGY

If you wanted to boil internet marketing down to a single starting point, keywords are it.

What is a Keyword?

A keyword is a word or phrase that a person enters into a search engine like Google and Bing or a social media site like Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn.



Why Build a Keyword Strategy?

More and more consumers are finding businesses online through search engines. How do they find them? By using keywords! Fortunately, you can take advantage of this consumer habit by optimizing your website around the keywords that are relevant to your business and which keywords consumers are using to find you online. This will increase your chances of getting found by people searching with those keywords, which will drive more and better quality traffic to your website.

While it's difficult to know exactly which keywords will get the most relevant people to find your business, there are ways to determine the popularity and competitiveness of certain keywords. You can also test and analyze how effective different keywords are in drawing visitors to your site.

As a business professional, you should make sure the right people are finding your business online. In this section, you will learn how to define which keywords will maximize your potential to draw in relevant traffic from search engines.

Keyword research is an ongoing process that should be followed closely. It gives valuable insight in terms of industry trends and product demand. Comprehensive keyword research can help a business grow its organic traffic and save you from spending money on pay-per-click (PPC) campaigns such as Google AdWords.

How to Create a Keyword Strategy

1. Create a list of 3-5 keywords relevant to your business

Think like you're using the brain of someone searching for your product with a search engine. For small-and medium-sized businesses, your keywords are not your brand name. Instead, think of words and short phrases that get to the core of what your product or service is about.

2. Choose keywords based on difficulty and relevance

The keywords you choose should be based on difficulty and relevance. Some very general words such as “marketing” or “business” are very competitive, making it harder to rank well for them in search engine results. If you are a small-or medium-sized business, you probably want to choose less competitive keywords, more specifically related to your business (these are commonly referred to as long tail keywords). The greater the volume of searches on a keyword, the more competitive it is. There are a number of different tools you can use to determine the competitiveness of a specific keyword as well as suggest and help you brainstorm new keyword ideas. These tools include the Google Keyword Tool or HubSpot's Suggest Keywords feature in its software's Keyword Grader tool.

Another important factor for picking keywords is their relevance to your business. While some obscure terms might be easy to rank for, they might not be relevant to your business.

You should find a balance between relevance and difficulty. Choose about 5 keywords that match your business well.

Note that these keywords do not have to be perfect at first. You can try out different ones to see which work best for you. This will be discussed more in the ‘Analyze & Refine Strategies’ section (Step Eight).

3. Design and optimize your website around your targeted keywords

Now that you’ve chosen your keywords, you should incorporate them into your website. We will talk more about this in the upcoming section on website optimization (Step Two).

Think your competitors are already ranking for the best keywords? According to Google’s internal data, 16% of daily search queries have never been seen before! There are plenty of opportunities for your business to be found with keyword phrases.

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STEP 2: OPTIMIZE YOUR WEBSITE

Now that you’ve chosen your keywords, you can increase your website's chances of ranking for those keywords. Search engine optimization (SEO) is about doing just that!

In order to get found, you should aim to be on the first page or in the first few search engine results pages for your keywords.

With it’s Penguin and Panda updates released in 2011 and 2012, Google is making it easier for small and mid-sized businesses to rank high in keyword searches by creating good educational content that is shared on social media. Google suggests that you design your website for visitors, and not for search engines. While you should keep this principle in mind, it is worthwhile to learn a bit more about SEO in order to better optimize your site.



What You Should Know About SEO

SEO can be divided into two separate categories: on-page SEO and off-page SEO.

On-page SEO refers to how well your website's content is presented to search engines. This can often be improved immediately.

Off-page SEO refers to your site’s overall “authority” on the web, which is determined by what other websites say about your site. This can take time to improve.

Even though on-page SEO accounts for only about 25% of how search engines score and rank your website, it’s worth tackling first since it can be improved quickly.

Test Your Website SEO With HubSpot’s Marketing Grader

To find out how well optimized your website is, run it through HubSpot’s free SEO tool, Marketing Grader. This tool will analyze your website and provide you with an overall score between 0 and 100. The higher the score, the better your site is optimized for internet marketing. These scores are based on a percentile scale, meaning that if you scored a 54, your website has scored better than 54% of the more than 3.5 million websites that Website Grader has analyzed. For on-page optimization, the most relevant part of this report is the SEO section under “Top of the Funnel.”

Do not be discouraged if your SEO score is a little low. If this is the case, you can probably get your website back in the game with only a little bit of work on your on-page SEO.

HubSpot’s Marketing Grader BETA

[Grade Another Company](#)

86

b2binboundmarketer.com

Overall

Last updated 1/7/13 – [Update now](#)

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Get updates to your marketing grade in your inbox every Monday morning.

Blog

<http://b2binboundmarketer.com/inbound-...>

RSS Feed

<http://b2binboundmarketer.com/CMS/UI/...>

Facebook Page

<http://www.facebook.com/B2BinboundMa...>

Twitter

DCB2Binbound

[Update & Run Report](#)

[edit](#)

b2binboundmarketer.com

Top of the Funnel

3 Action Items

85%

Middle of the Funnel

3 Action Items

50%

Analytics

1 Action Item

50%

9 Elements of On-Page Website Optimization

1. Page Titles

Page titles are one of the most important on-page SEO factors. Page titles are the text you see at the top of your browser window when viewing a web page. They are also the title of a page that is presented in search engines.

Page titles can be found and edited in your site's HTML. The text that is surrounded with the <title> tag is your page's title.

The following are a few guidelines for coming up with effective page titles:

- include keywords
- make it fewer than 70 characters long. Longer page titles will not be seen in your web browser or in Google search results. If you make the page title too long, it will also dilute the importance of the keywords mentioned.
- put keywords as close to the beginning of the title as possible.
- make it readable for site visitors.
- include your company name at the end of the page title, unless you are a big brand and people search for you through your brand name.
- use different page titles for each page. Each page is an opportunity to target different keywords.

Page Title



SMB Inbound Marketing Consultant | Social Media Marketing | Washington DC - Mozilla Firefox

b2binboundmarketer.com/?Preview=true

 [HOME](#) [COMPANY](#) [SERVICES](#) [PRICING](#) [RESOURCE CENTER](#) [BLOG](#) [CONTACT US](#)

Data-driven solutions to accelerate sales growth 

2. Meta Descriptions

Meta data is an often overlooked opportunity to attract visitors from search. Interestingly, it does not directly influence search engine rankings. Nevertheless, it is a good practice to include keywords in your meta description.

Meta data is the text seen as the description of a site in Google search. These words attract a searcher's attention and indicate if a search result is particularly relevant to the searcher. For this reason, including keywords in your meta description can draw in visitors, even though it does not affect search engine rankings.

The meta description is not something that is visible on your web page. The short summary of the web page, which is usually included at the top of the pages source code in a <meta description> tag, is not used by the search engines for any SEO purposes. What the meta description is used for is to provide the searcher with a short description of the page (<150 characters to be exact) beneath each result. In fact, if a meta description is not included in the source code, then the search engine will usually display part of the content from the page in its place. Since the meta description is not as well understood as other page elements, there are some very common mistakes people make when creating their websites.

Meta Description Example

[All-in-One Marketing Software | Inbound Marketing with HubSpot](#)

www.hubspot.com/

HubSpot's inbound marketing software offers businesses an all-in-one marketing solution; blogging, analytics, social media, email, automation & more.

3. Headers

If a piece of text appears larger or more prominent than the other text on a page, it's probably part of a header. You can verify this by checking the HTML code of your website, and seeing if that text has an `<h1>`, `<h2>`, or `<h3>` tag surrounding it. Ask a developer to help you check this. Text in the headers is more likely to be read by search engines as keywords than text in the rest of the page. For this reason, it is good to include keywords in your headers whenever possible. `<h1>` tags give the text more weight as keywords than `<h2>` tags, and `<h2>` tags have more weight than `<h3>` tags. While `<h4>` and `<h5>` tags do exist, their influence on keywords is virtually the same as that of regular text. Including too many headers dilutes the importance of keywords in other headers, so we recommend using the `<h1>` tag only once. If the page is text-heavy like a blog post, then feel free to throw in a few `<h2>` or `<h3>` tags as paragraph titles.

Header Example

The image shows a screenshot of the HubSpot website. At the top left is the HubSpot logo. To its right are navigation links: Software, Pricing, Case Studies, Partners, About Us, Blog, and Sign In. Below the navigation is a large promotional banner with a yellow background. The banner contains the text "Create marketing people love." in large green letters. Below this text is a smaller line of text: "All the software you need to do inbound marketing." There is a video player icon and a "Watch the Video" link. Below the video player is a "Request a Demo or View All Features" link. To the right of the banner is a large monitor displaying the HubSpot dashboard. The dashboard shows "Visits & Leads" with a total of 884,139 visits and 37,562 leads. It includes two line graphs showing trends over time. In front of the monitor is a smartphone displaying the same dashboard data.

4. Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)

HTML is the back-end code of your website that search engines read. Search engines extract relevant information from your HTML, such as keywords. CSS, on the other hand, holds a template for the layout of your page. In the CSS, you define how headings, links, and other visual elements of the text should look. The takeaway here is simple: use CSS. Putting layout-related information in your HTML can dilute the relevance of the HTML text, which is what you want search engines to read.

5. Images

Images on a web page can certainly enhance user experience. However, when inserting images into your website, you should keep in mind the following:

- don't use images excessively. More pictures means your page will take longer to load. This has a negative impact both on user experience and search engine optimization.
- associate text with pictures. Search engines do not 'read' images; they read only text. ALT text is an HTML attribute you can add to your picture so search engines replace the image with some associated text.
- include keywords in your image file name. This will help you draw in relevant traffic from image searches. Separate different keywords in the file name with a dash (-).

6. Domain Info

Search engine rankings favor sites that are registered for a longer period of time. Longer domain registrations indicate a commitment to the site and mean the site has a lower chance of being considered to be spam. Extend your website registration for \$10-20 a year for an SEO boost.

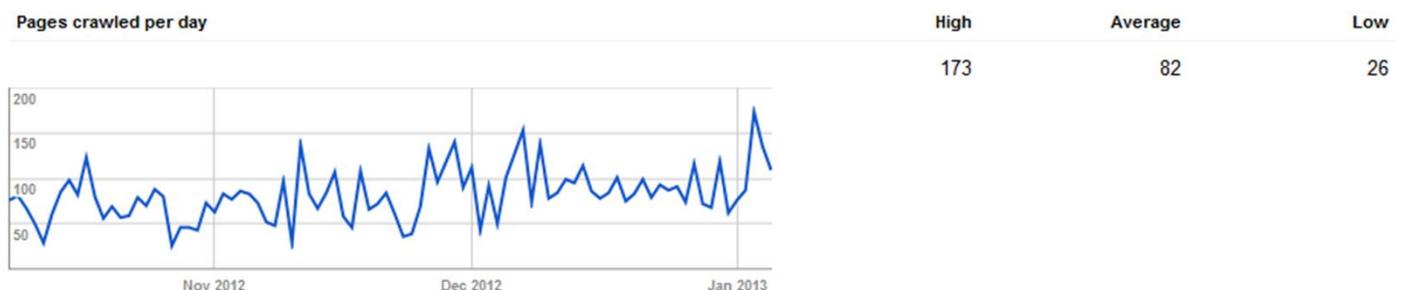
7. MozRank

MOZ Rank is a general measure of how much online authority your site has. A higher MOZ rank is better. Note that MOZ Rank factors in both on-page and off-page SEO. Improving your on-page SEO may help improve your rank, but there is much more you can do to improve it. Don't worry, we will get to all this.

8. Google Crawl Date

When Google crawls your site, it updates the information related to it, such as your keywords and other SEO factors. Therefore, you want Google to crawl your site as often as possible. The best thing you can do to make Google crawl your site more frequently is to regularly produce fresh content and publish it on your website. We'll cover this in more detail in Step Three.

Crawl Stats Googlebot activity in the last 90 days



9. URL Structure

The URL of a web page is its web address. For example, HubSpot's blog has a URL of <http://blog.hubspot.com>. The URL structure of a website is about how the different URLs connect with each other.

Unfortunately, improving your URL structure is one of the more difficult aspects of on-page website optimization. The methods of fixing these issues depend entirely on the back-end parts of your website, such as your content management system or programming framework. Nevertheless, if you have a competent developer by your side, having him or her tackle these issues can significantly improve your SEO. Your best approach might be to hand your developer the following list.

Principles of Good URL Structure

- Apply a 301 redirect where required. A 301 redirect forwards an old URL to a new one after it changes. Make sure you do this if you change the URL of a page on your site. A common mistake is not applying a 301 redirect between yoursite.com and www.yoursite.com. This can be quite a problem from an SEO standpoint, because search engines will give separate credit to both versions of your site.
- Avoid pages with deeply nested URLs. Here is an example of what a deeply nested URL would look like: <http://yoursite.com/about/management/contact/phone>. Deeply nested pages will get less SEO credit. You can fix this problem by improving your overall site design.

- Include keywords in your URLs. If you've already purchased your main URL, then don't worry about buying a new one just for this sake. But you can clean the URLs of your interior pages to include keywords and not look like gibberish.
- For your internal page URLs, separate individual keywords with dashes (-). For example: <http://hubspot.com/marketing-resources/> is a good URL that captures 'marketing' and 'resources' as keywords.

Create static URLs, not dynamic ones. This means that the URL for one of your pages should be the same, no matter what. Check if you see different URLs for the same page in your website. If there are, you can look into how to create static URLs with your web server software. Do a Google search on "create static URL" + (name of your server software).



Avoid Keyword Stuffing

After reading this, you might think, “Keywords are really important. If having keywords all over my page helps me rank for them, I should just fill my page with these keywords.”

Unfortunately, it’s not that easy. Apart from leading to a bad experience for site visitors, search engines are smart enough to detect these behaviors. Trying to ‘trick’ search engines is not a good SEO strategy, and sacrificing readability for SEO is not a good idea either.

Improving Off-Page SEO With Inbound Links

So if on-page SEO accounts for 25% of your overall search engine ranking, what makes up the remaining 75%? As we mentioned before, off-page SEO is based on the authority of your website, or what other websites ‘say’ about yours. Simply put, websites with better or higher authority will rank better than websites with lower authority.

According to a December 2011 Report by the DAC group, 71% of enterprise purchase decisions originate with a search engine query on Google, Bing or Yahoo. If you’re not optimizing your website to get found by customers, you’re missing out on new business opportunities.

One of the main influencers on a website's authority is inbound links. If another website links to your website or a page on your website (like a blog article), that is called an inbound link. More inbound links is better, and more inbound links from website's with high authority themselves is even better than that (e.g. an inbound link from The New York Times website is much more valuable than an inbound link from a low-trafficked blog with a small readership).

So what's the best way to attract more inbound links (or 'link love,' as we like to call it)? Through content creation! Creating valuable, remarkable content that other websites will naturally want to link to in their own content is a great way to increase your website's inbound links. In addition, you can improve your chances of attracting inbound links by sharing your content in social media and optimizing it for search results so it can easily be found. We'll discuss content creation more in Step Three of this eBook and social media promotion in Step Four.

Download Search Engine Optimization 101

Get website tips you can implement immediately

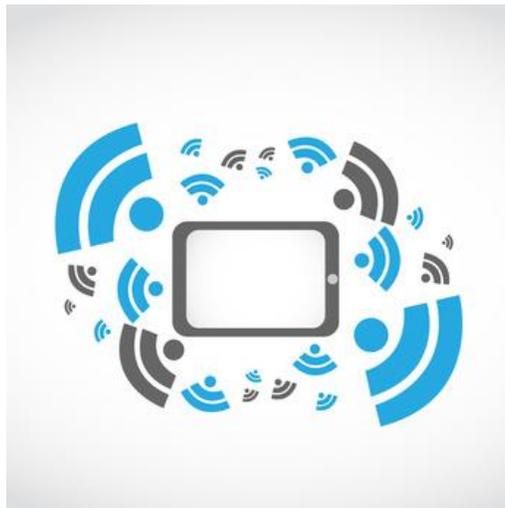
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3

STEP 3: CREAT BLOG ARTICLES AND OTHER CONTENT

Blogging platforms like HubSpot, WordPress and Blogger have made publishing content on the web easier than ever. Now that you have developed a clear understanding of your company's keywords and optimized your website for search engines, your next step should be to attract more visitors. Blogging and creating other content like eBooks and webinars are powerful ways to help more of the right people discover your business online.



How to Think About Business Blogging

When thinking about blogging, take off your hat as a business owner or marketing manager and instead try to think like a magazine publisher. The goal of your business blog should be to publish articles that are not promotional but instead share industry expertise, much in the way a column or an article in an industry magazine would.

Think about what you are writing and the words you are using. Don't use industry jargon that only you and your employees would understand. Just as you did when brainstorming keywords, think of the words your customers would use to describe your business and use those keywords in your blog posts. Section One of this eBook should serve as a helpful guide for the types of terms to include in your blog posts.

Getting Set Up with Blogging

While writing content that is interesting to your prospective customers is important, you first need a way to publish that content online. There are many paid and free tools available that provide a way to let you easily publish content online. When selecting a blogging platform, take a few things into consideration. The most important thing you can do when you first start blogging is to make sure your blog is a section of your business website. Without a blog, a website is kind of like a brochure that doesn't change often. A blog makes your website more dynamic by automatically injecting new content every time a blog article is published. Search engines reward higher rankings to websites that consistently add fresh content, and these higher rankings translate into new visitors and leads for your business.

Blogging Platforms to Consider

While it is important that your blogging software be easy to use, it is more important that the content you create be interesting. If you are looking for a blogging platform for your business, some options include HubSpot, WordPress, TypePad, Drupal, and Posterous.

These platforms all offer a content management system (CMS) that allows you to easily add content to your blog, without needing to know any HTML code. This enables you to quickly update your site with industry news or other timely information, without having to wait for a webmaster to post your changes.

According to [HubSpot's Marketing Benchmarks from 7,000 Business Report](#), companies that blog 15 or more times per month get 5 times more website traffic than those that don't blog.

Key Components of a Great Blog Post

A well-constructed blog post should include several key components:

- **An Attention-Grabbing Article Title:** Because your blog article's title is the first thing people will see, it's important to make sure it clearly indicates what the article is about, is concise, keyword-rich (because the header tag is the most important for SEO), and attention grabbing.
- **Well Written & Formatted Text:** The body of your article should be well written and formatted in a way that makes it easy to read. Consider using header tags and bulleted lists to break up the content into sections.
- **Images/Videos:** Relevant multimedia content can make a blog article more memorable and fun to read. It also helps to break up text to make it more pleasing to the eye.
- **Links:** Include in-text links to relevant content. These can also point to landing pages (which we'll discuss more in Step Five) to help you generate more leads for your content.
- **Call-to-Action:** Each and every blog article you publish should include a relevant call-to-action at the bottom of the article to help boost lead generation (again, will discuss this in more depth in Step Five of this eBook).

Deciding What to Blog About

Most business blogs start with a purpose. What are you trying to educate your industry and potential customers about? This education is not about your product, but instead about common industry issues and the problems your potential customers face and that your product or service helps to solve. A great way to start blogging is to think about the 10 most common questions you get asked by prospective new customers. Take each one of those questions and write a short article explaining an answer. Do this once a week for 10 weeks and you have the strong foundation for a successful blog. Once those first 10 weeks are over, check [out this list of additional ideas](#) to keep your business blog packed with interesting content. Remember to let your expertise and passion shine through your blog content and keep some of these business blog best practices in the back of your mind.



Convert Blog Visitors to Leads

In Step Five, you will learn how to create landing pages and calls-to-action (CTAs) to help drive more potential customers for your business. It is important to remember that your business blog is an important platform to use these conversion opportunities. Create a call-to-action of some type at the end of each blog post. These CTAs work best if the offer is closely related to the subject matter of the blog post. Additionally, you can place image-based CTAs in the sidebar of your blog as a secondary way to convert more visitors into leads.

These calls-to-action should link directly to a landing page that provides downloadable access to a more in-depth learning experience such as an eBook or webinar upon the completion of a lead generation form. We'll discuss CTAs and Landing Pages in more depth in Step Five. For additional information on converting blog visitors to leads, read [this post on blogging for lead generation](#).



Free Download

Blogging for Lead Generation Checklist

Get your checklist here

Other Types of Content

While it's a great place to start, blog content isn't the only type of content you can be creating. Consider producing longer-form content items like eBooks, whitepapers, or research reports that can be used as lead generation offers for your calls-to-action. Also consider non-text based offers such as how-to videos, webinars, slideshows, etc.

4

**STEP 4: PROMOTE CONTENT
AND PARTICPATE IN SOCIAL
MEDIA**

Social media is generating a lot of buzz right now amongst marketers and business owners. Marketers who can leverage social media to help distribute business content and increase the overall community of advocates for their business can experience significant growth. Social media allows your customers and potential customers to communicate directly with you and your employees online, and it allows interesting content to spread quickly.

While new social media tools launch every day, most businesses really only need to focus on the major players: Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.



Monitoring Social Media

An important part of leveraging social media for business is to understand what conversations are happening online related to your industry and recognizing where you should respond. Here are some great tools you can use to easily monitor your business and industry mentions in social media:

- **Google Alerts:** Set up multiple Google Alerts for your company, brand, products, leaders, industry terms, etc. The alerts will get delivered directly to your email inbox at the frequency you indicate (e.g. daily or as they happen) and is a great way to help you track mentions of your brand and relevant keywords on the web on news sites, in blogs, etc.

- **Twitter:** Monitor mentions of your brand on Twitter with tools like Twitter Search or HootSuite. CoTweet is also a great tool to help manage multiple users on a corporate Twitter account and allows you to assign particular tweets to the appropriate team member for follow-up.
- **Google Reader and RSS Feeds:** Set up RSS feeds in Google Reader of searches of your brand or industry keywords in other popular social media sites such as Flickr, Digg, Delicious, etc. Scan the results in your reader daily for mentions.
- **Facebook Insights:** Stay on top of and participate in discussions occurring on your company's Facebook Fan Page. Use your Fan Page's Facebook Insights Dashboard (found in the left sidebar when you're on your page as an admin) to show you stats such as fan growth and page views to gauge your page's interaction and engagement.

Getting Started with Twitter for Business



Twitter is a social network on which users share short, 140-character messages with each other. Users "follow" or subscribe to each other and can receive messages from each other via multiple technology devices including desktop computers, smartphones, and text messages. As mentioned previously, for business, it is best to use Twitter's free search engine, Twitter Search to search for your business, competitors, and industry mentions on Twitter. Understanding how and if people are talking about your business and industry will give you enough information to determine if you should invest the time to start and manage a Twitter account for your business. If you decide that Twitter is right for your business, you can visit Twitter.com to sign up for a free account.

Here are a few tips for setting up a business Twitter account:

- Use the name of your business as your Twitter username.
- Use your business logo or a picture of the person managing the account as the profile image for the account.
- Create a custom Twitter background that provides additional information about your business.
- Use Advanced Twitter Search to help determine industry influencers and potential customers that your business should follow.

For more tips on how to use Twitter for business, you can access [HubSpot's free webinar, "How to Use Twitter for Marketing & PR" by following this link.](#)



Using Facebook for Business



With more than a billion users, Facebook has become the major player in the social media industry. Facebook can serve as a powerful platform for building a community of advocates for your business to help increase word-of-mouth marketing. The first step in leveraging Facebook for business is to set up a business page.

Here are two excellent resources to help you set up and manage your Facebook business page:

[HubSpot eBook: The Step-by-Step Guide to New Facebook Business Page Timelines](#)

[HubSpot eBook: Beyond the Facebook Business Page](#)

LinkedIn: The Social Network for Business Professionals



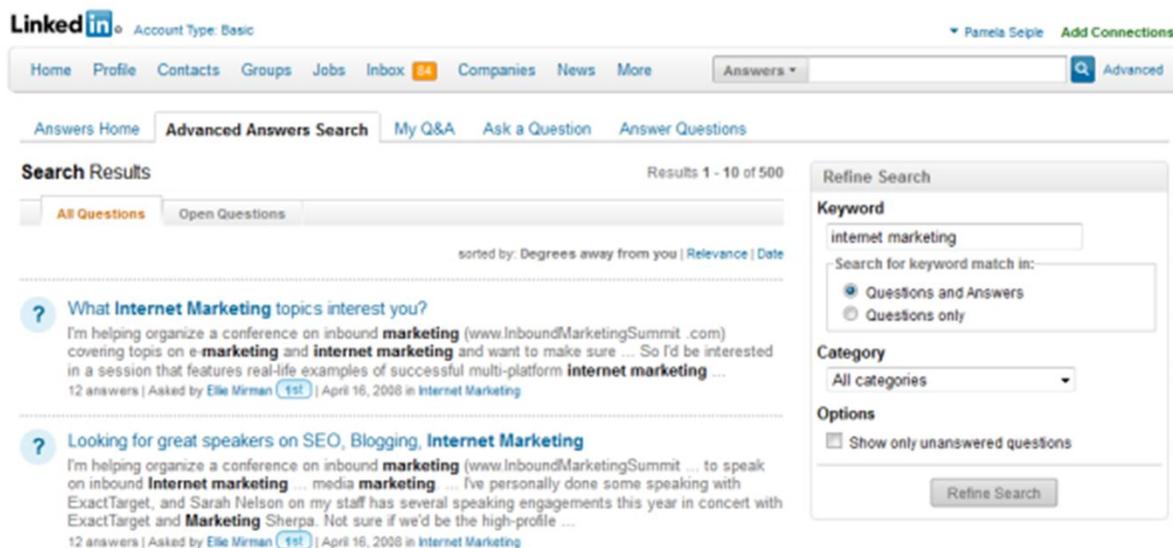
The social network businesspeople may be most familiar with is LinkedIn. This network of over 160 million business users and more than 1 million business profile pages can be an important resource. To get started using LinkedIn for your business, it is best to set up and complete a personal profile for yourself as well as a company profile for your business. When setting up these profiles, remember to include all important information such as your website and blog URLs. Additionally, it is important to take the time to make the descriptions for you and your business interesting to read and an accurate reflection of your experience, knowledge, and passion.

LinkedIn Groups

Once you have created profiles, LinkedIn has two major features that are of particular use to businesses and their employees. The first feature you should examine is the Groups feature. The Groups feature allows LinkedIn users to create and participate in discussions around a topic within LinkedIn. Groups can be a great way to make potential business connections, but can also be a great place to share relevant blog content.

LinkedIn Answers

The second feature, LinkedIn Answers, allows you to find people publicly stating they have a specific problem or need that your product or service would solve. Identifying these questions and responding with a resources or a blog article of yours that answers that person’s need can offer a great marketing opportunity for your business. Ultimately, you can generate high-quality traffic to your blog from LinkedIn Answers, and get some really qualified leads as well.



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STEP 5: CONVERT SITE TRAFFIC INTO LEADS

By step five, you should have already launched your blog, optimized your site for search engines, and started participating and promoting your content via social media. If it's been several weeks, by now you should start to see a spike in traffic to your website.

There's only one problem. All that traffic to your site isn't leading to any new business! People are visiting your site, but those visits aren't leading to new customers --or even new sales leads.

So what do you do?

Simple. **Focus on conversion.** Focus on converting more of your website visitors into sales leads. To do this, decide on a compelling offer for your customers, create a call-to-action to promote your offer, and launch a landing page with a form for visitors to submit their information to obtain the offer. Finally, test, measure, and iterate the whole process.



Here's a detailed guide to each step in this sales and marketing conversion funnel:

Step 1. Decide on Your Offer

The offer is the most important part of any campaign. It's the initial attraction that catches the attention of your website visitors and gives them a reason to fill out the form used to collect their information. Your offer should target the type of sales lead you're trying to attract. For example, if you're a golf instructor, you want to create offers that will appeal to golfers trying to improve their game. If you're a sales process consultant, you'll want to create offers that appeal to executives trying to improve their sales process.

Typical content offers include research reports, how-to eBooks (like this one!); slide downloads, or archived webinars. Other offers might include a free trial or demo of your product or a personal consultation. Of course, there's no reason to be constrained by what's typical. Use anything you think will work for your target customers. (Also keep in mind that the offer form is a conversation starter for the sales team, so it should be designed to start a conversation that will lead to a sale.)



Step 2. Create Calls-To-Action

Once you decide on your offer, create a few compelling CTAs. As we alluded to in Step Three of this eBook, a call-to-action is a button or a link on a website that grabs a user’s attention and directs that user to a landing page. On the landing page, the user is prompted to complete a form and submit contact information in order to receive what’s being offered. By submitting that information, the visitor is then converted into a lead with whom your sales team can follow up. Your call-to-action can be text, an image, or html, but it should always include a link to the corresponding landing page. If you have an effective call-to-action, you’ll convert a high percentage of your website visitors into leads.

Here is a call-to-action for our eBook, “How to Conduct an Effective Inbound Marketing Campaign.”

Download our eBook and start selling on the web

How to Conduct an Inbound Marketing Campaign

Get your eBook Here



[This eBook from HubSpot, “101 Examples of Effective Calls-to-Action”](#), provides some great advice and inspiration for creating great calls-to-action for your marketing.

Step 3. Create Landing Pages

After you create a call-to-action, you need to set up the landing page that it will link to. The landing page is the page where your website visitors arrive after they click on your call-to-action, and where they will fill out the form to receive your offer.

You'd be surprised by how many times we've seen calls-to-action that aren't links. Whether intentional or a matter of forgetfulness, the lack of a link will make it much harder for visitors to find out how to receive the offer, and they'll likely give up. So double, triple, and quadruple check to make sure all of your CTAs links to their corresponding landing pages.

As we said, landing pages house the form where users submit information that allows them to access your offer. The information you collect will also be used by you or your sales team to follow up with them. Once users submit their information on the landing page, they should be redirected to a thank-you page where they can access the offer. (Note that if you're doing a promotion on a third party site --Google AdWords, for example --a landing page might be the first page on your site where your users arrive.)

Typical HubSpot Landing Page

Request a Free Demo of HubSpot's Software

The Only Marketing Tools You Need, All In One Place.

We want to talk with you! Let us walk you through HubSpot's marketing software and show you how to execute your marketing campaigns easier and faster than ever before.

With HubSpot's marketing software you can:

- **Drive Traffic to Your Website:** Grow your reach with blogging, social media, and search engine optimization tools.
- **Convert More Leads and Customers:** Use landing pages, email marketing, and dynamic calls-to-action to generate more leads and close more deals.
- **Save Time:** Execute all of your tactics in one place, and track visits, leads and customers from all of your marketing channels in one simple reporting dashboard.

Get a free demonstration of HubSpot's software to see how it works.

We'll show you how to make marketing your leads will love.

See HubSpot in Action

First Name *

Last Name *

Email *

Company Name *

Phone *

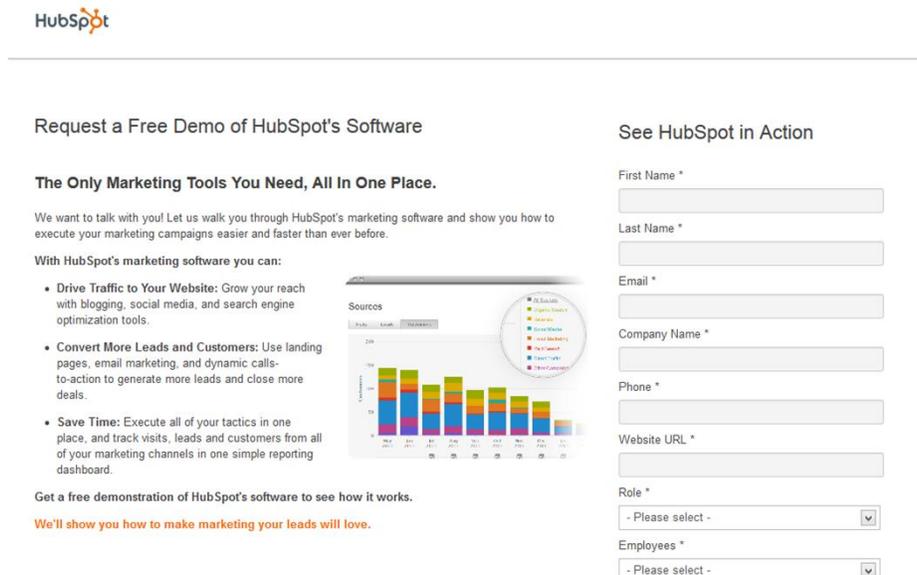
Website URL *

Role *

- Please select -

Employees *

- Please select -

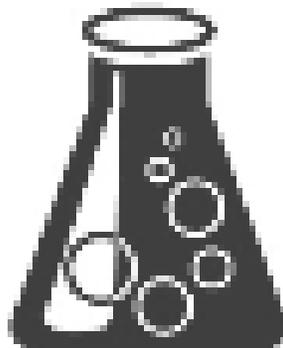


Be crystal clear about what the offer is in your CTA. And be specific. If you're giving away a free guide, say "Download our FREE guide to X." If you're hosting a free webinar, say "Register for our FREE webinar on X." X should clearly convey a compelling benefit of receiving the offer. This is much more effective than "Download Now" or "Get a Free Article." These simply aren't specific enough.

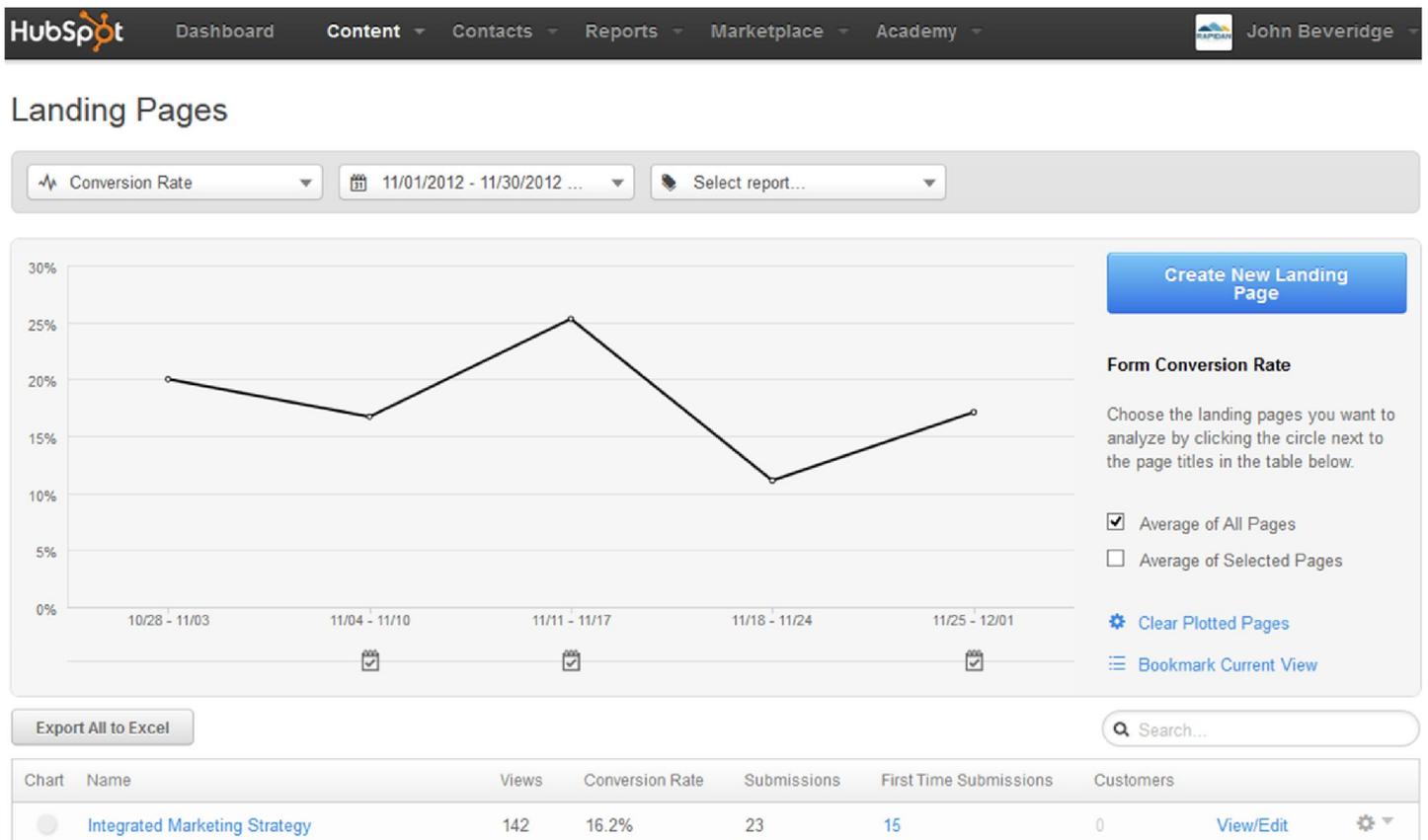
For more tips on creating optimized landing pages, check out our free archived webinar, ["Optimizing Landing Pages for Lead Generation and Conversion."](#)

Step 4. Test, Measure and Iterate

Offers, calls-to-action and landing pages are the core elements of the conversion process, but you can't stop there. If you just have a single conversion pathway, you have very little insight into the process and the way it performs. In order to improve your conversion process, you need to experiment. You need to test different CTAs, you need to test different landing pages, you need to test different offers, and then you need to decide which ones best help you achieve your goals.



After a CTA has been on your homepage for a month, vary the messaging or swap out an entirely new CTA, and after another month, measure which has performed best. If landing page conversions are low, move the form above the fold and measure the results. Don't be afraid to test different variations; you can always switch back if the old version worked better. It will be worth it when you've found the best combination that increases your site's conversions.



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STEP 6: NURTURE LEADS WITH E-MAIL MARKETING

According to MarketingSherpa, 70% of your leads will end up buying something from you or one of your competitors, but they won't do it right away! Companies that build relationships with their leads over time have the greatest success in turning leads into customers by staying top-of-mind until the lead is ready to buy.

Lead nurturing is the process of developing that relationship with your potential customer by sending targeted, relevant, and valuable messages to them in a timely manner. The end goal is to get your leads to “raise their hand” and self-select into further engaging with your business. Forrester Research found that companies that excel at lead nurturing are able to generate 50% more sales-ready leads at 33% lower cost-per-lead.



E-Mail Marketing Best Practices

List Building

- **Create opt-in opportunities.** Make sure your lead forms allow your website visitors to enter their email address and opt-in to receive your messages.

- **Give people a reason to opt-in.** Whether it's a landing page for an eBook or an email newsletter subscription form, make sure you give people a compelling reason to opt-in. What's so valuable about your eBook? What interesting and unique information will they receive in your email newsletter? Be explicit and phrase the benefit(s) in terms of your recipient.
- **Would I be upset if I didn't receive your message?** Only send messages to people who have explicitly opted in. You can follow the extreme principle of Seth Godin's Permission Marketing: Would your recipient be upset if they didn't receive your message? If yes, you should go ahead and send your email.



Sending

- **Stay relevant.** What was your lead interested in? Did they download your “5 Tips for Using QuickBooks to Manage Your Business” eBook? Or did they read your blog article on “How to Get Your Business Listed in Google Places”? Send them an email with more resources targeted to their interests.
- **Get personal.** Use a name and email address in the “from” line of your email that your recipients will recognize. Personalize the message so the recipient remembers how and why they came to your website. For example, start with “You recently checked out our eBook...” or “Thanks for subscribing to our blog!”

- **WIIFM?** At the end of the day, make sure that your message adds value. Get into the mind of your recipient and ask, “What’s In It For Me?” (WIIFM) Are you emailing them just to tell them how great your product is? Or are you offering to help solve a problem they’re facing? Make the value clear in both the email body and the subject line.
- **Don’t rely on images.** Many email clients don’t load images automatically, so if your email is one large image, your recipient won’t have any idea what it’s about! Use images as supplementary (clickable) content in your email, and make sure you have enough text to communicate value.
- **Be consistent.** You want your recipients to expect and look forward to your messages. Whether you send your messages daily, weekly, or monthly, pick a schedule and stick to it.
- **Don’t let the law get you down.** Brush up on CAN-SPAM regulations to make sure your email practices comply.



Converting

- **What do I do here?** When someone opens your email, make it clear what they're supposed to do. Is it to click to read a blog article? Download a new, free eBook? Include a call-to-action that links to a landing page where the recipient can convert again and self-select to further engage with you.
- **The landing page is part of your email campaign.** Email marketing doesn't stop with a click. Your landing page is an extension of your email, and it is where your conversion takes place. Make sure your email offer and landing page flow, and review Step Five of this eBook for tips on conversion opportunities and landing page best practices.



Hi

I hope you enjoyed the eBook you downloaded a few days ago. Since you're interested in growing your business with inbound marketing, I thought you'd be interested in this eBook on search engine optimization. Don't worry, you don't need to fill out a form. The link below will take you directly to the PDF.

[SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION 101](#)

Search engine optimization helps your ideal buyers find you on the internet. This eBook will give you some of the basics so that you can set your website up for success.

Best of luck and happy selling!



[Free eBook: How to Conduct an Effective Inbound Marketing Campaign](#)

Measuring

- **Click-Through Rate (CTR) measures response.** Of the people you emailed, how many of them clicked through to your landing page? The CTR can give you a sense of how compelling your offer and email messages are. Experiment with different subject lines, calls-to-action, and timing to improve the CTR of your emails.
- **What about open rate?** Open rate is an increasingly unreliable metric, as more email clients do not load the images necessary for tracking who opened an email. Focus instead on how many clicks your email received.
- **Unsubscribe rate measures annoyance and spam.** There will always be some people who do not want to receive your emails anymore, but you want to make sure your unsubscribe rate does not exceed 5%. If your unsubscribe rate gets this high, check on your opt-in policies and procedures to make sure you're only emailing subscribers who want to receive your messages.
- **Conversion rate measures actions.** The final step is conversion, so measure how many of those clicks turned into reconversions on your landing page. Test different landing pages to improve the conversion on your website.

Lead nurturing is all about developing relationships with your leads, so keep in mind that this does not have to be limited to email communication. Think about how you can communicate with your leads via social media or another platform they use.

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STEP 7: BE MOBILE-FRIENDLY

It's obvious that mobile platforms are becoming more and more of a consideration when it comes to internet marketing. The growth of the iPhone is going to continue – analysts estimate that 27 million iPhones were sold in the 3d quarter of 2012. If you are trying to market on the mobile web, you need to consider the importance of creating entertaining and quality content that can be easily consumed on mobile devices such as smartphones or tablet computers.



Image courtesy of Apple

Optimize for Mobile

Mobile marketing is being tossed around frequently in marketing circles, often with many different intended meanings. While mobile marketing can mean many things, there is one primary message being conveyed for marketers looking to take advantage of mobile: optimize for mobile devices.

While developing a mobile application relative to your business is another option, most businesses are still just ramping up their internet marketing efforts and do not have enough content to support a mobile application. Additionally, many marketers would be better off optimizing their SEO, email, lead nurturing, and social media campaigns for maximum lead generation before taking on yet another major project such as a mobile application.

For those internet marketers just getting started with mobile, the important thing to focus on is making sure your website is easy to view and navigate when accessed on mobile devices.



What Should You Worry About When You Optimize for Mobile?

1. E-mails and Calls-to-Action

It is important that you optimize your website and emails to be viewed correctly on mobile devices, such as the iPhone and Android-powered devices. Additionally, it will be important to think about how your calls-to-action and offers work on mobile devices.

2. Downloads

Is it easy for a prospect to fill out a form on your website from their smartphone? If you are offering a download, will it open on mobile devices?

3. Video

Bytemobile has found that in 2011, 60 percent of all traffic on mobile web devices was for video. The study also showed that 10 percent of mobile web users account for 90 percent of mobile web traffic. This staggering statistic means that a relatively small group of mobile internet users are doing the vast majority of mobile bandwidth consumption.

This data highlights some critical elements in the evolution of the mobile web. With indications that mobile bandwidth cost may be on the rise, it is important for marketers to develop lightweight ways to engage mobile users. Don't ask a user to stream a 10-minute video. Instead, provide a clean text summary of the video if they are using a cellular data connection. Give them an opportunity to watch the video if they are on a WiFi connection, in an effort to help them conserve mobile bandwidth.

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STEP 8: ANALYZE & REFINE STRATEGIES

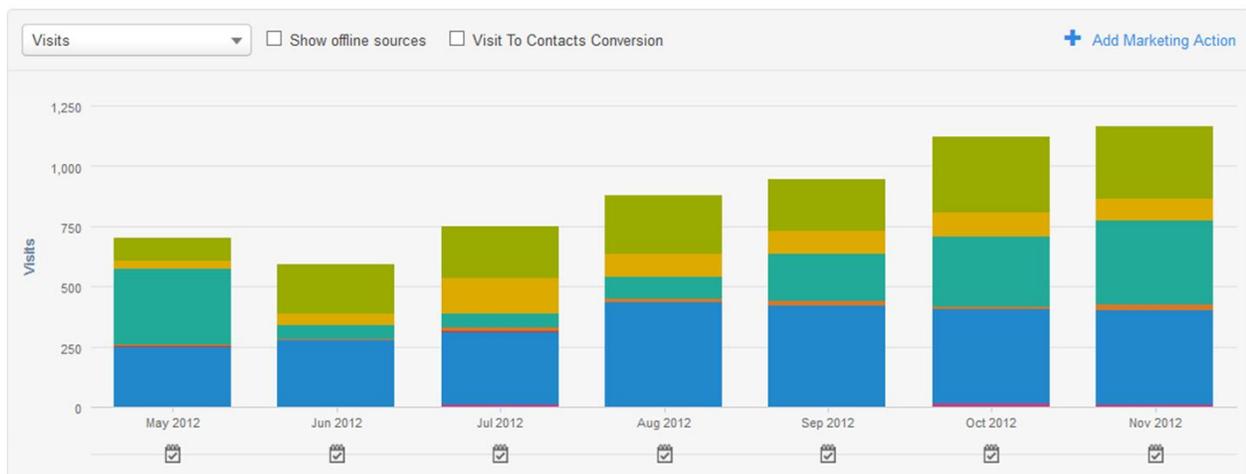
Now that you have all the right internet marketing strategies in place, it's time to make all of them as efficient as they can be. Your main goal in this step is to find the best way to use all the techniques we've already discussed to get found online and generate new customers.



5 Steps for Analyzing & Refining Internet Marketing Strategies

1. Implement an Analytics Program

In order to analyze, you need to have an analytics program in place. [HubSpot software](#) has a business-oriented system in place for this purpose. [Google Analytics](#) is a non-business based but free tool that helps analyze your website traffic.



2. Identify Opportunities

Figure out what you want to improve. Do you want more people coming to your blog? Do you want to convert more visitors on your home page into leads? Get into the mindset of constantly looking for new opportunities.

Traffic Sources ▶ Social Media

Site	Visits	Conversion	Contacts	Conversion	Customers	Conversion
Facebook	229	2.6%	6	0.0%	0	0.0%
LinkedIn	93	6.5%	6	0.0%	0	0.0%
Twitter	18	5.6%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%
Google+	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
HootSuite	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Pinterest	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
StumbleUpon	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	346	3.8%	13	0.0%	0	0.0%

3. Set a Metric for Success

In almost all cases, your metric should be quantifiable and involve a set time frame. For example: "Increase X website leads over the next X days."

Research: Identify your Goals and Timeline

Goal:	Increase monthly leads from internet marketing from 40 to 60
Timeline:	By the end of quarter 2, 2013

4. Refine

Analyze how your programs performed and make changes with the aim of achieving your marketing goals by doing less of what doesn't work and more of what works (and by modifying what doesn't work so that it works better).

5. Evaluate

Determine if you've met your success metric. If so, stick with your change. See what you could have done differently. Continue to monitor it to make sure the improvement has a long-term effect.



Metrics to Analyze

In order for your refinements to have a big impact, you need to monitor several key factors. Again, you'll need analytics software to do this.

Marketing Grade: How well optimized is your website overall? To find out, continue running your website through [Marketing Grader](#). You can sign up for monthly updates on your grade via the Marketing Grader report.

Traffic: Overall, how many people are coming to your website?

Leads: How much of this traffic are you converting into leads (e.g. potential customers)?

Customers: How many sales did you close this month?

Customer Acquisition Cost: How much are you investing to draw in each new customer?

New vs. Repeat Visitors: Of your overall traffic, how many visitors are returning to your site, and how many new people are finding you? Both types of visitors are good. Attracting new visitors means people are finding you through search. Attracting repeat visitors means you've given people good reason to come back to your site. The key is finding a balance. Mike Volpe, HubSpot's CMO, recommends having around 15% repeat visitors.

Effectiveness by Channel: What promotional channels or referring sources are sending you the most traffic? Focus on long-term results, not short-term traffic spurts that you might get from news coverage or press releases.

Traffic by Keywords: Which keywords are drawing in the most visitors to your site?

Sorted by: Visits		Showing: Visits Rank Difficulty			
<input type="checkbox"/>	business buying process Added June 12th 2012	7	100+	33	
<input type="checkbox"/>	stages of business buying process Added June 12th 2012	6	41	23	
<input type="checkbox"/>	rapidan strategies Added September 1st 2011	6	1	99	
<input type="checkbox"/>	social proof Added August 22nd 2012	4	100+	63	
<input type="checkbox"/>	value proposition Added November 6th 2012	3	100+	91	

Steps for Improvement

While you should try to reach long-term goals, there are some short-term steps you should take to get there. The following are some elements of your website you can refine so you can reach your broader goals:

Keywords: Try new keywords or variations of keywords to see if they help you get found better. Since each page on your site can incorporate different keywords, there are tons of ways to do this.

Keywords [Tutorial](#) [Tour](#)

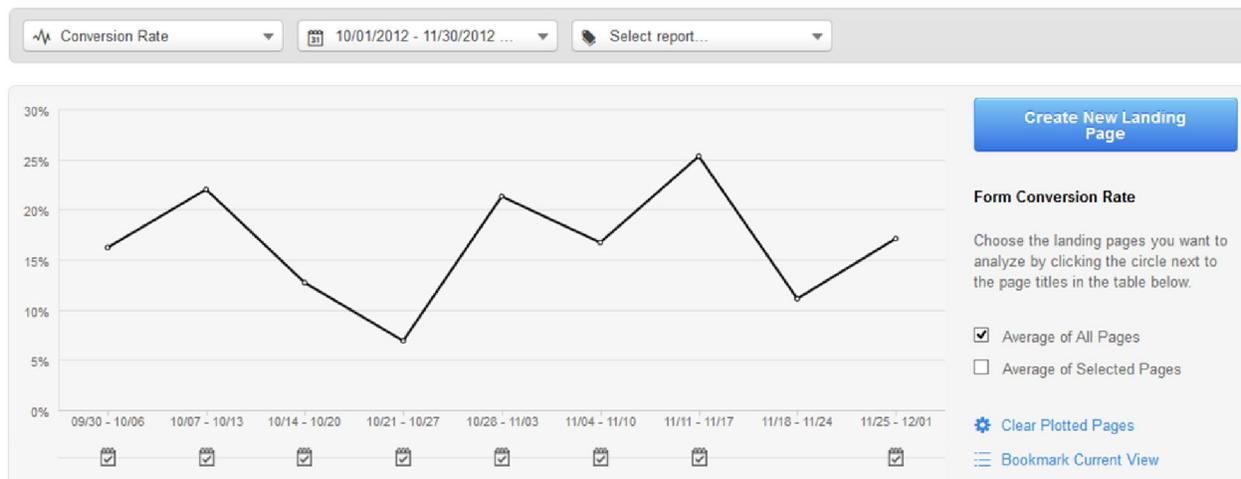
106 Keywords Ranked in Top 3	191 Keywords Ranked in Top 10	0 Contacts Generated	\$148.34 Estimated Savings
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On-Page SEO: See if changing a simple on-page factor can help boost visits. Examples of on-page factors are page title, meta description, and headings. As a simple test, try changing the page title of one of your web pages to see if you generate more traffic.



Conversions: Try new things with your conversion forms or landing pages. For example, try making the conversion form more prominently located on your web page.

Landing Pages

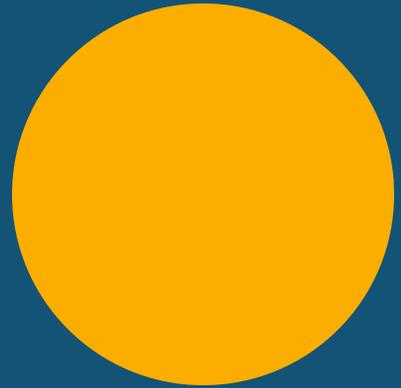


Content Strategy: Determine which content is generating the most traffic. This could be an opportunity to either focus more on that kind of content, or refine your delivery of other content.

Social Media Promotions: Evaluate which social media channels are generating the most site visitors and leads. Again, you can either focus on your successful social media platforms, or try improving your performance in your less successful ones.

Lead Nurturing: Maybe you're sending emails too frequently --or not frequently enough. Maybe the calls-to-action in your email are not appropriate for your audience. Always keep experimenting and testing.

For more information about how to effectively measure your marketing programs, download [HubSpot's How to Unlock the Marketing of Your ROI with Analytics.](#)



CONCLUSION

For starters, the concept of internet marketing might seem difficult and daunting. But by tackling each internet marketing tactic step by step, businesses can make internet marketing more manageable and start generating results. By reading this eBook, we hope you've gained an understanding of how internet marketing can improve your overall marketing plan and help you achieve business growth.

Now go forth and conquer internet marketing, one step at a time!

Get a free inbound marketing consultation

Schedule a free 30-minute consultation with a certified inbound marketing specialist to discuss how inbound marketing can work for your company

[Schedule your consultation here](#)

