



Intelligent  
Inbound & PR:  
The Magic  
Combination for  
Increased Growth

**SmartBug.**

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# Introduction

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The coordination of Intelligent Inbound and strategic PR efforts will lead to more visibility, more credibility, more brand recognition, and more potential to reach the target audience. This guide will show you how the two can work together to achieve awesome results.

## CHAPTER 01

# Overview of Intelligent Inbound and Public Relations



**Learn what defines each discipline and why they work better together.**

Understanding the principles and nuances of both Inbound Marketing and Public Relations is the key to realizing why they work better together. Inbound Marketing is the practice of creating content that attracts prospective customers at any stage of the buying process. It uses content that is helpful, addressing the needs and/or solving the problems of the ideal customer. The content is often dynamic, using a variety of styles and channels such as blogs, social media posts, e-books, infographics, online videos, white papers, and podcasts. The goal of Inbound Marketing is to use this content to attract and engage the most suitable prospects.



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You probably already knew all of that. But what makes Intelligent Inbound...well, intelligent? It's using data to eliminate guesswork and make smarter decisions. Intelligent Inbound involves a collaboration of a variety of marketing tools such as:

- Inbound Marketing
- Traditional Digital Content Development
- Paid Search Optimization
- Social Media Outreach
- Branding

It's about using as many marketing tactics as possible in addition to and on top of regular inbound efforts. To do this effectively, it's essential to use data not only to understand your target audience, but also to predict what they might do or need next. Dig into buyer personas. Learn what makes the buyer tick. Figure out what channels they use and where you can get your brand in front of them. This is where Intelligent Inbound can use a good dose of public relations.

In terms of business, the traditional purpose of public relations is to manage the flow of information between an organization and society in order to shape and control public perception. This involves the art of engaging, influencing, and building relationships with key players who shape public opinion. But with the confluence of marketing and technology across a fast-changing digital landscape, the value of PR has become so much more.

The practice of PR is easily adaptable. PR pros keep up with trends and know how to get your brand, messaging, and content in front of the right audience. Today, the most successful PR campaigns aim to accomplish a trifecta:



**Enhance Visibility** — put your message, brand, and experts in front of a bigger audience.



**Build Credibility** — earn validation when third-party outlets look to you as a source.



**Promote Thought Leadership** — gain recognition as a key expert in your space.

Capitalize on these valuable goals by combining an effective PR campaign with your Intelligent Inbound Marketing campaign. Now that we understand what each discipline can accomplish on its own, let's discuss the magic that happens when we combine forces.

## CHAPTER 02

# The Magic Combination

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## **Intelligent Inbound creates the content. Public Relations gives it wings.**

When implemented correctly, combining Intelligent Inbound with PR can result in one big happy marriage. Why? Because they both have similarities that complement each other and differences that complete each other. Let's dig a little deeper:

### **Similarities: We Go Together**

The primary similarity between PR and Inbound Marketing is that they both create a variety of content and messaging that supports brand-building and corporate growth. Intelligent Inbound involves building a digital content-rich empire that includes an interactive website full of infographics, videos, e-books, social media links, and an active blog. PR also relies on content-rich strategies, including pitches, press releases, case studies, blog entries, and byline articles. As you can see, both practices are content-based and even have some crossover in the type of content they produce, which makes it easy to get along and complement each other's efforts. So why would they ever need each other? The answer lies in their differences.



### **Differences: You Complete Me**

Although both Inbound and PR are content creators, their content is different in type and delivery. And even though the type of content they produce can sometimes seem similar, the way that content is distributed can have a huge impact on its effectiveness. For example, Inbound Marketing may create articles to post on social media outlets like LinkedIn Pulse or on their corporate website's blog. But the audience for those articles is limited, either to current customers and prospects already in the sales channel or to those who frequent those outlets. PR, on the other hand, develops content such as byline articles for publication in third-party media outlets. This puts the message in front of a whole new set of prospects. Disseminating content to the public through third-party media outlets not only increases the size of the audience, it also helps to validate a brand or establish a company as a thought leader in its industry. This is where PR fills in some very important gaps and "completes" an Inbound Marketing program.



So PR and Inbound make a happy marriage. Can't they survive without each other? Sure. But why sell yourself short? If you only use Inbound Marketing to create great content for social media and a website, but you don't get it in front of writers and editors, your content won't get the visibility it needs to get your message where it needs to go. PR gives it the wings it needs to soar.

Likewise, PR can be difficult if you haven't already created great content that you can use to break the ice with reporters. It is also evidence of the organization's expertise. For example, if a thought leader has an extensive arsenal of articles on a particular topic already on their website or, it helps their PR rep to demonstrate expertise when pitching to the media. If an expert has written a book on a specific topic, this arms their PR rep with the ability to leverage their industry prowess.

So, you see, PR and Inbound really do complete each other. Now let's explore how to move past the theoretical and put the hybrid approach of using both methodologies into practice.



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## CHAPTER 03

# How It's Done: Pass it On

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**Promote your existing content: Leverage your current content to build relationships, gain credibility, increase exposure, and drive leads.**

The first step in creating the magic between Intelligent Inbound and PR is for each discipline to use the other's content to its advantage. PR can leverage content already created by marketers and get it in front of third-party outlets. Inbound Marketing can repurpose already-published content for social media, websites, and e-books.

First, let's take a look at how inbound content can boost PR efforts. Having access to an arsenal of great content helps PR reps make introductions and build relationships with reporters, editors, and bloggers. Those are the people who have the ability to get that material out to the public.



These are some examples of how this can happen:

- Getting your existing infographic or video included in a published article
- Using existing content to position your executives as experts for interviews
- Having your existing article republished on a third-party blog

Why is this important? Because having your material included in outside outlets exposes your company and its brand to a wide-ranging set of new prospects. PR pros work with a variety of different outlets—from local, regional and national news outlets to trade publications that reach vertical audiences. Most of these publications have anywhere from tens of thousands to millions of readers. That's a lot of extra eyes on you. Taking the audience of an external outlet and adding it to your own readership puts your message in front of more eyes, creates the potential for more views and link referrals, and generates new contacts.



**Having access to an arsenal of great content helps PR reps make introductions and build relationships with reporters, editors, and bloggers.**



It's also about brand recognition. Including your infographic or a link to your material in an article—or better yet, having one of your C-level executives quoted in one—also gives credibility to your company and its products or services. It begins to establish you as a leader and an expert in your space. This means prospects will turn to you for advice, leading them straight into the buyer process.

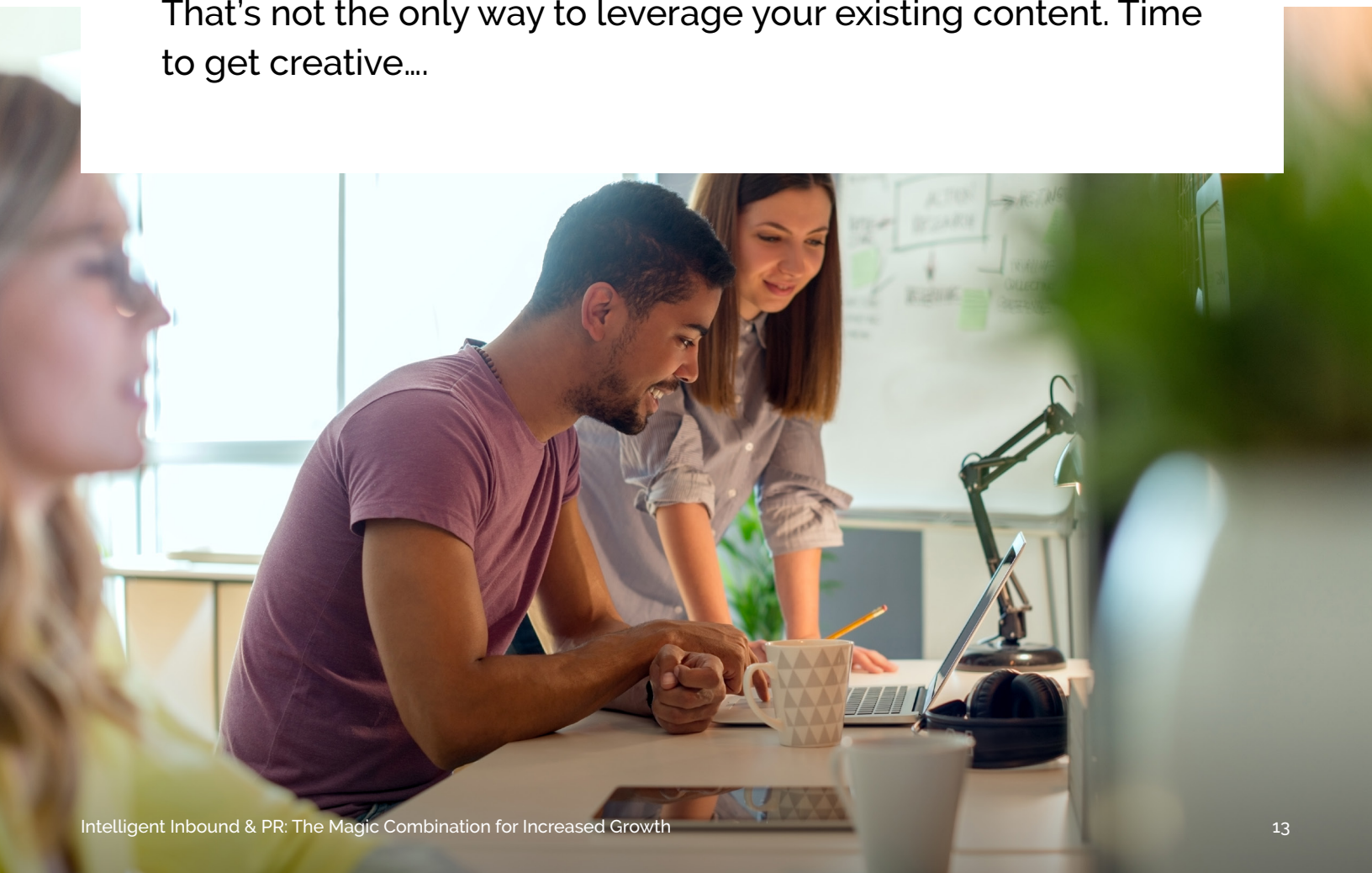
Now let's talk about how inbound marketers can use existing PR content to their advantage. PR reps are always working to drum up a steady beat of news, and just because these news articles don't typically include backlinks doesn't mean that you can't use them to generate traffic.

These are some examples of ways marketers can use already-published PR content:

- Post PR articles on your website's newsroom
- Share articles on social media—use hashtags and links, and mention the news outlet
- Write a blog post related to a published PR article, and link to it in the post

By using the methods listed above, marketers are able to repurpose content that wouldn't typically include traffic-generating links or CTAs then post it in formats and on channels that can drive leads.

That's not the only way to leverage your existing content. Time to get creative....



## CHAPTER 04

# How It's Done: Tweak It

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**Repurpose your content to give it a fresh spin: Use your inbound content as bait to spur new ideas for PR and vice versa.**

When your Intelligent Inbound Marketing efforts give rise to expertly written material, such as blog articles and e-books, a PR pro will use that material as inspiration for fresh ideas. These new ideas can be used to create dozens of pitches that can be put out as bait to reel in reporters and catch executive interviews.

Taking it a step further, a PR pro can rework your material to create something along the same vein, but altogether different. Then they will pitch it to editorial directors, suggesting the material for a new article called a byline. If the pitch is accepted, your PR rep will work with one of your executives to craft a new article that is published as an expert piece. Credit for the article is given to your executive, and the piece generally includes a blurb about your company at the end.



**Taking it a step further, a PR pro can rework your material to create something along the same vein, but altogether different.**

Byline articles are a great score because they allow you to tell your story. While they are educational in nature, you still have the ability to control the message and present your thoughts in a persuasive way to a captive audience. This may sound like a lot of work, but your PR team is ready for the challenge. Your content is already there, and your expert is a whiz at discussing the subject at hand. Once the article is published, you will not only have more validation that your company is leading its space, but also more content and sales collateral at your fingertips.

Inbound marketers can repurpose PR content too. Many times, PR reps have generated thought leadership articles after conducting one-on-one interviews with members of the executive suite—a luxury that isn't always afforded to marketers. Rather than starting from scratch, marketers can repurpose pieces from thought leadership articles to create rich content. This can come in the form of culling expert commentary from a published PR piece to create social media posts, repurposing the content from a published article into an infographic or slideshare, or using the structured content of PR pieces to lay the foundation for e-books and white papers.



This allows inbound marketers to use PR content, which is usually devoid of backlinks, to create collateral that will point back to a website or spur dialogue with new contacts. PR reps usually have a close relationship with the C-suite and will create expert pieces that inbound marketers can use in a multitude of ways to drive traffic and leads. Inbound marketers and PR reps alike have tons of content at their disposal. Why reinvent the wheel when you already have so much to work with?

But don't stop there. Time to leverage that expertise...



## CHAPTER 05

# How It's Done: Become an Expert

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### **Own your space: Leverage your expert status to become an industry thought leader.**

Once your executives are out of the box by landing interviews and publishing byline articles, they have officially reached expert status in the eyes of the public. Now it's time to up their game and achieve the highly coveted "thought leader" status in their industry. Here's how:



#### **Keep Building Relationships With the Media**

Every time your executive is interviewed, he or she is building key relationships with reporters and becoming a trusted source for more material and thought leadership. The next time that reporter is covering your space, you are now the go-to expert for quotes, opinions, and a chance to shape the direction of their latest article. Your PR rep will ensure you stay in front of them and relevant.



**Leverage social media feeds to provide experts another channel for them to share their message.**



## Show Off the Depth of Your Expertise

As the geniuses behind your products and services, your industry experts are already innovators and thought leaders who know their business inside and out. Now it's time to tell the world. If they've written any books, e-books, blog articles, white papers, or bylines, let your PR rep show them off. This authored content is your expert's brand. Sell it. Show it off. Give everyone proof that your expert truly is one of the top thought leaders in the industry. By putting your executives on the map as industry thought leaders, PR can position your company as a leader in its field.

Inbound marketers can also take advantage of an exec's new expert status by launching recurring campaigns like a blog or web series that points back to published PR content. Leverage social media feeds to provide experts another channel for them to share their message.



# Conclusion

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As you can see, you can enjoy many benefits from creating a happy marriage between Intelligent Inbound and PR. From enhancing visibility to building credibility and leveraging thought leadership, it's a magical combination.

## Use These Six Tips to Get Your Inbound and PR Marriage Off to a Good Start:

- 1** Pitch existing content to reporters at third-party news outlets. They may repurpose, republish, or quote some of it in an upcoming article.
- 2** Share published PR content on your brand's social media sites or your corporate website.
- 3** Take existing content such as a blog post and create a pitch for a new byline article in a trade magazine or online outlet.
- 4** Use executive thought leadership pieces to spur ideas for infographics, slideshares, and blog series.
- 5** Take existing digital content, such as an infographic or a video, and show it to a writer who may be doing an article on a similar topic. They may even use it in their article.
- 6** Take a book written by one of your expert thought leaders, and pitch it to an editor or an analyst for a review. The book or excerpts from it may be quoted in an article.

# About SmartBug

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SmartBug Media is one of a handful of HubSpot Diamond partners in the world and is the highest-rated agency in the history of the HubSpot ecosystem. We also boast the highest ROI documented from any HubSpot partner—3,558% and 14,500% ROI on a six-month and three-year campaign, respectively. At Inbound 2015, SmartBug Media was the most recognized agency, having won or been named a finalist in nine awards.

SmartBug Media is one of the first HubSpot partners to implement growth-driven design and was an inaugural member of the HubSpot COS Advisory Board. For more than seven years, SmartBug Media has been helping businesses increase sales leads, close more customers, and enhance the reach of their brands. From building comprehensive online marketing programs to designing new websites, driving leads through social media or sales enablement, we're an extension of your marketing team that delivers.

**For a free inbound marketing or web design consultation, or to learn more, visit [www.smartbugmedia.com](http://www.smartbugmedia.com) or call [949-236-6448](tel:949-236-6448).**

## Curious how we can help grow your business?

Let's chat. Get the conversation started and let's talk about your organization, your goals, and how SmartBug can help you achieve them.

Let's Talk

**SmartBug.**

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