10 Steps To Building An Inbound Marketing Campaign That Works

SmartBug.

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Introduction

An inbound marketing campaign can help your company grow by using digital channels in an organized and measurable way. Usually the goals for inbound campaigns involve certain marketing goals, like increased visits, improved conversion rates, defined marketing qualified leads, and (of course) increased total customers.

Your website serves as the foundation for all inbound marketing activities. Online platforms like HubSpot can manage all the components of your inbound marketing efforts in a way that ismeasurable and clearly demonstrates marketing ROI.

This guide helps break down the key steps to building an inbound marketing campaign.

Define Structure

Before you start building your inbound campaign, it's important to create the blueprints and understand how a campaign is structured. Typically, the key components include these eight steps:

	Analysis
	Offer
	Conversion Path
	Lead Nurturing Campaign
	Promotional Email
	Keyword Strategy
	Blog Posts
	Social Media Promotion

Step 1: Target a Specific Persona

The first step is to clearly define your buyer personas. Your first inbound campaign should target your primary persona —the person who will most likely become a future customer. This will help you tailor your messaging and create a focused campaign across all channels.

Let's say you are a shoe manufacturer, making both running shoes and high heels, but you want to increase the number of leads wanting heels. This has a huge impact on the kind of website you will create because its content will be aimed at women who want shoes for work or events, not for running at the track. This messaging should stay consistent in your emails, PPC ads, social media posts, and other inbound campaign tactics.
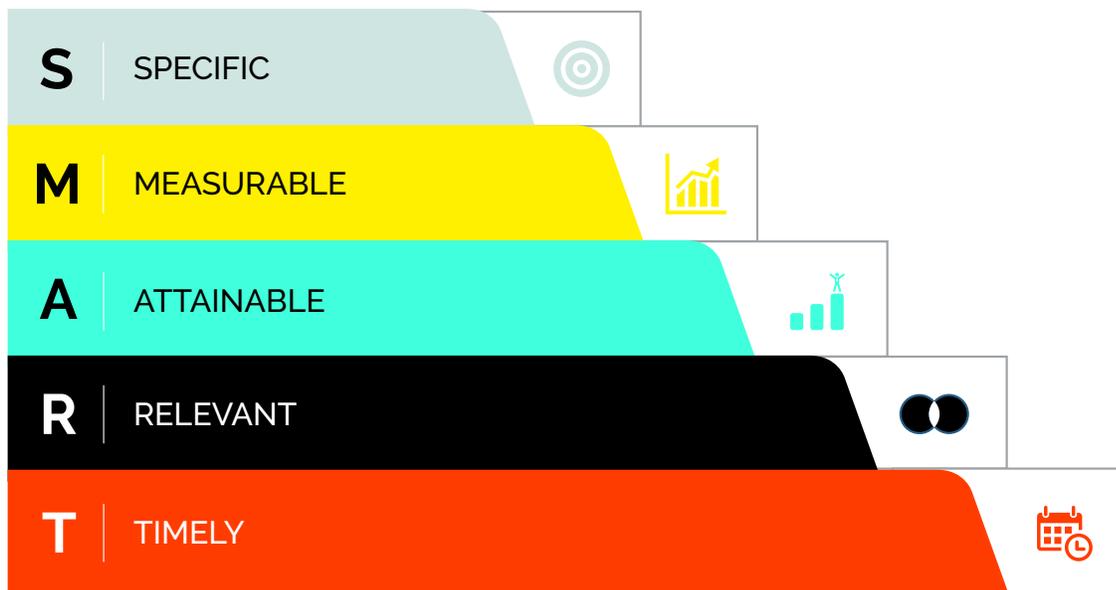
Check out SmartBug Media's resource library for eBooks on how to create your personas.

View Now

Step 2: Define SMART Goals

If you've ever taken a HubSpot Academy class, know the term S.M.A.R.T goals is an acronym that stands for:

S	SPECIFIC
M	MEASURABLE
A	ATTAINABLE
R	RELEVANT
T	TIMELY

You should set these goals for every inbound marketing campaign, to help you track and measure tangible results that can impress your colleagues and help you plan your next strategy or tactic.

A S.M.A.R.T goal looks something like this:

Increase VTL% from **2%** to **3%** in **three months** by creating five new pieces of content with a landing page that converts at **20% or higher**.

Step 3: Build An Enticing Offer

When planning an inbound campaign, consider the kinds of content you will offer your personas. This could be an e-book, webinar, podcast or checklist and it should align with something your persona would find valuable.

The best content is usually educational and helpful, not a sales pitch. It also helps to create content at all stages of your buyer's journey, since these components will be used together to nurture someone toward your ultimate goal of creating a new customer.

AWARENESS	CONSIDERATION	DECISION
Have realized and expressed symptoms of a potential problem or opportunity	Have clearly defined and named their problem or opportunity	Have defined their solution, strategy, method, or approach
Research focused on vendor neutral third-party information around identifying problems or symptoms	Committed to researching and understanding all of the available approaches/ methods to solving their defined problem or opportunity	Researching supporting documentation, data, benchmarks, endorsements to make or recommend a final decision
■ Analyst reports ■ Research reports ■ eGuides & e-books ■ Editorial content ■ Expert content ■ White papers ■ Educational content	■ Comparison white papers ■ Expert guides ■ Live interactions ■ Webcast/podcast/video	■ Vendor comparisons ■ Product comparisons ■ Case studies ■ Trial download ■ Product literature ■ Live demo
■ Troubleshoot ■ Upgrade ■ Issue ■ Improve ■ Resolve ■ Optimize ■ Risk ■ Event	■ Solution ■ Tool ■ Provider ■ Device ■ Service ■ Software ■ Supplier ■ Appliance	■ Versus ■ Review ■ Comparison ■ Test ■ Pros & Cons ■ Benchmarks
I have a sore throat, fever and I'm achy all over. What's wrong with me?	Aha! I have strep throat. What are my options for relieving or curing my symptoms?	I can see a primary care physician or nurse, or visit a clinic or the ER. It costs money to visit the ER, but it's the quickest solution and I have insurance.

Step 4: Create an Effective Conversion Path

A conversion path consists of a call-to-action (CTA), a landing page with a form, a thank-you page, and corresponding thank-you email. This pathway lets people interact with your content while also giving you information about themselves and their interests or goals.

Once someone enters your conversion path to access a piece of content, that person generally becomes a lead. This is mandatory to the success of inbound campaigns; you can't give content away without knowing where it will land because then you can't capture leads, nurture people, or understand the impact and success of each campaign.

**PRO TIP:** Follow the three B's when building landing pages:

- Brief—stick to the point!
- Bullet Point Benefits—why is this valuable?
- Blink Test—can you find the value of this page in two seconds?

Step 5: Segment Leads & Build Email Workflows

Now that you have leads, it's time to follow up in a valuable way. This nurturing process is typically done through email, so people still have control over their time but can easily find your content when they are ready.

By creating the right lists, you can target the right people at the right time in their individual buyer's journey. Lists are typically broken down to align with both personas and the different stages of your buyer's journey, and can be easily created and managed in HubSpot.

Inbound campaigns are also fascinating because you can track how a customer first came to your website and understand the steps they took—which is a huge boost to ROI.
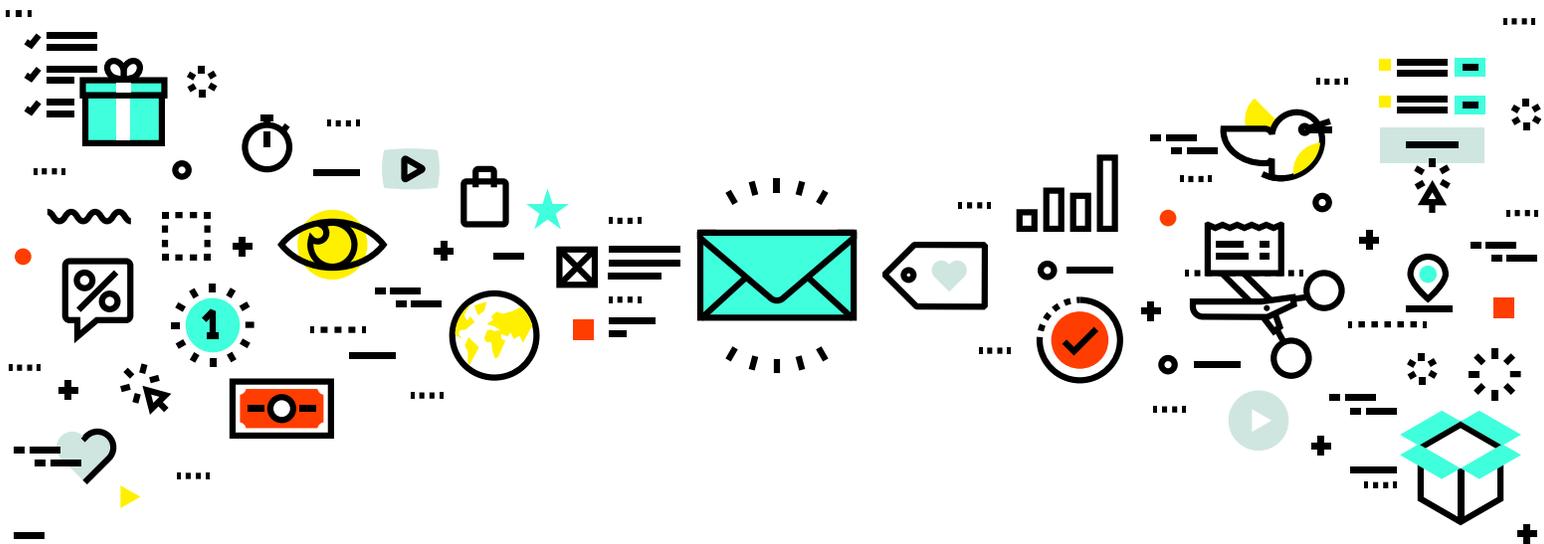
💡 **PRO TIP:** A lead downloads your e-book on the best high-heeled shoes for prom. Next, you send them an email that follows up with some tips on how to dance in heels. Next, you might send an email that pairs heels with different prom dresses, showing your product and including an offer to save 15%.

Alternatively, if someone reads content about the best high-heeled shoes for the office, your follow-up nurturing campaign would focus on appropriate topics for that persona—not on the prom!
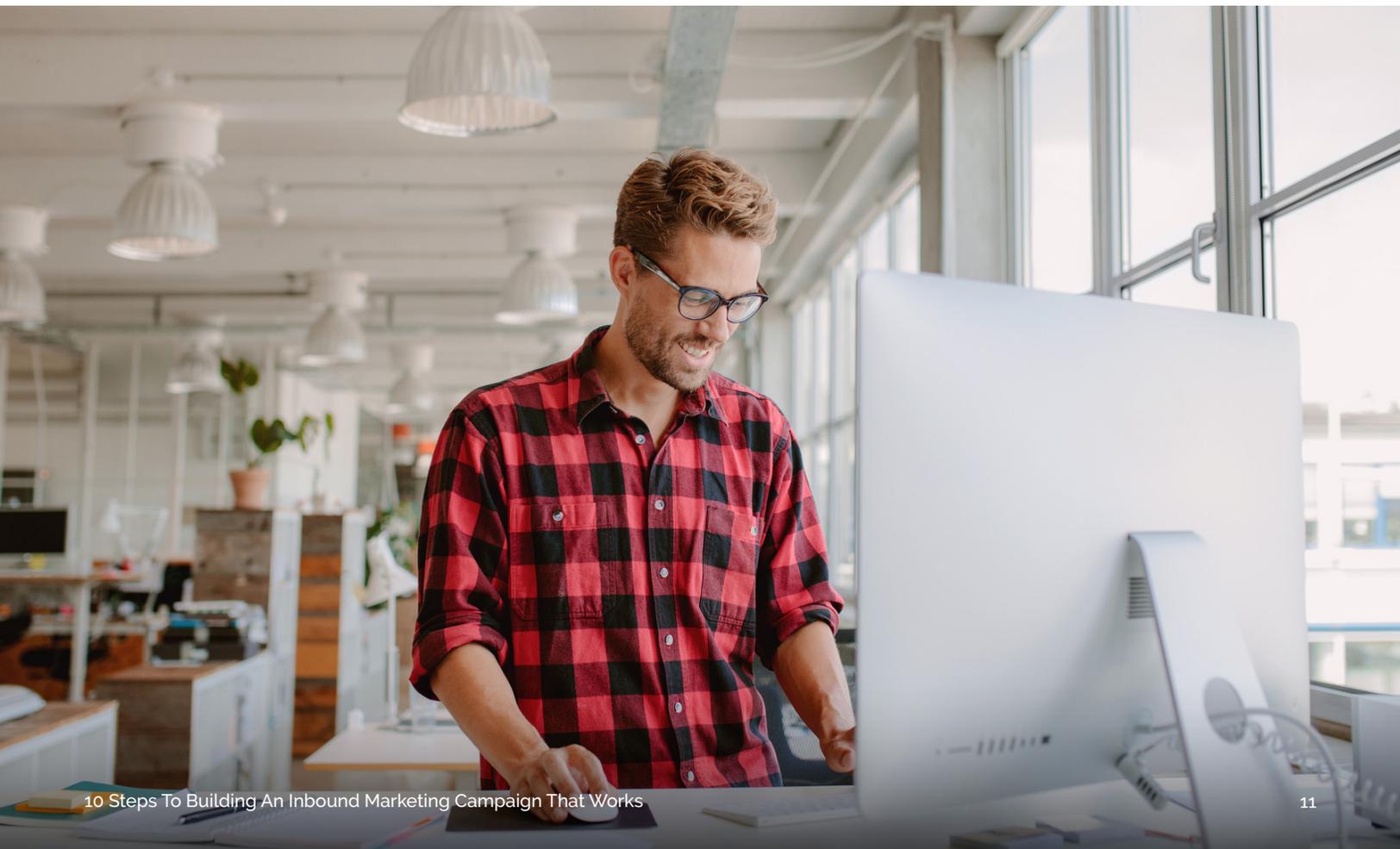
Step 6: Kick Off the Campaign with a Promotional Email

With your content assets in place, it is time to let the world know what you have to offer! Send an email to your contacts that announces your new, valuable content.

Remember: If your offer applies to more than one of your personas, tailor the language of each email so that it speaks to specific pain points of each persona. This means you might have to create more than one email.

PRO TIP: Use the copy in your e-books to build your landing pages and emails and save time!

> Remember: If your offer applies to more than one of your personas, tailor the language of each email so that it speaks to the specific pain points of each persona.

Step 7: Define Optimized Long-tail Keywords

Before you can start promoting your offer through other channels, such as blogging, consider your keyword strategy. Think about what your personas are typing into Google when they think about their problem, or when they need help understanding a certain product or situation.

Does your website align with those keywords? What about the content you're creating? If the keywords you've chosen target the right persona, have a difficulty level of 60 or less (as given by the HubSpot tool), and contain at least 100 monthly searches, you're on the right track!

Use Hubspot's Keyword Tool to track your rankings and determine the best keywords use in your website copy, blog posts, and other content.

PRO TIP: Start by brainstorming topics within your campaign that relate to the best reasons to purchase your product or service. For example, "prom" relates to high-heels because it's a reason to buy and wear them.

Step 8: Create Shareable Blog Posts

Use your new long-tail keywords to create enticing blog posts that educate your persona on topics related to your offer. Stay away from posts that sell the reader and focus more on educating and providing real value.

Make sure the bottom of the blog post includes a clear CTA to engage your visitor and hopefully, converts them into a lead. And definitely encourage social sharing of all posts by posting blogs on your networks.

PRO TIP: Blog titles should be enticing and optimized for a single keyword. For example, The 15 Mistakes Every Girl Makes at Prom could include a a bulleted list on wearing the wrong heels.
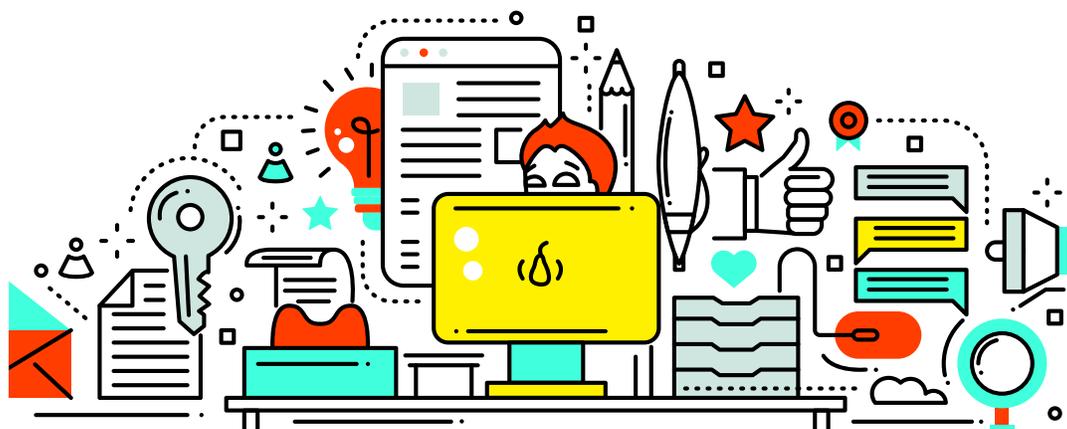
Step 9: Promote Content on Social Media Channels

As mentioned previously, sharing your content on social media is very powerful. It can be used to connect with your customers, provide information to leads, and of course, promote new inbound marketing campaigns.

When promoting your offer, choose the social media channels where your personas get the most engaged. You can promote the landing page of the offer, blog posts, and other campaign assets. HubSpot can even help you monitor social media channels to learn the best places and keywords for you to engage with your personas.

PRO TIP: Use Twitter to post the same content more than once. By varying messages and trying different times of the day, you can reach more customers. Twitter feeds move so quickly that it is safe to do this without being spammy, unlike with LinkedIn and Facebook.

Step 10: Analyze & Adjust For Every Campaign

Your inbound marketing campaign isn't finished once it starts. You should use a platform like HubSpot to analyze your efforts, optimize them, and create an even better campaign next time.

Analytics can tell you which channels provide the most traction, lead quality, content performance, website performance, social sharing statistics, email open rates, and so on.

Monthly reports are important; they can keep your marketing efforts on the right path by demonstrating a clear ROI, improving sales teams and really impacting your business in a positive way.

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About SmartBug

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 or call 949-236-6448.

Have a question? Curious about how we can help grow your business?

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