

MODE RN MAR KETING

A guide to inbound marketing, the best digital marketing method to turn website visitors into customers.

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Produced by:



ATTITUDE

www.attitudedesign.co.uk

Edition 1.1

September 2016

Introduction

**Hello and welcome to “Modern Marketing”
- a guide to inbound marketing, the best
digital marketing method to turn website
visitors into customers.**

**In this guide you will learn the
following things:**

- ▶ Why old marketing methods no longer work
- ▶ The modern buyer’s journey
- ▶ The four components of the inbound marketing process
- ▶ What buyer personas are and why you should use them
- ▶ The process of an inbound marketing campaign
- ▶ The difference between Outbound Marketing and inbound marketing

Purpose

How many weekly, qualified leads do you need to feed to your sales team? How many of them do you get from your website? Not enough? Then you are in the right e-book.

Inbound marketing is a smarter way to make your website do what it's supposed to be doing - generating you leads which can be turned into sales, taking strangers who visit your website and transforming them into happy customers who love your brand.

Like bears awakening from hibernation, businesses around the world are realising that the traditional methods of marketing and advertising are broken. No matter how incentivised the sales team are the, harder it is becoming to get them to close deals with cold calling and hard selling. Techniques which were working like a dream 10 years ago are not half as successful today. Why is this and what is the solution?

The purpose of this guide is to review the old broken methods of the past and take a look at new best practices that will help you produce a website which generates more leads and makes you more sales.

About the author

Matt Davies is the Creative Director and founder of Attitude Design - a branding and digital marketing agency based in Nottingham UK. For the last 15 years Matt has personally been involved in designing and launching hundreds of websites for businesses of all shapes and sizes.

If you would like to connect with Matt, he'd love to hear from you.

Follow on Twitter: [@mrmattdavies](https://twitter.com/mrmattdavies).

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Why old marketing methods no longer work

Why old marketing methods no longer work

The good old days

Before the internet, things were much simpler. If you had a product or service to sell, the chances are you and your team would know much more about it than your target audience. You would know what the benefits of using the product were, the value your audience would place on the offer, how much your competition were charging, and much more. Your audience would not have a huge amount of knowledge of these key things and would mostly be in the dark. Therefore all you had to do was push your message out to attract curiosity and then leverage the knowledge you had once anyone showed an interest. You'd use things like TV and radio adverts, print advertising, trade-shows and cold calling/email blasts to purchased lists. You got contacts, established relationships with anyone who responded, and your sales team closed on a deal.

This idea of pushing your message out has been retrospectively called "Outbound Marketing". It is a maze of jargon where the loudest are rewarded with the attention of their audience. As time went on instead of being the loudest, being clever became the

currency which got you attention. However as the advertising spaces became crowded, costs spiralled and competition increased. Marketers began to attract audiences using the lowest common denominator to maximise their conversions. We were left with brash adverts which appealed to base human instincts trying to get our attention.

Interrupt & attract attention

Outbound Marketing is based on the concept of interruption – of attracting and competing for attention. Its basis is to find a commodity with a large audience which follows it (such as a television show). Once found, Outbound looks to interrupt this following with adverts. They might be nothing to do with the television show the audience was watching but Outbound does not care. Outbound is working on the premise that in the huge audience which watches this show, 2% might just be interested in what it has to say. What about the other 98% you ask? They don't matter. Outbound is in the game for the few relevant potential customers.

This is the case with another favourite of Outbound's tactics – that of cold calling. I'm not sure about you but how many times have you been cold called in an attempt to be sold something completely irrelevant to your situation? How does this happen? Outbound. Outbound has bought a list of thousands of leads and you have been on the list. Outbound calls you in the hope you will be one of the 2%. The poor Outbound

salesperson is put under pressure to sell sell. In turn they turn into a sales monster to pressure you into buying double glazing. One-time offers that can't be missed. Shake hands today and you get a free giveaway. Buy some double glazing now. You have only just done yours last week? It doesn't matter, you just go into a bucket marked "call in 5 years". Goodbye.

The huge investment made in these and other forms of Outbound Marketing used to be worth the conversions. However this is changing. This has changed. The huge investments made do not render the same results.

The internet era

With the advent of (and access to) the internet this has all changed.

Over the last 15-20 years consumers have become smarter. They can connect with huge amounts of information. They can review hundreds of similar products or service offers from the comfort of their armchairs. The modern buyer is educated and has done their research.

According to an article by the Consumer Executive Board (CEB)¹ the average purchase decision is 57% complete before a prospect even makes contact.

¹ Five Customer Buying Trends You Can't Ignore, 8th July 2015, Markika Krausova: www.cebglobal.com/blogs/5-customer-buying-trends-all-sales-professionals-should-know/

Consumers today know all about the benefits of the product or service you offer. They will understand the value in what you are presenting to them. They will know what your competition is charging. No longer are they in the dark. The revolution we have witnessed over the last 15-20 years is a revolution in customer enlightenment.

This is why the old methods no longer work. The power is not in the hands of the seller any more. They do not have the right to interrupt what we are doing with their adverts targeting the 2%. We are now irritated by the inconvenience. If we don't recognise a phone number we leave it for voicemail. If we dislike that email we mark it as SPAM so we no longer have to be interrupted by another such irritating Outbound email.

Technology is allowing us to not only be educated about the purchase decisions we make, it is also allowing us to filter out irritating interruptions. These two components of interruption and education are what the old pre-internet techniques are built upon.

Adapt or die

Although consumers have changed, business has not. As a business we still need to seek to sell our product or service. Therefore a new methodology is needed. We need to understand the modern buyer. We need to adapt to their habits. The businesses which do adapt will survive. Those who do not recognise the change in how people buy will not. Adapt or die.

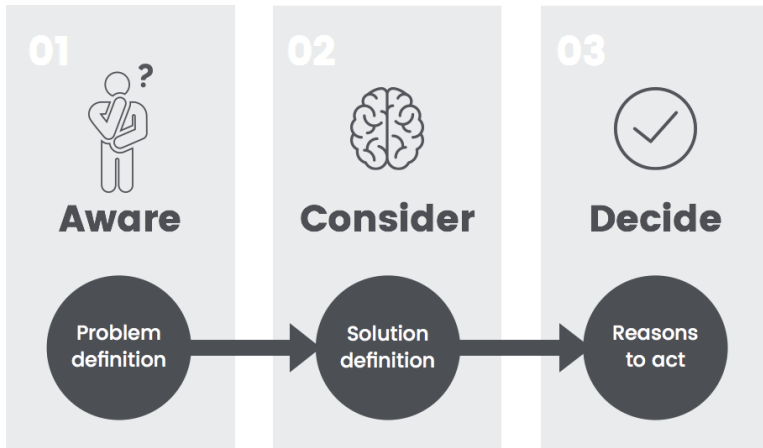
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The modern buyer's journey

The modern buyer's journey

Let's look at how the modern consumer makes a decision to buy. In essence the modern buyer pro-actively goes through a research process which leads them to a purchase. They go through three steps.



The stages of the modern buyer's journey

1. Awareness

The awareness phase is all about the challenges or aspirations of the buyer. Maybe they are experiencing a symptom of a problem. They might not know what the exact cause of the symptom is and so they actively search for answers around their problem. They seek to become aware of the situation they find themselves in.

2. Consideration

Once the modern buyer understands what their problem is and can define it, they move into the consideration step. This is where they actively seek solutions to the problem, challenge or goal that they want to overcome or achieve. They research, collate and consider all possible solutions.

3. Decision

In this final step the modern buyer, now with the full knowledge of what they want to achieve and having at their fingertips an array of potential solutions, they begin to decide the best course of action, short-listing types of solution and then eventually settling on a specific product or service. It is usually only in the final third stage of the buyer's journey that a prospect will contact a business.

What this represents is a huge shift in how we purchase products. Instead of being interrupted by companies outwardly pushing their offer on us, we do our research and, when we are ready, we make contact with them. We go in. We do not want them to come out. This is why old methodologies no longer work. We, as modern buyers, do not want to be disturbed by advertising and messaging which is not relevant to us.

As we go through the above process it has to be on our terms. We want to be helped not sold to. We want to be enriched with useful and relevant information which makes us feel smart. Information that helps us make a good decision for us. Not a decision based on pressure.

What about AIDA?

AIDA is no longer with us.

Old buyer journey models used in the Outbound Marketing methodology are usually based on an article written in the 1904 Salesmanship Magazine, by Frank Hutchinson Dukesmith. Frank wrote about 4 steps in the buyer's journey later dubbed "AIDA": Attention, Interest, Desire, Action¹. However now, over 100 years later, as we have shown above, things have dramatically changed.

Frank's AIDA model was based around a product offer. Not a problem solution. The modern buyer does not like to be interrupted with an attention grabber. They want to independently research their problems and solutions.

Frank's AIDA model was also based on the idea that the seller had the power to generate the interest and desire for the offer. However the modern buyer has the power to review many different offers before they make their decision. The modern buyer is more sophisticated, more switched on and better educated.

Sorry Frank. It worked well for about 100 years but your model is now broke. The internet killed AIDA.

¹ See Businesstopia, AIDA Model, www.businesstopia.net/communication/aida-model

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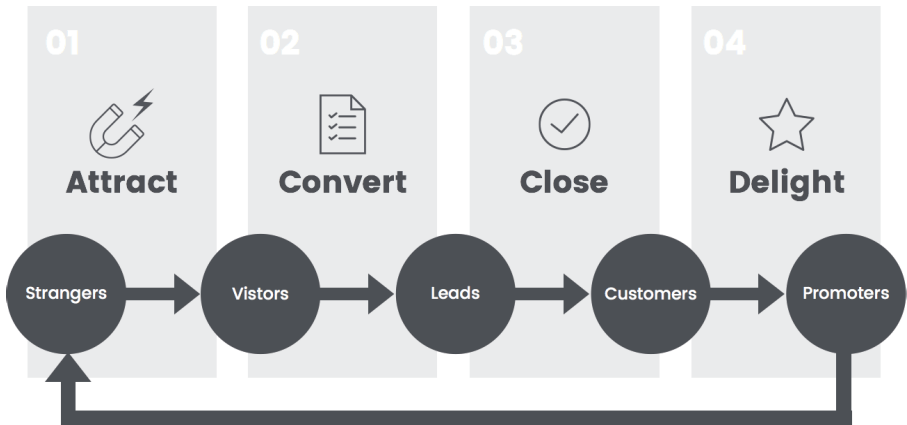


The four action phases of the inbound marketing methodology

The four action phases of the inbound marketing methodology

By aligning the content a business publishes with its customer's interests, customers are naturally attracted inbound so that they can then go through the four action phases of the inbound marketing methodology.

Let's walk through each action phase now:



The stages of the inbound marketing methodology

Phase 1. Attract

We don't just want any visitor coming to our site. What we need is the right type of visitor. Who is the right type of visitor? Our ideal buyer. We want the people who are most likely to become leads, then happy customers. The ideal buyer is also known as a "buyer persona". To attract the ideal buyer we need to generate content on our site which they are interested in and which they can find easily online via search engines.

The main tools used to attract visitors to the site are; blog articles, search engine optimisation, website pages and social media which links to key parts of the site.

Phase 2. Convert

Once we have attracted a visitor on the site the next step is to convert that visitor into a lead. What we mean by convert is that we want that visitor to willingly give us their contact details. Why would they do such a thing? Well there are many strategies we could employ but usually visitors are only willing to give away their contact details if we give them something they want. For example a white paper or an ebook. This is called a "content offer". The offer of useful and exciting content which will be given for the price of the user's contact information.

The main tools used to convert visitors into leads are: premium download content, forms, calls to action and landing pages.

Phase 3. Close

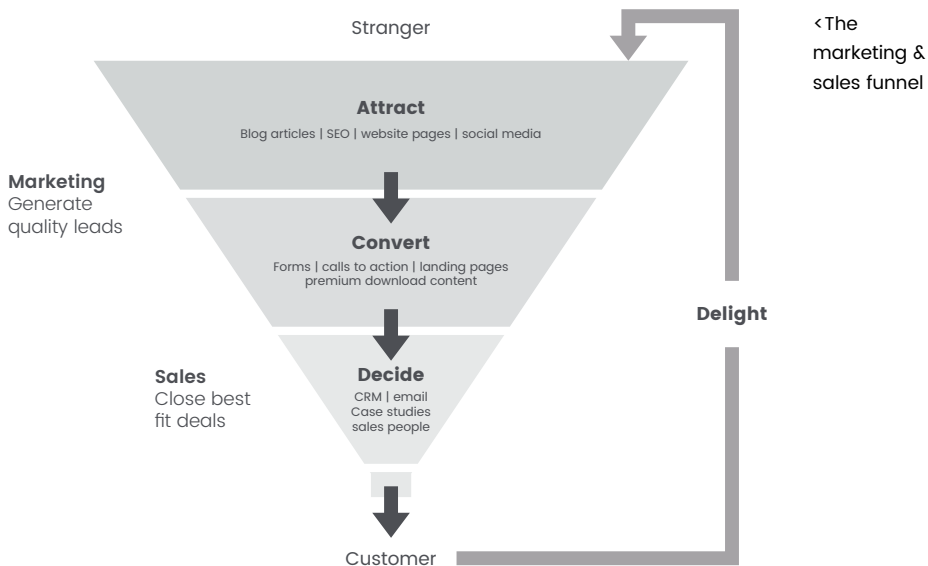
Now we know who our visitor is we can seek to close them into a lead. How this should be done will differ from company to company but typically a Customer Relationship Management system is used to help qualify the best leads from a marketing perspective. These can then be handed to a sales team to qualify and then transform into a customer. Technology can be used to understand which leads are most ready to buy and which leads need to be further enriched with good content to help them along the buyer's journey until they make a decision.

The main tools used to convert leads into customers are: case studies, CRM, email, automated marketing and sales people.

Phase 4. Delight

Now we have helped a prospect all the way through the buyer's journey and they are now a customer. Does the inbound methodology end there? No. We should continue to provide remarkable content to customers so that they are delighted. Why? Because delighted customers become champions of brands. They willingly promote what we do to others.

The main tools used to delight customers are things like: surveys, free resources, social media and personalised emails.



The marketing & sales funnel

The great thing about the inbound methodology is that it gets your marketing and sales team working together. Both can have aligned goals which can drive growth within a business. For example, marketing should be focused on producing content which generates an increasing quality of leads for sales to then close.

The process of marketing and sales is often described as a “funnel”. A larger number of prospects go in the top and are reduced to a smaller number of

customers who come out at the bottom.

The sales and marketing funnel would look like the diagram above – at each stage of the funnel, prospects drop off to eventually leave customers. Everything is clearly defined. As time goes on you will be able to know how many prospects you have at each stage of the funnel and use this model to make forecasts and revenue projections – very helpful for business planning.

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What buyer personas are and why you should use them

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The importance of buyer personas

Buyer personas are at the heart of the inbound methodology. A buyer persona is a semi-fictional representation of your ideal customer. It is created based on research on existing customers (or potential customers).

When a buyer persona is created the basic information about a person is attributed to the persona. Things like behaviour patterns, demographics, motivations, and goals. One of the key things to detail is the main problems or challenges this persona is facing. It is often a good idea to tell a bit of a story around the background of your buyer.

So what's the point of buyer personas? In simple terms they exist because if your marketing is to be successful you need to plan your content, your website and your strategy around the buyer. What will interest them? Why will they care? What will attract them to depart with their contact details? Remember they are the hero of the story. In today's modern world, they hold the power.

Having clearly determined personas helps to segment content and tailor it to a specific customer type. They help you plan and build ways of helping each customer through the buyer's journey. You can begin to ask questions like; "what content could we create to move persona A from the consideration stage to the decision stage of the buyer's journey after they have become a lead?".

Buyer personas provide a framework for teams to do this. They "humanise" the customer profile, making it easier for us to understand and communicate our strategies around them. They help to bring focus and alignment. As a result you will be able to attract the most valuable visitors, leads and happy customers. It all boils down to the fact that you need to create the right content, for the right people, at the right time and without personas it would be incredibly hard to do this.

Depending on your business, you could have different amounts of personas. For smaller businesses or businesses in a very niche marketplace you may only have just one or two personas. Bigger businesses can have as many as twenty or more. In terms of starting out though it's best to start small with two or three and build up to larger numbers over time.

Once we understand our buyer personas the next step is to consider how we are going to help them overcome their challenges or reach their goals. What does our offer do for the buyer? Which of our products or services are they most likely to be interested in and why. This is crucial to becoming customer centric in our communications and helping the modern buyer to reach a decision which is right for them.

PERSONA 01. | **ADVENTURE ANDREW**



NAME: ANDREW

GENDER: MALE

AGE: 32

EDUCATION: DEGREE

OCCUPATION: RETAIL MANGER

MARITAL STATUS: SINGLE

LOCATION: MANCHESTER

STORY

Andrew loves to spend time with his mates & is passionate about extreme sports. He wants to share experiences & he loves to show off. Most of all though he wants to tick achievements off a bucket list of activities. He loves technology and will often get a friend to film him so he can share achievements on social media. He is the organiser of a circle of friends & is often the one who finds weekend activities for them to enjoy together.

MOTIVATIONS

Excitement, showing off, pride, adventure, something different

CHALLENGES

Costs, organising multiple people, booking something to do easily,

An example buyer persona

How do you create a buyer persona?

The information to create the best buyer personas is usually gleaned in two ways. Firstly from customers and potential customers themselves through interviews and discussions; Secondly through data or information which we might already have from existing customers.

As patterns which connect types of customers are discovered an ideal buyer persona can be created.

Key to creating buyer personas is to ensure that the sales team is consulted. They are the ones on the 'coal face' interacting with customers daily. They themselves may automatically put customers into specific mental boxes.

All of this insight is essential to building realistic and relevant buyer personas upon which a killer marketing strategy can be built.

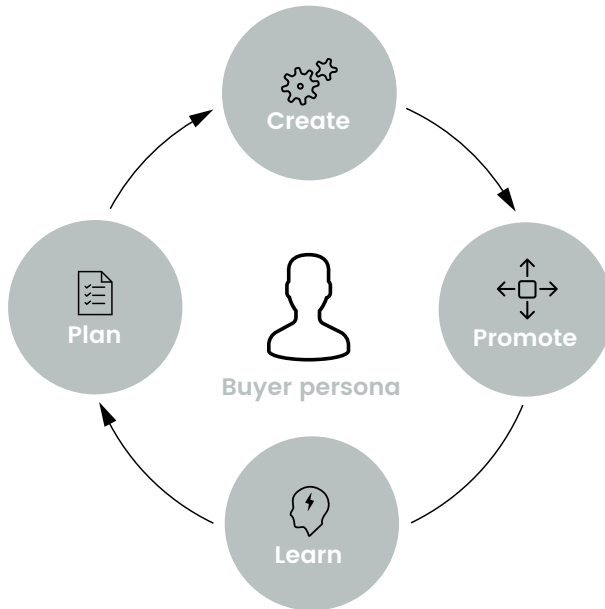
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The process of an inbound marketing campaign

The process of an inbound marketing campaign

Inbound is all about magnetically attracting potential customers to you rather than pushing your marketing out to them in an attempt to fight for their attention. How is this done? What are the main components of an inbound marketing strategy and how does it work? In this section we look at a few of the key activities that would be conducted as part of an inbound marketing campaign.



<A process by which you would execute ongoing inbound marketing initiatives

Step 1: Plan

Without effective planning there is no way you can execute an effective campaign. In the planning phase, if they do not already exist, personas need to be created. Next, goals need to be set to ensure there is a focus for the campaign. Finally a content strategy needs to be produced. This is the basis for how we are going to plan out the content we need to hit our goals.

Once we have a plan for the campaign the next job is to run through various action cycles on a regular basis.

Step 2: Creation

This step is essential. This is where we create content for the campaign. There are two types of content - content which we use to attract strangers into being visitors to our site and then content which we use to convert a visitor into a lead. There is going to be much more content needed to attract strangers but without having a good content offer to convert them there is little point in attracting them to the site. Therefore activities around content creation need to be executed in an intelligent way to ensure that we are attracting and converting audiences over time effectively. Critical to creating good content is Search Engine Optimisation which is the practice of ensuring the content is optimised to increase the chances of it appearing high in search engine rankings. For premium content offers, landing pages need to be produced, with calls to action and forms to enable conversion. All of these activities need to be undertaken on an ongoing basis to ensure accumulated success over time.

Step 3: Promotion

After each item of content is produced promotional activities will need to be executed. For example social media is a great way to attract attention to new blog posts. Scheduled 'tweets' can drive traffic over the course of a few weeks. Email marketing is another great way to make your audiences aware of a new content offer. Pay Per Click and other paid advertising could also be considered as 'quick wins' to get the traffic needed to your site. Inbound marketing is multi-channel by nature because it approaches people where they are, in the channel where they want to interact.

Step 4: Learn

Once a specific action cycle has been completed it is time to review activities and see what is working and what is not. Take the time to track various marketing metrics (i.e. website traffic, conversion rates, click rates, etc.) to see how your efforts are moving your business towards your goals. It is important to consider where things could (and should) be better and make adjustments for the next round of activities. This allows for continuous improvement and even more return on the effort and energy you spend on your inbound marketing.

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The difference between Outbound Marketing & inbound marketing

The difference between Outbound Marketing & inbound marketing

Many businesses cannot distinguish between inbound and Outbound Marketing strategies. They know something is not working but they don't know how to change it.

By now we hope you have obtained a good overview of the importance of inbound marketing and its relevance to the modern business.

The main difference between Outbound and inbound is the shift in emphasis from being marketer or salesperson centric to being buyer centric. It is a recognition that technology has empowered the prospect to the degree that there is no point in trying to get them to purchase something they do not need or want. It is a respect for the prospect which has not been afforded them up until recent times when only Outbound Marketing was possible.

To conclude this ebook we thought it would be good to compare inbound with its traditional counterpart, Outbound so the pros and cons could be seen side by side.

Outbound

Salesperson centric

Interruption based

One way “push”
broadcasts

Powered by reputation
& budget

No value added

Non-educational

Low conversion

Short-term

Inbound

Customer centric

Permission based

Attractive information
which “pulls”

Powered by telling a
helpful story

Value added

Educational

High conversion

Builds value over time

Attract.
Convert.
Close.
Delight.

Respect the buyer

So - now you understand a bit more about Inbound Marketing and why it's important we wish you the best of luck in undertaking your next marketing campaign and hope you have found the information in this guide useful.

If you like what we have had to say please tweet about it using the hashtag **#modernmarketing** and include our twitter handle [@AttitudeDesign](https://twitter.com/AttitudeDesign).

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